



WEDNESDAY EVENING

AT BETHANY BAPTIST CHURCH

Title: Spirit-Directed Prayer

Passage: John 11:1–6

Speaker: Youth Pastor Trevor Hampton

Introduction: Prayer is not meant to be shaped by personal preference, comfort, or human reasoning, but by the leading of the Spirit of God. Scripture makes this clear: what seems right in human thinking can lead the wrong way, while the Spirit gives life and direction that the flesh cannot provide. The challenge is not simply whether prayer is happening, but what is guiding it. Just as direction is sometimes resisted when it does not align with personal desires or understanding, the same struggle can appear in the prayer life. The question then becomes whether prayers are being formed by what feels right in the moment, or by a willingness to trust that God knows what He is doing.

I. Understand God Has a Sovereign Perspective

Mary, Martha, and Lazarus had a close relationship with Jesus, so when Lazarus became sick, the sisters confidently reached out to Him, expecting immediate healing, but Jesus delayed, and Lazarus died.

When Jesus arrived, Mary and Martha expressed the same confusion and disappointment, struggling to understand why He had not acted the way they expected.

Yet at the tomb, Jesus revealed a greater purpose by raising Lazarus from the dead, showing that while they could not see the full picture, God's sovereign perspective was at work all along.



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God understands and sees things that we don't! He is always there with us! His knowledge is infinite!

When our prayers don't seem to be answered, know that God has a sovereign perspective on your situations. He loves you!

II. Understand God Has a Shared Purpose

Had Mary and Martha's request been answered the way that they wanted, they, and others, would have missed out on other blessings and victories!

God doesn't answer prayer requests just to answer them. He has a purpose in them. Oftentimes that purpose is for people other than ourselves.

Prayer is the only way for you to become who God wants you to become.

We can't be dirty vessels and expect to see God intervene in our life upon our demand.

Conclusion: In the end, it is clear that being Spirit-directed in prayer means trusting both God's sovereign perspective and His shared purpose, even when the outcome cannot be seen. Faithfulness in prayer is not about controlling results, but about aligning with God's will and trusting His timing. When prayer is truly Spirit-directed, there is confidence that God is always working, even when the evidence is not visible, and a steady commitment to continue seeking Him with perseverance and trust.



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Prayer Focus for Tonight:

1. Be Spirit-Directed, Not Self-Decided

Ask God to align your heart with His will, not personal preference.

Surrender specific desires, plans, or expectations to Him.

Seek clarity through His Word and sensitivity to the Spirit's leading.

Pray for a willingness to follow, even when it does not make sense.

2. Be Clean Before God

Take time for honest confession of sin.

Ask God to reveal anything that may be hindering fellowship with Him.

Thank Him for forgiveness and cleansing.

Commit to walking in obedience and holiness.

3. Pray in Faith

Believe that God hears and answers prayer.

Trust His timing, even when answers are delayed.

Rest in His character, knowing He always does what is right.

Pray with confidence, leaving the results in His hands.