

ICC Church Prayer Guide July 19 - 25, 2010

Do you want to experience the power of the Holy Spirit in your life? James 4:3 says "When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures." Do you want to experience more of the Holy Spirit for your own benefit? If so, we are no different than Simon the magician, who tried to buy the Holy Spirit's power from the apostles. Peter's response was strong when he said "May your money perish with you, because you thought you could buy the gift of God with money!" As we pray this week, let's take time to ask ourselves why we want the Holy Spirit to be active in our lives. Do we want power? Our own purposes? To experience all God has for us? Or because we love the church and desire to be better servants to our brothers and sisters in Christ? As we pray this week, prayerfully consider these things and make sure your motives are pure. Then ask God, and he will give you immeasurably more than we can imagine.

Monday: Philippians 1:23-25

On a scale of one to ten, how much do you love the church? Do you ever look around the church on a Sunday morning and think to yourself, "I love these people so much; I pray God empowers me in some way to encourage these people toward a deeper walk with Him?" If God cares enough about His church to give you this Spirit-empowered ability, shouldn't you care enough about the church to use that gift for the same purpose? Pray today that our purpose and love for the church would be pure and intense like Paul's. Pray for that our desire for more of the Holy Spirit in our lives would be driven by our desire to serve others ... to encourage and lift up our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Tuesday: 1 Corinthians 14:23-33

The Holy Spirit works to glorify Christ (John 16:14), yet so many who emphasize the Holy Spirit seem to draw attention to themselves. This was true in the Corinthian church. A sure sign of the Holy Spirit's working is that Christ is magnified, not people. At Pentecost, people didn't say, "Look, Peter is amazing! He learned a new language in seconds!" When the Holy Spirit moves, God is the one praised. Pray today that God would empower us so radically that we would get no glory. As Paul said in 1 Cor. 14:12, "Since you are eager to have spiritual gifts, try to excel in gifts that build up the church."

Wednesday: Matthew 4:5-7

It is truly amazing when a miracle takes place ... when you experience something that couldn't happen by natural means. But we can easily pursue miracles more than we pursue God. After experiencing the power of the Holy Spirit in a worship service, don't we often say to God, "Do it again!" We all love to witness miracles, but if we make miracles the focus of our energy and pursuit, we ignore the priorities God tells us to pursue and we impose our own desires upon God. God does miracles when He sees fit and for His own purposes. As we pray today, ask Him to supernaturally enable you to love Him and love others. Trust Him to display miracles for His glory, in His time and in His way.

Thursday: Matthew 4:1

Most of us, while we say we want to be led by the Spirit, are actually afraid of this reality. What would it mean to be led by the Spirit? What if He asked you to give up something you were not ready to give up? What if He led you to go somewhere you don't want to go? What if He tells you to change jobs? To move? Are you willing to surrender to Him, no matter where He takes you? Sometimes there are equally good options that God lets us choose between. But sometimes He calls us to do a particular thing, and we have a choice to obey or not. The truly startling thing is that by not submitting and totally trusting the Holy Spirit, I am not submitting to or trusting God. This is no small matter! As you pray today, reflect on any fears or areas of your life that you are not ready to give to God. Ask Him to help you fully submit these things to Him ... and submit to His will and calling on your life. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you in your desire to be led by Him.

Friday: 1 Corinthians 12:1-31

Do you feel you were called here? To Fort Collins? To Immanuel Community Church? Maybe you were, but let's consider this further. How would you be missed if you left this place? Basically, what difference does your presence here make? We know from this scripture that we each have a role to play in the body of Christ, given to us by the Holy Spirit when we become believers. What would our church look like if everyone was as committed as you are? If everyone gave and served and prayed exactly like you, would the church be healthy and empowered, or weak and listless? As you pray today, acknowledge before God that *you* have been given a manifestation of the Spirit and that your church, the worldwide body of Christ, and our world are crippled without your involvement. Believe that you are a vital member, and ask the Holy Spirit to enable you to carry out your function. If you truly believe that you exist not for your own pleasure but to help people know the love of Jesus and to come fully alive in Him, then that will shape how you live your life in the place where you are.

Saturday: 1 Corinthians 13:12-18

When we are led by the Holy Spirit, He helps us become more holy ... more like Jesus. This is a lifelong journey of putting our flesh to death and choosing to walk in the Spirit. He also leads us to become more like Christ in His love. In 1 Cor. 12:31, after talking about the gifts of the Spirit, Paul writes, "And now I will show you the most excellent way." He's telling us what is really important ... what will change the world. As we pray today, pray that the Holy Spirit would fill us with God's love. Pray that we would show the love of Christ to everyone we meet, and in every circumstance. Pray that we would grow in Christ's love every day.

Sunday: Ephesians 3:16-19

Praise God today for His goodness and mercy, and for sending the Holy Spirit to guide us. We are most alive when we are loving and actively giving of ourselves because we were made to do these things. Pray that we would know this love that surpasses knowledge – the mystery of this great love – by the strengthening power of the Holy Spirit.