

A prayer guide in the series: The Way to the Kingdom

The Way to the Holy Spirit

By: Steve Seamands

In his classic book, "The Way to Pentecost," originally published in 1932, Samuel Chadwick, a leader in the British Methodist Church, poignantly describes, "The Church without the Spirit." As we embark upon this new adventure called the Global Methodist Church, how crucial it is for us to soberly reflect upon his words:

The presence of the Spirit is vital and central to the work of the Church. Nothing else avails. Apart from [the Spirit], wisdom becomes folly, and strength weakness. ... Scholarship is blind to spiritual truth till He reveals. Worship is idolatry till He inspires. Preaching is powerless if it be not a demonstration of [the Spirit's] power. Prayer is vain unless He energise. Human resources of learning and organisation, wealth and enthusiasm, reform and philanthropy, are worse than useless if there be no Holy Ghost in them.

The Church always fails at the point of self-confidence. When the Church is run on the same lines as a circus, there may be crowds, but there is no Shekinah. ... Education can civilise, but it is being born of the Spirit that saves. The energy of the flesh can run bazaars, organize amusements, and raise millions; but it is the presence of the Holy Spirit that makes a Temple of the Living God. The root-trouble of the present distress is that the Church has more faith in the world and the flesh than in the Holy Ghost, and things will get no better till we get back to His realized presence and power.

In sharp contrast to what Chadwick describes, our prayer this month is that every local Global Methodist Church become a "Church in the Power of the Spirit," like the one Luke so wonderfully describes in the first two chapters of "Acts."

A Suggested Pattern of Prayer

As you pray through the following prayer points, invite the presence of the Lord into your time of prayer. Each day's prompt has a Scripture reference for you to pray through. As you pray allow time also to listen to what the Holy Spirit is saying to you. When you have prayed through the Scripture and prayer point, you may be led to add your own prayers. Pray and consider what action steps you might take in response to the Lord's leading. Repeat this prayer pattern weekly for the month.

Prayer Points:

Sunday: Pray that through the power of the Holy Spirit our churches would be bold and faithful in witnessing for Christ locally, nationally, and globally. (Acts 1:8)

Monday: Pray that every local GM Church would truly experience a “Day of Pentecost” of Wind, Fire, Speaking in other languages, where those who are gathered together are “filled with the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 2:1-4)

Tuesday: Pray that, according to Joel’s prophecy, the Holy Spirit would be poured out on us so that our sons and daughters will prophesy, our young see visions and our old dream dreams. (Acts 2: 17-18)

Wednesday: Pray that the Holy Spirit will anoint us all, clergy and laity alike, as he did Peter, to proclaim Christ with such clarity, conviction and boldness that those who hear will be “cut to the heart” and cry out “What shall we do?” (Acts 2:32-37)

Thursday: Pray that when we gather as congregations, classes, small groups, and bands, the Holy Spirit would be present and empower us as we devote ourselves to apostolic teaching, fellowship with one another, sharing in the Lord’s Supper, and corporate prayer. (Acts 2:42)

Friday: Pray that the Holy Spirit will fill us with expectation and awe, and will increase signs and wonders among us, coupled with generous, extraordinary giving to those in need. (Acts 2:43-45)

Saturday: Pray that the Holy Spirit will inhabit our praise and worship, so that as joy, gladness and sincerity flow from our hearts, people will experience God’s presence and salvation through Christ. (Acts 2:46-47)

*And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit.
(Acts 2:4)*

Dr. Stephen Seamands is Emeritus Professor of Christian Doctrine at Asbury Theological Seminary. Having taught full- time at the seminary for 35 years, he retired in 2018, but continues to serve as an affiliate professor teaching one course each semester. He also continues to be involved with seminary students and Christian leaders in coaching, spiritual direction, and healing prayer.

Dr. Seamands is the author of seven books including Ministry in the Image of God and The Unseen Real. He and his wife, Carol, have been happily married for fifty-three years. They have four adult children and eight grandchildren.

~~~~~

This month's guide concludes the 18-edition series: The Way to the Kingdom. Special thanks to Rev. Dr. Carolyn Moore who initiated the series inspired by John Wesley's original Standard Sermons. Thanks also to the many writers of the guides over the last 18 months for their excellent work and contributions. And last but not least, many thanks to the team of contributing editors who kept the vision on task: Mrs. Carol Perry, Rev. Russ Patton, and Rev. Dr. Doug Fox.

In Christ,

Pastor Laura Ballinger, Prayer Guide Project Team Leader