

THE LORD'S PRAYER – PART I

David Baker, Presbytery Word for week commencing Sunday 06 July 2025
Transcription of recording, slightly edited

We are going to continue in this theme of the Lord's prayer. Last week we were considering the preliminary statement that Jesus made when He said in Matthew chapter 6 and verse 6, 'But you, when you pray, go into your room [or your inner room], and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.' We were considering that the Father is *in* the secret place. He does *see* in secret, but more fundamentally, He is *in* the secret *place*. The secret place is the house of the Father. It is where He lives; it is where He dwells; it is the house of God. It is the body now of the glorified Son of Man that connects heaven and earth. The body of Christ is the ladder that Jacob saw. This is the house of God; it is the gate of heaven. When we are born as sons of God, the Father places us as members of the body of Christ. This becomes our inner room, within the secret place. It is one secret place, the body of Christ, but when you are born as a son of God, the Father places you into your unique place within the fellowship of the body of Christ and that becomes your inner room - your place within the secret place.

Jesus said that we need to be there to be able to pray. There is a big implication to that. You need to know where God the Father has placed you in the fellowship of the body of Christ. If you are rejecting that, if you are running from that, if you are rebelling against that, then you can throw as many prayers up as you like, but the heavens will be as brass to you. The Lord is not listening or engaging with us in relation to our prayer unless we are submitted to where He has placed us in the fellowship of the body of Christ, remembering that He is the God of all the families of the earth.

When we come into the inner room (we were considering this again last week), we need to

leave our shoes outside the door. I am picking up some of these pictures. Hopefully this is helpful for the children, remembering that when the Lord spoke to Moses, the first thing He said to him was, 'Take off your shoes, you are on holy ground.' Exo 3:5. Before we think about the door, we have to take our shoes off and leave them outside the door. We are not approaching the holy ground of the fellowship of Yahweh with all our religious projections and asking God to support those. That would be the equivalent of the Pharisees praying on the street corner. That was their projection. They wanted to be seen by men. We are not doing that, but we do create our own religious projections, and we get pretty anxious if we feel like they are coming undone. It is very easy for a lot of our prayer to be bringing the religious projection, imposing it upon the Lord and asking Him to support it and protect it. That would be one example of bringing our shoes in onto the holy ground of Yahweh in that sense.

The other one that Jesus identifies is if we are continually praying about our own perceived needs, motivated by anxiety. Jesus says that concerning your real needs, the Father already knows what you need before you ask or think. The purpose of prayer is *fellowship*, not just to ask God for things.

Having said that, I want to note here as we begin, we do have needs as sons of God. Would you agree? We do have needs. Paul says in his letter to the Hebrews, chapter 4 verse 16, 'Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.' When is your time of *need*? When is my time of *need*? It is not when I am faced with particular points of crisis. You are in need every day. When you wake up every morning, you are in need because you wake up bankrupt in spirit, completely reliant upon the Lord for the grace that is necessary

to live as a son of God each and every day. I think the Lord wants us to acknowledge that we are continually in need. We will all be familiar with this: I can cope in my own strength up to here. Most things I have in hand. I am pretty competent. I am pretty capable. I think I can handle most situations, but I do find myself in situations that I *cannot* handle, so that is when I run to the Lord in prayer. The Lord is saying, 'No, that is not your need. That is motivated by anxiety. How about you recognise each and every morning that you wake up bankrupt in spirit and that day is another time of need for you?' We come and join a prayer meeting each and every day. We do have needs, and we do have a need; we have specific needs. We do make requests.

Let us be clear on this. We do make requests. Paul says in Philippians 4 verse, 'Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.' He is saying, 'Be anxious for nothing.' That is an all-encompassing statement. That does not leave any wiggle room for any justifiable anxiety. As we have already heard today, the provision in the offering of Christ is full and complete for us. There is nothing that we will encounter that needs to be the cause of any anxiety for us as sons of God.

We need to know how are we making requests to the Lord? It is not motivated by anxiety. Paul says, 'Have no anxiety for anything... [Having said that, we *are* making requests], ...but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.' Php 4:6. We are talking about faith-filled requests, not anxiety-motivated requests. We are joining a prayer meeting, and we are not imposing our own agenda on that prayer meeting. At the same time, we are being asked to become a fully active participant in that prayer meeting.

This is a wonderful dignity that the Lord has bestowed upon us as sons of God. We are not only listening, but He also wants to hear from us. There are requests that we are making. As we continue to look at the Lord's prayer (which we will not get to today), Jesus is very clear what we are to ask for. We are to ask that the will of God is done in our lives. We are to ask for the provision of His bread each and every day. We are to ask for the grace to be able to forgive. We are asking for a circumcising work to be done in our heart each and every day so that we can forgive. We are also asking to be led. 'Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.' Mat 6:13.

We are making requests, but these are faith-filled requests motivated by the Holy Spirit. They are not motivated by anxiety. To pick another Scripture, James 1 verse 5 says, 'If any man lacks wisdom...' This is another all-encompassing statement. We come in time of need. What is your time of need? Well, always. Now, 'If any man lacks wisdom...' Or if any person lacks wisdom, we all put our hand up and say, 'Yes, that is me. I am not the one exclusion to that.' Every person lacks wisdom because we are not the source of wisdom. Wisdom does not originate in you. Wisdom comes down from above. You are always lacking wisdom, but at the same time asking God 'who gives to all liberally and beyond reproach'. That is a legitimate request that a son of God is asking for, motivated by the Holy Spirit as an expression of faith again each and every day.

I like to think of wisdom as 'How do I live as a son of God today?' I am thinking reasonably devotionally this morning and practically. We know that we need to receive all our circumstances from the Lord each and every day and He is doing a regenerative work in our heart. But being a son of God is not being a passive recipient of a package of circumstances which are rolling over you each day. We actually need to know how to

respond to those circumstances as a son of God. We need to know how to navigate our way through certain circumstances. There are some matters that need to be answered. There are some legitimate queries that in a family, our children may have. We need to make decisions. We need to know how to live and walk and respond as a son of God through the circumstances that we are receiving from His hand. That is where we need wisdom.

Even more than that, Jesus Christ has learned all our obedience. He has fulfilled all the works of our sonship for each and every day. In the end, when we are saying we need wisdom, we need to be connected to what Christ has learned for us in the middle of all these situations. The Holy Spirit is doing that. We are asking for the Holy Spirit to lead us in terms of our responses. But also, again, we are not just a passive recipient of circumstances. We are also needing to take initiative as sons of God in the course of a day, led by the Spirit — not by my own self-righteous, zealous initiatives. There are works to do which are the expression of who I am as a son of God each and every day. I need to be led by the Spirit and living by the faith of the Son of God, in taking initiative toward things. This is all part of asking for wisdom. We need to know when and how to do that and what belongs to our sanctification and what does not. All these things are part of the package of living as a son of God each and every day.

We come then to the Lord's prayer. Before I get there, we will consider this preliminary verse, where we are going into our room in the secret place and then we are to shut the door. We were considering that in terms of it being our responsibility to guard the sanctification of our own life, our own family, our own household, knowing that all these things do have an impact upon the holy ground of the body of Christ.

As we are dealing with uncleanness, we have been considering grace for familiar spirits to depart. The key for that is to deal with our own uncleanness, knowing that the familiar spirit only works by advantage. As we deal with the uncleanness, and as we deal with the lack of sanctification, we are throwing the unclean spirit out the door and shutting the door behind it. It hits it on the way as it goes out. It is important that we are shutting the door.

I did want to say on the way through, that it is very easy for us to spend a lot of time preoccupied with what the Lord is asking us to be sanctified *from*. Can we be encouraged to lift up our eyes and behold what you are being sanctified *to* as a son of God? When you are illuminated to know what you are being sanctified *to*, then what you are being sanctified *from* pales into insignificance and a lot of those issues are resolved very easily. Our major focus is what we are being sanctified *to* as sons of God, having been invited to join the fellowship of Yahweh as a son of God.

Let us from that perspective then, come to the Lord's prayer because this is a prayer that belongs to a son of God and it is initiated by the Holy Spirit, who is the source and the capacity of all prayer. Jesus described the culture and fellowship of the prayer that we have been called to join as we watch and pray with Him when He gave what we refer to as the Lord's prayer to His disciples, remembering that the disciples asked Jesus to teach them how to pray. We do all need to be taught how to pray. The reason they asked that question is they were watching Him pray as the Son of God and His relationship with His heavenly Father, which was foundational then to everything He did in every day. Every good work that He did and every miracle that He performed were all the works that the Father had given to Him to do. They were all revealing the Father's name. They were works of obedience.

The disciples were observing this personal relationship that Jesus had with His heavenly Father. Then, of course, how foundational that was in terms of how He is responding to all the situations He is confronted with and how He is walking through them. They are saying, 'Can you please teach us how to pray?' Jesus is teaching all of us then how to pray as a son of God.

He says in Matthew 6 verse 9, 'In this manner... [or in this way. This is a culture; it is a way. It is not a set of words that we learn off by rote] ... In this way, therefore pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.'

As I said last week, it is helpful to know this off by heart. I certainly learnt this off by heart all the way through school. But Jesus is not asking us to recite this like a mantra. Every unbelieving person can do that. He is describing how a son of God prays when they are enabled by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the source and capacity of our prayer. He is the one who initiates and focuses all the dimensions of our prayer as a son of God. That is a massive point to begin with. Remember that Paul says to the Romans (and we might look at this a bit further in a moment), he says that our first point of weakness is 'We do not know how to pray as we ought.' We do not know how to pray. We need to be *taught* how to pray, but we are not learning it as a method that we can employ. We need to pray by the Holy Spirit. He helps our weakness. 'We do not know how to pray as we ought,' and 'He makes intercession for us with groanings too deep for words.' That is the beginning of

joining the prayer meeting - to pray by the Holy Spirit - to pray in the Spirit.

I was intending to look at the first line (which we will not do), in terms of 'Our Father in heaven hallowed be Your name.' I am going to leave 'hallowed be Your name'. That is a big subject in its own right. We will look reasonably briefly at 'Our Father in heaven'. As I said, each of these points is a massive block in its own right.

The first dimension of prayer for a son of God is that the Holy Spirit enables us to call God 'our Father'. This is possible only by the Holy Spirit. We need not go too fast to really appreciate how remarkable it is that we can call God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, 'our Father'. We have been born of His life, and He is our Father. We are a son of God. That is remarkable. You cannot even believe that God wants to be your Father unless the gospel of God is proclaimed to you by messengers of Christ who preach by the Holy Spirit, and then the Holy Spirit is bringing some illumination to your heart so that you know the hope of the gospel. You see your calling that God the Father wants to be your *Father*. You cannot possibly comprehend that without the illumination of the Holy Spirit. Without that illumination, you are stuck with a Creator/creature gap and then grappling with some kind of positional salvation that is based on a legal transaction. The first word of the gospel is that you have been predestined and called to be a son of God. You need to be illuminated by the Holy Spirit as the word is proclaimed to you to see your calling. This is where the gospel begins. Without the illumination of the Holy Spirit, it is impossible to comprehend the gospel of God with our mind. From a natural perspective, it is inconceivable that the Creator of the heavens and earth wants to be our Father. As Paul says, 'Eye has not seen, ear has not heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man everything that God has prepared for those who love Him.' 1Co 2:9.

When he uses that phrase, 'who love Him', he is talking about a son of God who has been born of the love of God — 'who love Him'.

Then he says in the next verses (1 Corinthians 2 verses 10 to 11), 'But God has revealed this to us through His Spirit.' 'Eye has not seen, ear has not heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man... But God has revealed it to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.' Now having been illuminated to see our calling, we are still not able to call God our Father until we receive the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of adoption.

We have been looking at the steps of new birth and the gospel of God that is proclaimed to us. Then the next step is that the prevenient grace of God gives us the opportunity to receive and believe the word that is proclaimed to us. We are set free from every impediment, every bondage, so that we are able to choose what is being proclaimed to us. We are made alive again. This is where regeneration is beginning. We are made alive again, given the freedom, the opportunity to choose what God is saying to us. In this phase there is an initial lordship crisis as a person is deciding whether they are going to be obedient to Christ or not. As they choose that, there is deliverance from addictions and all kinds of things. Of course this is not new birth, and it is not salvation - but it is a wonderful step.

In response to that (unless we dig in and start resisting the Lord), this all rolls very smoothly and seamlessly because Jesus says in John 14 verse 21, 'He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. [That is what we see in this prevenient grace phase] And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to Him.' Christ comes and reveals Himself then to the person and He comes, and He takes up residence in their heart. He brings the Father with Him.

Jesus said, 'We will both come and We will make our abode with him in his heart.' In John 14 verse 16, Jesus says (He is praying here from the context of our heart now), 'I will pray to the Father and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever [He is talking about the Holy Spirit now - verse 17] - the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him for He dwells with you and will be in you.'

The Holy Spirit comes into our heart then in response to this prayer of Christ convicting us of sin, righteousness and judgement. Through this conviction, we are being asked, 'Do you want to be a son of God?' This is the major question that the Holy Spirit puts to us. 'Do you want to be a son of God?' He is not presuming upon our answer. He is giving us the complete freedom and dignity to respond, but at the same time, He is compelling us (as we have been hearing) to say, 'Yes.' 'Do you want to be a son of God?' As we say, 'Yes', the Holy Spirit gives to us the faith to believe for what is entirely impossible and naturally inconceivable, which is that we can become a son of God who is born again of His divine nature. When the word of God is first proclaimed to us, it takes the illumination of the Spirit to see that God wants to be my Father. That is a major step in its own right. As the Holy Spirit comes into our heart, and He asks us this question very personally, 'Do you want to be a son of God?' He is then giving to us the faith to believe that yes, not only does God want to be my Father, but I believe that I can personally, actually be His son. As we say, 'Yes', the Holy Spirit gives to us the faith to believe for what is entirely impossible and naturally inconceivable, which is that we become a son of God who is born again of His divine nature.

As we believe for sonship, the Holy Spirit adopts us, making us children of God. By the Spirit of adoption, we are able to call God our

Father. Paul says in Romans 8 verse 15, 'You did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear.' Can you see how this is completely transforming our prayer? (Or what we may have previously thought *was* prayer?) It is not motivated by anxiety; it is not motivated by fear in any way. 'You did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption [that is the Holy Spirit] by whom we cry out, "Abba Father"'.

This right here is the first prayer of a son of God. This is a big point. The first prayer of a son of God is not a sinner's prayer. Can we digest that point and be very clear on that point? The first prayer of a son of God is 'Abba Father'. Now this is the same as 'Our Father, my Father'. It is '*our* Father' because we are looking at a corporate prayer meeting here in terms of the Lord's prayer; but talking about you individually as a son of God - *your* prayer, '*My Father*, Abba Father, Daddy, Daddy. I believe you are my Father and I am Your son.' That is the first prayer of a son of God.

There is a deliverance from the bondage of sin in relation to prevenient grace, but the whole focus of that is to set a person free so that they can choose whether or not they want to be a son of God. Now, equally, when the Holy Spirit comes into a person's heart and He is convicting them of sin, righteousness and judgement, that conviction of sin there is in relation to unbelief. He is wanting to give us faith to believe to be a son of God. In terms of actually dealing with our sin (and we do need to be saved from our sin), the Lord is not really confronting us. He is setting us free from the bondage (as I said) in relation to prevenient grace, and then the Holy Spirit is convicting us of the sin of unbelief as He is coming and He is saying to us, 'Do you want to be a son?'

Christ Himself does not really confront us concerning our iniquity and sin until we are

joining the fellowship of His seven wounding events. That is the second wound, in the court of Caiaphas. We meet Christ eye to eye and heart to heart, and He reveals to us (in that relational interaction) the depth of our iniquity. But He is revealing that to us *after* we have been born as sons of God and we have chosen to join ourselves to the fellowship of His offering. He *does* address our sin, and we do need to be saved from our sin. That is through participation in those seven wounding events. None of that actually equals a sinner's prayer.

The preachers, teachers and leaders who have imposed a scripted sinner's prayer on a person at the prevenient grace phase have done a person who is receiving the word and actually making a genuine response to Christ a very big disservice. It is as if saying, 'That is what you need to do, and once you have done that, you are saved.' What they are doing when they impose that upon a person is that they are shutting the kingdom of God up and preventing them from continuing to enter and being born as a son of God.

Jesus was very strong on that when he addressed the scribes and Pharisees by saying, 'Woe to you! You are not entering the kingdom; you are not born as a son of God; and you are preventing everybody else with your legalistic doctrines from entering as well.' We need to be very clear on how we are born as a son of God. I am making this point out of the first prayer of a son of God. It is not a sinner's prayer. The first prayer is 'Abba Father' and then Christ is actually addressing our sin in the fellowship of His seven wounding events. That is part of the pathway of regeneration - to deal with the condition of the soil of your spirit and your heart.

In response to our cry 'Abba Father', the Father sends the Spirit of the Son (who is the Father's Seed) into our spirit. We are being very specific here. Christ has come into our heart, but now in response to our cry of 'Abba

Father', the Father sends the Spirit of the Son (who is the Father's Seed) into our spirit. This is really now the soil where the seed germinates. We have a new plant as a son of God in the soil of our spirit. This is the unique seed of our name which was multiplied through the travail of the one Seed, Christ.

While the Son in identity dwells in our heart and Christ does live in our heart by faith, the seed of our sonship... (which is the seed that is brought forth through His offering journey - that unique seed in the sheaf, that is you)... the seed of our sonship is germinated in our spirit by the Holy Spirit and we are conceived as a son of God. We are born of the divine nature and have become a totally new creation. When this conception has happened, Christ has become our life. He is now crying, 'Abba Father'. Christ has become our life. We then live by *His* faith - the faith of the Son of God. That was Paul's testimony. As someone who had been born as a son of God, the seed had germinated in his spirit. His testimony was, 'I have been crucified with Christ. Nevertheless, I live. But it is not me living now, it is Christ who lives in me. The life I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself up for me.' That is the testimony of a son of God. Gal 2:20.

We are continuing to pray then as sons of God - 'our Father' with Christ, with all our brethren. We are together then praying as sons of God - 'our Father'. As we pray in the Spirit (this is where I want to focus this up devotionally), the Holy Spirit is bearing witness with our spirit that we are a son of God. In the first case, this is why praying in the Holy Spirit is so important, because it is actually connecting you to positive identity verification as a son of God.

If you have missed this, or if you are not receiving this in the fellowship of this prayer meeting, then you will be looking for identity verification somewhere else. As sure as night

follows day or day follows night, if you are not being verified properly as a son of God in the fellowship of this prayer meeting, you will be looking for identity verification somewhere else. We have already heard some of those points this morning. I have touched on some of these things before, but we will remind ourselves of some of the big ones, thinking devotionally.

It will be performance. How am I performing? In terms of how I am performing, how does that measure against my own expectations or how I compare with other people? We all (in terms of our fallen humanity) struggle with this. Regeneration answers this and it is a process. The Lord is still dealing with this in each of us. We are either going to be insecure and therefore we are constantly measuring ourselves by our own appraisal. How am I going based on how I think I should be going? I am insecure. If I am insecure, everyone else could almost say anything, but I am still stuck with my own insecurities. Am I measuring to my own expectations? That is one kind of person.

You also have the people who struggle with inferiority, and everything is a peck order. The only way I can know myself is where I fit in relation to everybody else. I am constantly measuring myself by comparing myself.

Let us think about this devotionally. Paul identifies both of those mechanisms in 2 Corinthians chapter 10 verse 12. He says, 'For we dare not class ourselves... [what he is saying is, 'I do not classify myself. I am not the measure of me.' Now equally], '... We do not compare ourselves [to find where we fit in a peck order] with those who commend themselves.' It is interesting that in terms of inferiority (or once we start comparing), it is very easy to think that everybody else is doing pretty well, and in comparison, I am always inferior. The more we compare, the more inferior we feel. 'For we dare not class ourselves [or compare ourselves] with those

who commend themselves. But they are measuring themselves by themselves... [that is the first one. I am my own measure. Or the second one], ...in comparing themselves among themselves.'

Both of those things, Paul says very politely 'are not wise'. What he is saying is, 'That is foolish.' We could use a stronger word. He says, 'I dare not do this.' Paul says, 'I dare not go down that track. I am going to stick with getting a reflection from the Lord Himself concerning who He has called me to be. I am very happy to meet Christ with eyes like a flame of fire and for Him to expose the depths of my iniquity and also the heights of my sonship. That will be the measure - what the Holy Spirit is bearing witness to in relation to the face of Christ, not me, or comparing myself.'

Equally, you have looking into the face of others in terms of how they are responding to us. Lach was talking about that in relation to a marriage because it is a very big problem. In fact, it is a very big problem for all of us in our marriages. We are inclined to look into the face of our spouse to know how we are doing. That then cultivates a trading mechanism in our marriage as opposed to meeting Christ and receiving the reflection of who we are called to be from His face and then finding grace to make offering to our spouse - constantly looking into the face of others.

That can be in a marriage, but it can be in a family; it can be in a church; it can be in a workplace; it can be in any number of different places where we are constantly looking for other people to give us feedback or affirm us. These are all identity verifying mechanisms. The answer to this is to pray in the Holy Spirit and be affirmed by the Lord concerning who you are as a son of God.

There are many others. We have touched on this already today: the person who loves to cuddle their lameness. 'This is part of me. This is what I identify with. This is how

everyone relates to me. I am not sure actually who I am. If the Lord healed me, I am not quite sure who I would be.' It is interesting how the Lord always asked every person who came and plainly needed to be healed. They had obvious impediments - issues that needed to be addressed. He always starts by saying, 'What do you want Me to do for you?' He is not presuming that they want to be healed, because lots of people do not. They actually like being lame. Maybe the bloke on the stretcher liked being carried around by his friends all the time. Now he had to get healed and then pick up his own stretcher, carry his own load and learn to walk. There can be big issues.

The flip side of that is the person who cannot actually receive help from anybody but constantly wants to be the benefactor, helping everybody else because there is identity verification in that.

Talking: this can be our own self-analysis. I have quoted this Scripture from Ecclesiastes 10 verse 13. It says (this is again talking about a fool) in verse 14, 'A fool also multiplies words.' The verse before (verse 13), 'The words of his mouth begin with foolishness and the end of his talk raving madness.' That is an interesting verse. That is someone who is constantly talking about their own issues, thinking about their own issues. 'I am the kind of person who...' and 'I am the kind of person who...', and 'I am the kind of person...' - all this kind of talk which is never ending - all trying to find themselves through talk. Then hopefully drawing everybody else into this vortex of talking, trying to find themselves through counselling or something of this order where everything is completely self-focused. I am trying to find *me*. These all easily become identity verifying mechanisms as well.

It is important to recognise then that there is a genuine reflection in true fellowship. There is a genuine reflection concerning who we are, but we are not coming to find that. We

need to know who we are as a son of God and be verified, so that we are then coming into a fellowship to make offering. We are walking in the light of the word, and we are 'praying in the Holy Spirit'. We are 'building ourselves up on our most holy faith' and if we are walking in that light, we are able then to have 'fellowship together and the blood of Christ is cleansing us from all sin'.

We are not coming into a so to say fellowship to ask somebody else to script for us. 'Tell me what to do and I will do it', as if that is how you find yourself; or equally asking someone else to tell me what my name is. We can see how all these things, sometimes look very similar, and we can call it fellowship, but that is not fellowship. That is an identity verifying mechanism. We have all the issues of fantasy, escapism, all those kind of things - vain imaginations.

The Lord is saying that we need to be verified in the right way. This is Jude 1 verse 20 and we are talking about 'our Father'. We are not even getting to 'who is in heaven' today. I will finish with a couple of points here. Jude 1 verse 20: 'But you, beloved, building yourselves up...' Can you see this? 'Building yourselves up.' This is positive identity verification which comes only from the Lord through the Holy Spirit as He bears witness with your spirit that you are a son of God. As I have said many times, if you get up in the morning and you get up off your knees and that is all that has happened ...(there is more that is happening - but if that is all that has happened) - the Holy Spirit has born witness with your spirit that you are a son of God, then that is time very well spent.

'Building yourselves up in your most holy faith...' That is the faith that is being ministered to us as the word is preached to us and 'faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God' and we are receiving that faith. Then we are praying in response to the word that we have heard to build ourselves up in our most holy (which is most

sanctified) faith. That is the faith of *Christ* which becomes *your* faith. It does not start as *my* faith - something I believe about God - it is *Christ's* faith. He is the Author and the Finisher of my unique, most holy faith on that offering journey. I am connected to that each and every day by the Holy Spirit. There is faith for me, which is the faith of Christ, which is unique for me each and every day. As I pray in the Spirit, I am building myself up on that most holy faith, '...praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.'

If we do not pray in the Holy Spirit, we will be driven by anxiety and mind chatter (picking up another point now). Our mind will be in control. Our mind will be set on the flesh. A 'mind set on the flesh' is talking about its orientation and its focus. It is orientated then completely to the information I am receiving through my five senses and then it is focused on how do I survive? If I am really lucky, I will do well today in this environment of the world - the mind set on the flesh.

Then driven by anxiety: I am aware of all my own insecurities, my inferiorities, all the issues, and my mind is running at a million miles an hour, and I cannot seem to rein it back into control. It is driving me. It is actually pushing me to do things. I want to pick up on this little phrase here: What is driving you? What is driving me?

If we are being driven by mind chatter (it does drive us), it does more than rob us of sleep. (It does that too.) But actually, when you are up and about, it is actually driving you to do things - to respond a certain way, to try to control your circumstances. When we pray in the Spirit... I want to encourage you with this simple point. Hopefully all the children are listening to me now on this very simple point concerning mind chatter and praying in the Holy Spirit, because praying

in the Holy Spirit is the antidote to mind chatter.

I will describe it this way. When you begin to pray in the Holy Spirit (I am using this little phrase, 'driving you'), mind chatter is driving you. The car is in gear. It is driving, it is pushing, it is compelling, it is affecting you. You start to pray in the Holy Spirit, and it is like you have slammed the car into neutral and your mind chatter is no longer driving you. What happens to the car or the engine when you are driving along and you suddenly slam it into neutral? The engine races. In that initial phase, this is still positive. This is not the end; this is still a positive in the step. You start to pray in the Holy Spirit. I do not know if you are anything like me - maybe not. Maybe you are completely focused immediately 'in the Spirit on the Lord's day', dropping to your knees. For me, it is a conscious decision to pray in the Holy Spirit. When I begin to pray in the Holy Spirit, what I find often is that I am praying in the Holy Spirit, but at the same time my mind can still be doing something else. But it is not now driving me, because I am praying in the Spirit, but it is still racing.

Now Paul identified this issue, and he said to expect this; but we overcome this, and we do need to persevere in prayer. What I am trying to encourage is (and particularly for the children) do not drop the bundle and become discouraged and condemned after praying in the Holy Spirit for five minutes and your mind is still wandering. You do need to persevere. The Spirit does want to help your weakness right there.

There is an anointing that enables you to overcome this. Paul says this in 1 Corinthians 14 verse 14. It says, 'If I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding [that is my mind], is unfruitful.' At least it is not driving the car anymore, but it is not connected initially to the Spirit. It is still doing its own thing, but at least it is in neutral. This illustration might

fall over, but I am hoping it is helpful a little bit. Then Paul says in the next verse - verse 15, 'What is the conclusion then?' Is this where it ends? Do we forever live with that? No, he says we can actually persevere. What is the end of the matter? What is the conclusion? This may well be the beginning of our prayer in the Spirit, but what is the end? Well, persevere by the Spirit. What is the conclusion then? 'I will pray with the Spirit and I will also pray with the understanding (or with my mind).'

There is a gear change here as we persevere in prayer when we can bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. We are bringing our mind back into subjection to the Spirit and we are able to get connected with what the Lord is saying to us - become illuminated and actually gain some understanding so that we are not only praying with our spirit, but we are also able to pray with our mind according to the will of God.

Hopefully that is a little bit encouraging for you, and I will leave it there for the sake of time. We can certainly continue at another time.