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Mighty Prevailing Prayer: Experiencing the Power of Answered Prayer

19. The Dynamic of the Spirit, Part 1

This chapter argues that every other dynamic of prevailing prayer depends on the Holy Spirit. Real prayer is born of the Spirit, prayed in the Spirit, and made effective by the Spirit. The strength of your prayer life tracks exactly with how fully the Spirit fills and works within you.

Key takeaways

- Prayer is God's own work in you, not a task done in your natural strength — you are a fellow-worker with the Spirit.
- Your prayer power rises and falls with the Spirit's work in you; prayerlessness signals a Spirit indwelling you only minimally.
- Only the Spirit-filled repeatedly prevail in prayer — being filled with the Spirit is 'the only secret of a real prayer life.'
- Living after Pentecost, we have far greater access to the Spirit's power than the Old Testament saints, but we leave it undiscovered.
- The church leans on wisdom, method, and busyness to near spiritual bankruptcy instead of praying in the Spirit's power.

- The Spirit helps concretely: He fills you, makes you spiritually healthy, draws you to pray at strategic moments, and ushers you into God's presence.
- When the Spirit prompts you to pray, obey at once — someone's crisis may hang on it.

Passages worth keeping

“It is a work of God, of God the Holy Ghost, a work of His in you and by you, and in which you must be fellow-workers with Him — but His work notwithstanding.”

Trench's frame for the whole chapter: prayer is the Spirit's work, not human effort.

“The extent of the abiding is the exact measure of the power in prayer.”

Murray ties prayer's strength directly to abiding in Christ's Spirit.

How it connects

The chapter reads Zechariah 4:6 alongside Jesus' promise that faith moves mountains (Zech. 4:7), suggesting mountain-moving prayer is Spirit-powered, not willpower.

Scripture referenced

- **Zech. 4:6** -- 'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit' — the chapter's core principle for prayer.
- **Rom. 8:26** -- The Spirit helps us in our weakness in prayer.

- **Zech. 12:10** -- The Spirit of grace and supplication — 'grace for supplication.'
- **Rom. 8:15** -- The Spirit of sonship enabling us to cry 'Abba, Father,' making prayer acceptable.
- **John 14:16** -- Christ sends another Helper-Counselor to enable our praying.
- **Heb. 4:16** -- Through the Spirit we approach the throne of grace with confidence.