



# Spirit Empowered C H U R C H

Spirit Empowered Church

Part 5

July 17, 2022

The Gospel of Saint Matthew 26:36-42, <sup>36</sup>Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, “Sit here, while I go over there and pray.” <sup>37</sup> And taking with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, he began to be sorrowful and troubled. <sup>38</sup> Then he said to them, “My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch with me.” <sup>39</sup> And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, “My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not

as I will, but as you will.”<sup>40</sup> And he came to the disciples and found them sleeping. And he said to Peter, “So, could you not watch with me one hour?”<sup>41</sup> Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”<sup>42</sup> Again, for the second time, he went away and prayed, “My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done.” May the Lord add His Blessing to the Reading and the Hearing of His Word. Amen. You may be seated...

Today we will be continuing our series addressing the need to be a “Spirit Empowered Church”. And as I stated last Sunday, the Church’s overall health is determined by these four facets of the Early Church noted in Acts 2: They were Doctrinally Sound, Relationally Connected, Building Community and Spiritually Developing. And spiritual development is an imperative and this imperative begins with and is rooted in Prayer. I want to draw our attention to one specific central thread in the tapestry of this text; they devoted themselves to Prayer.

Now I want to point to something that may be a bit conflicting but I want you to hear my heart in what I am about to say... We have heard the old adage of “prayer changes things” but I would like to suggest that prayer doesn’t always change things but it should always wield the power to change us.

Could it be that He, the Lord, can take our difficult seasons, our tough times, our grief, our loss, our pain, our regrets, and use them all for His Glory by using these points to posture our lives in a place of prayer? How often do we find ourselves praying for God to change our situations but how many times have we honestly prayed not for the situation to change but rather to use the prayer to change us and not necessarily the situation itself. Church family, the goodness of God can be found even in the most difficult seasons of our lives; He's not just good when things are good, He is infinitely good even when things are bad. Our temporary situations do not wield the power to change His Eternal Character.

We have all heard it said and even perhaps said it ourselves in times of difficult, "Where is God?" He was there when you were sticking needles in your arms, and giving your body away... He was there when loss and grief came to call after a tragic loss of life... He was there at the suicide, at the abortion, at the most painful moments of our lives He was there.

How can I say that? Because I've been there to hold loved ones screaming at the top of their lungs after the act of suicide had taken a life suddenly. I've been there as a young woman confesses to having had an abortion and had struggled for years with their decision.

I've been there when marriages imploded after the discovery of infidelity; I've been there when a person who was clean and sober for years encounters a roadblock and the spirit of addiction comes to call...

I've been there to pray with grandparents who were having to bury their grandchildren and have to console a family that simply doesn't understand why. I've been there when excited and expecting couples, who were pregnant, get the report that the baby had died in the womb. I've been there myself. I've been there when there was no heartbeat. I've been there when emotions overwhelmed me and I didn't know what to say.

I've been there when faith was broken, and resolve was tested. I've been there even when it was me that wanted to give up and walk away. I've been there... I've been there when others worlds were falling apart and I've been there when my own world was falling apart as well. And in every one of these difficulties of life, the one thing I know for sure is that the Lord was there... He was there... He had to have been or many of us would not be here today to tell the story.

Church, Prayer is Powerful and Prayer has its Purpose but, in the end, the most powerful and purposeful impact of prayer is not our prayers to change others, or change our situations, but when God uses others and uses our situations to posture our lives in a state of prayer in



so that through prayer, it doesn't change others or our situation but rather it changes us...

Not every prayer that Jesus ever prayed was answered as He prayed but it did accomplish its purpose of empowering Him to endure; when Jesus prayed for the cup to pass of Him, He came to the end of Himself and realized that His Prayer would not pass the cup but His Prayer would enable Jesus to partake of the Cup.

Sometimes prayer makes the cup pass and, other times, prayer empowers us to partake of the cup... Sometimes, your prayer brings breakthrough into your life and other times, prayer brings the breaking of you into your life... Sometimes the most important breaking in a breakthrough is the breaking of you... Sometimes it's the situation and other times its us that needs to change...

## 1. A Spirit Empowered Church is a Prayerful Church

- a. The Gospel of Saint Matthew 6:5-8, "And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. <sup>6</sup> But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret

will reward you.<sup>7</sup> “And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. <sup>8</sup> Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.”

- b. According to this text, it can be easily surmised that Christ expected His Church to pray. Note that Jesus did not say if you pray; He said when you pray. He expects His Church to be prayerful and spiritually developing.
- c. I truly believe that if we understood just how powerful prayer was then we would spend more time doing it.
- d. Prayer should not be the seatbelt of our lives but rather the vehicle of our lives! It shouldn't be an insurance policy or a failsafe but rather a basic necessity of daily function in our lives of faith.
- e. Remember, A Spirit Empowered Church is a Prayerful Church!

## 2. A Spirit Empowered Church makes Prayer a Priority and not Optional

- a. Philippians 4:4-7, “<sup>4</sup> Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. <sup>5</sup> Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; <sup>6</sup> do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which

surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

- b. Church, far too many of us have allowed the cares of this life to strip from us our Joy in the Lord! The Bible doesn't command of us to rejoice FOR all things but it does say for us to rejoice IN all things!
- c. Notice how prayer and supplication should be performed with a heart of thanksgiving when we make our requests known to God.
- d. Our heart and our perspective, when it comes to prayer, is vitally important and directly impacts how and for what we pray for.
- e. We must be willing to make prayer a priority and not allow it to remain an option.
- f. We have our prayer language for a reason. We have access to the throne room of God in prayer for a reason. We were expected to pray for a reason. Jesus prayed and He was the Son of God. Prayer must be a priority; it must be returned back to its rightful place of authority.
- g. Remember, A Spirit Empowered Church makes Prayer a Priority and not Optional.
- h. And finally, Point #3...

### 3. A Spirit Empowered Church is a Prayerful Church that Makes Much Power Available

- a. The Gospel of Saint Mark 11:22-25, <sup>22</sup>“And Jesus answered them, <sup>23</sup>“Have faith in God. Truly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be taken up and thrown into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him. <sup>24</sup>Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. <sup>25</sup> And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.”
- b. Say to this Mountain! A mountain is an immovable object that stands in our way! The Bible doesn't command of us to climb mountains; to be mountain climbers! The Bible teaches us to be Mountain Movers!
- c. Prayer empowers us to do the impossible by faith! When the odds look completely against us, Jesus commands us to speak to it. Now pray about it but speak to it and command it to shift. There's a time to pray to the Father and then there's a time to prophesy under the authority of Christ by faith against the mountain.



d. By Faith, we speak things that are not as though they were until they are! We speak prophetically to mountains by Faith with earnest expectation that we will see the Mountain moved in our Lives! We need to stop praying about our mountain and begin speaking to it!

e. Job 22:26-28, “For then you will have your delight in the Almighty, And lift up your face to God. <sup>27</sup> You will make your prayer to Him, He will hear you, And you will pay your vows. <sup>28</sup> You will also declare a thing, And it will be established for you; So light will shine on your ways.”

Prayer Time - Altar Ministry

1 = 1,000

2 = 10,000

Power of Agreement in Prayer