

WHAT IS  
PRAYER

Scripture consistently shows **four active agents** in prayer:

## The Father

- the One who hears and answers

## The Son

- the Mediator through whom we have access

## The Holy Spirit

- the One who enables, shapes, and carries prayer

## The believer

- the real, willing, speaking participant

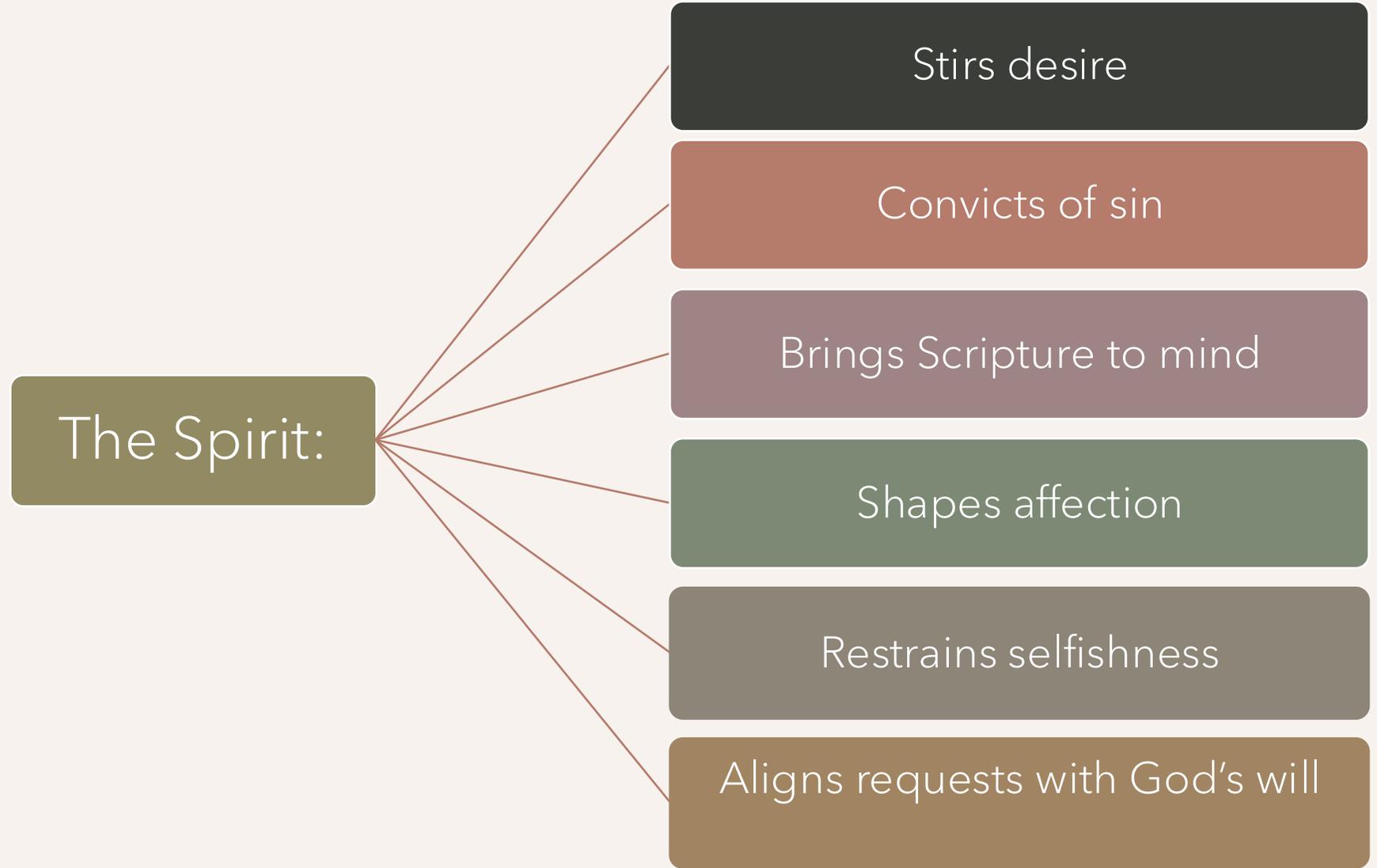
Prayer is **Trinitarian by nature**, even when we don't consciously think in those terms.

# The Holy Spirit works in us to pray

“The Spirit helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us...” Romans 8:26–27

Key clarification:  
–The Spirit does not *replace* our praying

The Spirit **helps, guides, aligns, and carries** our praying



# The role of the Bible in prayer

The Father uses the Word to reveal **who He is** and **how He relates to us**

Scripture establishes:

- God's character
- God's promises
- God's purposes
- God's covenant posture

Jesus used Scripture as the **language** and **logic** of prayer:

- Christ *is* the Word (John 1:1)
- Christ prays Scripture (Luke 23:46; Psalm 31)
- Christ teaches prayer from Scripture (Matthew 6)
- Christ mediates according to God's revealed will

We need the Word so the **Spirit** can work *through our minds and hearts* with clarity.

**The Spirit:**

- authored the Word (2 Pet 1:21)
- illumines the Word (1 Corinthians 2:12)
- brings the Word to remembrance (John 14:26)
- uses the Word to align us with God's will

The Spirit uses the Word to shape *our thinking, desires, and language* in prayer.

# Jesus's role in prayer

Prayer does not reach God because:

- *we pray well*
- *we are sincere enough*
- *we feel spiritual*



Prayer reaches God because Christ stands between us and the Father.

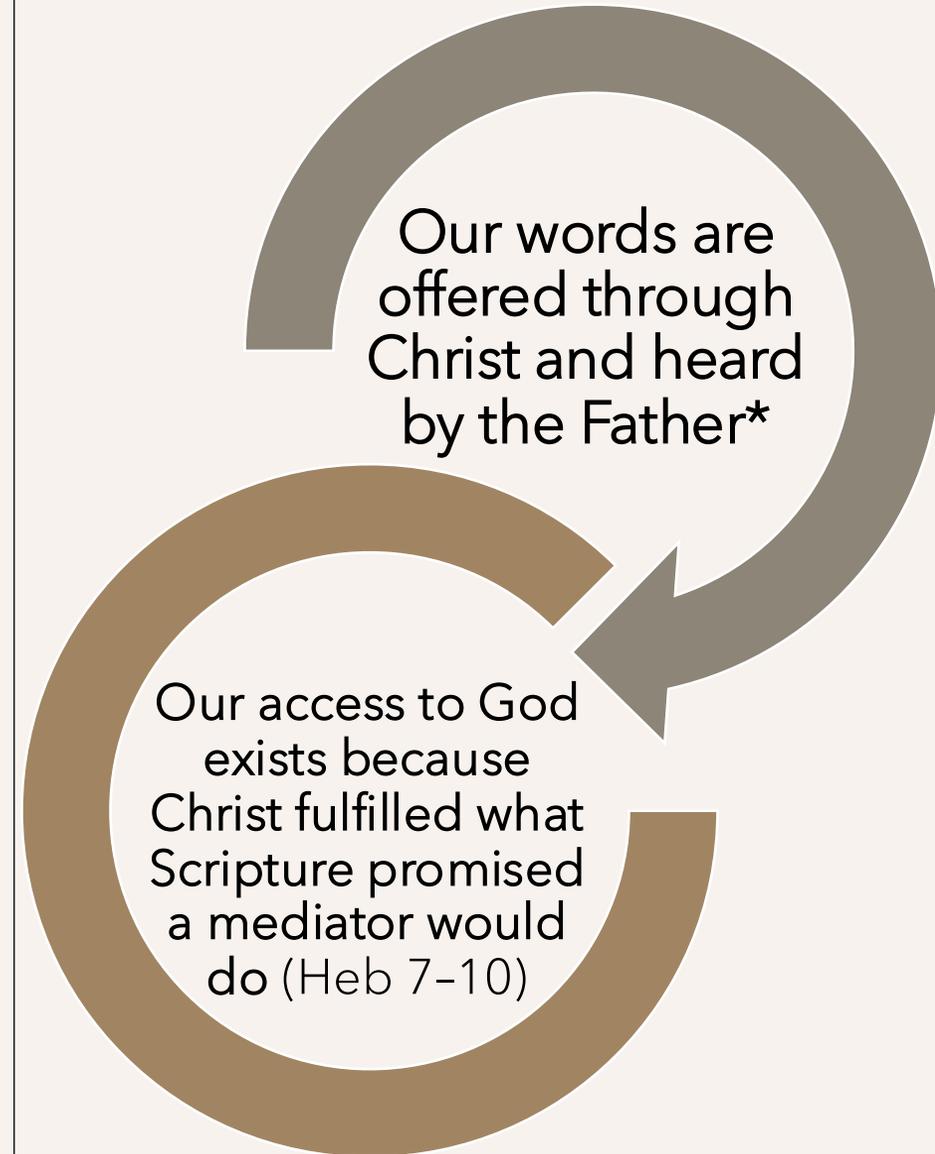
This guards our prayers from:

- *superstition*
- *emotionalism*
- *fear*
- *performance*

\*Hebrews 4:14-16 - "Since then we have a great high priest... let us draw near with confidence..."

\*John 14:13-14 - "Whatever you ask in My name..."

\*Romans 5:1-2 - "Through Him we have obtained access..."



# God uses circumstances and people to prompt prayer



- Trials lead to prayer (James 1:5)
- Need leads to prayer (Matthew 7:7)
- Weakness leads to prayer (2 Corinthians 12)
- Anxiety leads to prayer (Philippians 4:6)

God does not merely *respond* to prayer – He often **creates the conditions that drive us to pray.**

## God responds according to His wisdom - 1 John 5:14

### Prayer is not:

- forcing God's hand
- informing God
- changing God's character

### Prayer is:

- participation in God's will
- alignment with His purposes
- a real means God has chosen to use

God  
in  
prayer



*Truth  
keeps us  
from false  
models of  
prayer*

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**Prayer as venting**

"Talking out loud so I feel better."

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**Prayer as wish-making**

"Asking God for stuff."

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**Prayer as performance**

"Saying the right words the right way."

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**Prayer as superstition**

"If I pray hard enough, something happens."

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None of those survive suffering, silence, or delayed answers.

*Prayer is the believer's response to God, enabled by the Holy Spirit, shaped by God's Word, offered through Jesus Christ, and heard by the Father according to His will.*

