

Hopewell ARP Midweek Sermon
Wednesday, September 20, 2023

Romans 8:26–27

26 Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. 27 Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

Praying By and With the Spirit

Main idea: The Spirit, who helps us pray in a godly manner, also prays for us as God Himself.

Introduction: Help! We are still so groan-worthy that we need help even to groan properly.

1. God Who helps us in our weakness

- a. Help in general weakness (cf. v9–14)
- b. Help in groaning eagerly
- c. Help to persevere in groaning

2. God Who prays for us

- a. There is a “we ourselves” who groan (cf. v23), but now “the Spirit Himself” makes intercession for us.
- b. The groanings are unspeakable not because they are felt too deeply by man, but because they are the intention and pleasure of God.

3. God Who agrees within Himself for our good

- a. God Who searches our hearts
- b. God Who knows His own “heart”
- c. When God prays, God alone is equipped to “hear” ... the union of the substance is glorified in the fellowship of the Persons— and all to our advantage.

Conclusion: What a gift there is in groaning prayer! It brings you not only into the fellowship of dependence upon the Spirit and participation in God’s work, but even joining the holy fellowship of God’s own agreement within Himself.

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Romans 8 verse 26, through 27. These are god's words. Likewise the spirit also helps in our weakness. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought But the spurred himself makes intercession for us. With groanings, which cannot be uttered. Now, he who searches the hearts.

Knows what the mind of the spirit is. Because he makes intercession for the same. According to the will of god. Oh man. Thus farther reading of god's inspired and aren't worth. Praise god. The spirit. Helps in our weaknesses. Our weaknesses, our many. We have weaknesses that come just from being finite, just from being creatures.

We have weaknesses from being the children of Adam. And although we have come into, If you are a believer, you have come into the lord Jesus as the last Adam. The atom of the final and forever creation. Not just a second atom, as if there were going to be many.

But the atom. As Adam ought to have been in more if you have come into Jesus, the last Adam. You are no longer in your sin, but your sin remains in you. We are not in the flesh, we're in the spirit. But that sin that dwells in us, that remaining fleshliness.

Is also a cause of weakness. And the spirit helps us then in our weaknesses, our infirmities. Our diseases, we are plagued. By our limitations, we are plagued. By her sinfulness. And one of the Wonderful. Um, benefits of the gospel of the lord, Jesus Christ. Knowing That not only is.

It by his grace that we are saved through faith and counted righteous. But also that his grace is sufficient for us. And his strength is made perfect in our weakness. Therefore, Uh, we can even boast in our weaknesses our infirmities, like our being described here Knowing then that this isn't just sinful weakness because we don't boast in our sinfulness.

It's finite weakness. If we are in Christ by faith and know his grace, then Um, for both forgiveness and strength. Uh, we are free to be completely open with God to admit before God, to admit before ourselves. Even not to try and paint ourselves up any better than we are before others.

To admit. Our weakness and our infirmity. And not only that, then But we know that precisely at every point, in which we are weak. In which we are plagued, whether by our inability or Our remaining sinfulness. The spirit is there to help us? Here's the Paraclete. He is the one who is called alongside us.

The lord Jesus was so consistent in attending to the disciples. Everything that they actually needed. That. The time on the boat. When it seemed like the storm was out of control and he was with them, they Um, They were greatly Alarmed. But he had been with them attending to them.

And they could oh no. Almost as a matter of fact that Um, Well, they could have known as a matter of fact. But if they were thinking clearly, They would have known as a matter of fact that anything they genuinely needed. Christ, would make sure. That they had. Like many of us who have had good fathers.

Have thought and felt about them, not that they were omnipotent but that We trusted that God was helping them and that they were always looking out for our needs. Well, Jesus was called alongside them for some three years and he promised another one who would be called alongside them and other Peric.

Leaped And so the spirit Helps us in our weaknesses. And perhaps you have had. This. Experience. That. One of the places that you feel the weakest is when you come to pray. Perhaps it is a

A season for you in which Um, In which your soul is. Cold and heart and dalded. You're just unable to. Uh, to lift your thoughts, your desires your longings up. Before the lord. Perhaps. It's not just a season. Perhaps you have never made a point. Of prayer. You have never made a point of learning of God from his work so that you know who with whom it is that you that you interact in prayer that you would know something of God And something of what he says and something of what he promises, something of what is good to desire, something of what is bad to ask to be delivered of And so, perhaps, By lack of study, you By your own fault.

Don't have much to pray about. And by lack of exercise, then Don't have much skill. Than praying. And the fact of the matter is, That we all feel that. Even those who have studied much and who have prayed much, We still are those about him. Verse 26 says, we do not know what we should pray for.

As we ought. Notice that the apostle Paul. Who was accustomed? To wrestling with the lord and prayer. Includes himself in this group in verse 26. And so, Uh, not one of us, there's exclude ourselves from this group. Who do not know what to pray for as we ought and there's two parts there.

There's the what. And there's the how Often we come before the lord, and And we don't know what to pray for and a particular situation and even in times when he has given us some insight into his word and some insight into our circumstances, and perhaps we've been prepared, We've, we've Prepped.

Our hearts in the study of his word, the reading and soft hearted consideration, meditation upon, His word, we know some of the what but even when we get to the the what to pray for, we don't know the how

When? Women. Finite creatures.

Before, or Encounter. Great things. They feel they're smallness. And so there's little that will make you feel smaller quicker than Approaching the living god. If you know, it of whom with whom it is, That you have to do. And so we rejoice that. This is the particular weakness. That the spirit.

Helps us in or that that's helping ministry of this spirit. This is the particular weakness. That brings it up in the course of The apostles writing. The spirit helps us in our weaknesses. We do not know what We should pray for. As we ought. Indeed. He helps us. In everything we've seen that earlier.

If the, if you have christ, Or if you are, christ's if you belong to christ verse 9, then you do have the spirit and he dwells in you. If you have the spirit and he dwells with you, Then the spirit. Sorry dwells in you than the spiritude dwells in.

You is life. Verse 10. And he gives life even to Our mortal bodies, meaning that these bodies that are the way that they are, because They are associated with this death. In the marvel. The wonder, the miracle of god's spirit's dwelling in us. We are actually able to employ These mortal bodies.

In a way that belongs to life in service of god. If we live by the spirit. Then we will put to death, the deeds of the body verse 13. And we will live And so we the sons of god are led by the spirit of god verse. 14. He helps us in all of our weakness.

But he helps us especially Because if something that many of us were probably thinking, when we came to the conclusion of our consideration of verses 23 through 25 last week, My groaning. My longing. As not as eager as it ought to be. And it is not as persevering. As it ought to be.

The apostle said it, as a matter of fact, In verse 25, if we hope for what we do, not see, we eagerly wait for it with Perseverance. Just how eager are we? For the consummation of all things. Just how eager are we for the redemption of our body and the resurrection?

We're eager for a lot of intermediate things. Even to the point that we so look forward to them and we have invested ourselves in them as silly as that sounds. When we think about god, investing christ, and investing is spirit. And then we want the The, the The last day and the glory of jesus and his glorified people who are who are conformed to him body and soul to be, put off so that we can get something out of our investment.

But that is sort of the way that we thank And so we are not eager enough. We do not wait eagerly enough. We have as one of the things that plags us a lack of eagerness. But the spirit helps us. The eagerness that we do have has been given to us by god's

holy spirit, which means, That we are not stuck with the amount of eagerness that we currently have.

Because the spirit helps us in our weakness. And as you cry out to god, lord, i i am weak. I am so worldly, and fleshly and even when it comes to things that by your grace, i have desired to do for you. Even that has by my own weakness been turned into.

The means by which i am not. So eager for the last day as i should be. And so, he helps us with our eagerness. But eagerness, as we thought a little bit at the end of Uh, last week's portion. Eagerness gets tiring. Eagerness gets old. We grow weary and well doing which the bible commands us not to do.

And so, Our eagerness slacks off. It declines diminishes. And so verse 25 said, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance. And it's the spirit, then. Isn't isn't it? Who gives us perseverance? So, the spirit is got He is god who helps us in all of our weaknesses? He is.

God, who helps us? To groan eagerly. Um, Not. Uh, dismayed. Not. Suppressed. Not self-pitying. But eager. And he is god, the spirit is god, who helps us? Persevere in this groaning. Well, not only does he help us then in our own praying and it is We are ourselves who grown in verse 23 with eagerness and patience.

Or eagerness and perseverance, endurance, verse 25. And so this, right, groaning and this eagerness, and this person of hearing comes from the holy spirit. And so we pray in that way. But the spirit is also god who prays for us. Notice the similar language. Then in verse 26, The spirit himself makes intercession.

For us. With groanings, which cannot be uttered. And so just as there was a creation that groans In verse 22. And even as we ourselves grown verse 23, The spirit himself makes intercession with groaning. And so, it's similar. You remember when we're talking about how The spirit makes us call god abba, father.

And even as we are calling god, our father, the spirit is confirming. He's adding his own testimonies saying, yes, they are children of god, Well, in a similar way as the spirit makes us to groan to long for all of god's elect to be, brought to faith in christ as a spirit, makes us to long for all of the sin of god's elect to be put away forever.

So that they are conformed every last one to to jesus in righteous character and righteous conduct not just counted righteous Even as the Even as the spirit. Makes us to desire that the resurrection would come. And that christ would be the firstborn among many brethren who are glorified, even in body.

So, the spirit himself is adding his own intercession, his own praying, so he makes us to pray. He makes us to groan and then he too. Is interceding. With groanings that cannot be uttered. Now. I used to think that this meant, That if i was really, really praying. And i

would pray in a way that didn't use words that was this kind of Extension of the soul towards god.

And certainly there is that groaning sort of prayer that is beyond our ability. To verbalize the sort of prayer of Of a hannah so absorbed and given to prayer that the mistaken. Mistaken priest thinks. She, she must be drunk. And many of us have been Uh, the stupified and dumbfounded.

Before God. And In the expression of our soul. But that's not what's being described here. The spirit himself. Makes intercession for us with Uh, unspeakable groanings. Because they are the groanings of god. They are the desire and intention of god, the holy spirit. That's why verse 27 has to follow up.

It's not just that that what the spirit prays for us, Is a Is a mirror of a human desire and human longing that we should have had. But we we didn't have, because We are foolish or we're sinful. And, and it's deeper than we would be able to express in our own words.

But it's groaning. As it were of god himself, it is the hope as it were. Then which god has saved us that which he is intended to do. That which he is purposed to do that, which he desires. Now, god doesn't have emotions. You understand? He doesn't change. He's not controlled.

By them, we we or anything in creation is unable. To affect god. But he speaks of himself that way about what he intends and what he desires what he is planned. What he is going to do. In a way that has its reflection in us, just like god doesn't have Arms or hands, but we say, he extends his arm and he works by his mighty hand, God doesn't have eyes.

Uh, but we say his eye is upon us. And so, also the scripture doesn't just use anthropo morphisms. Uh, things that belong to our shape, but God has no shape. But the scripture uses, what's called anthropopathisms. Because god has given us emotions. That should reflect god's own unchanging unchangeable relation to the changing world.

And so he has always properly rightly perfectly oriented to everything that happens. But we're not infinite in our being. And we, we We are constantly being affected and changed by things that happen and there's a right way for us to feel. About everything. And so the spirit makes intercession for us.

According to his own purposes, his own intentions, his own desires. His own pleasure. And so the spirit is, god, who helps us in our weakness? And the spirit is god, who pray is for us? As marvelous now, because Two persons of the godhead are praying for us. Just as Just as we were quoting from galatians 4 a little bit ago.

That in the fullness of time, god sent his son. And then, because we are children. God sent the spirit of his son into our hearts and so two persons of the godhead have been sent for us. So also two persons of the godhead make intercession. For us. As we are

going to hear in just a few verses time verse 34, that christ who died and rose and sits at the right hand of god.

What does he doing there? Just what hebrews says. He always lives to make intercession for us. And so jesus, the son, is praying for us. Isn't that marvelous? Dear believer, dear congregation. The lord jesus prays for you. Every once in a while. The lord will bring one of you to mind.

Some way, and I'll shoot text message or an email. Yeah, god helping me i would Um, Take the time to write my hand. But you know, i'm praying for you. That's encouraging to know that your pastor is praying for you. For your husband or your wife, your parents, or your children.

Or how much more encouraging jesus prays for you. But he's not the only person of the godhead praying for you. The spirit is praying for you. What strange and biblically illiterate people, they must be Who think that the holy spirit is just a power. Or a force. Powers. Don't make intercession.

Forces. Don't pray. God, the holy spirit. Praise for you. So, here he is. Always pouring out the love of god into your hearts. Like we heard in chapter 5 and verse 5. And always pouring out prayer as it were making. Intercession for you. Indeed, the spirit, then is not just God who helps us in our weakness and god, who prays for us?

But he is god who agrees within himself for our good in verse 27. Now, he who searches the hearts. Knows what the mind of the spirit is. This is wonderful. Sometimes. It is a great comfort to use. I trust that. You may pray even. Without speaking words allowed, sometimes we are unable to speak words allowed.

Sometimes we're in situations where it's inappropriate. Sometimes we're speaking to someone. Uh, words or maybe even preaching depending on who you are. And while you preach your praying or while you talk to your family member or your friend or your child, You're praying. That's wonderful. God searches the heart.

He is able to hear the cry of our heart. Even when our mounds, our otherwise busy, How great god is? Who knows all things? Again. What foolishness to to pray to any mere creature? Who's not omniscient and not omnipresent. Can't hear you doesn't know your isn't able to search your heart.

We can't even search our own arts. God. God searches the hearts. And he can hear us. But who is big enough? To hear. The groaning. Of god, the holy spirit. Who is able to? Receive. And understand and respond to? The mind of god, the holy spirit. Well god, of course, father, son and holy spirit as Just one mind.

Only god has big enough to hear the prayers of god. And so he who searches the hearts knows what the mind and the spirit is Because he that is the spirit makes

intercession for the saints according to, and it's not just according to the will of god. You can see that if you're looking at a A.

A copy of the nuking james. Uh, you'll see that the will of there is Um, in italics, it's been Has been supplied. He intercedes according to The. The unity of the godhead. That, that which God father, son and holy spirit, has purposed and desired. Is the expression and desire of the spirit.

And so, there's this fellowship. Within the triune god concerning us.

And so in in that great mystery that is the interaction between the father and the son and the spirit. And that fellowship within the godhead. We? And what we ought to be groaning for and what will happen to us. When the groanings are answered.

There's part of that fellowship. When god prays got alone. Is equipped to hear, and The union of the substance of the godhead. Is glorified in the fellowship. Of the person's. As he seeks and desires and pursues. Our advantage.

If the spirit hadn't told us this in these verses, It would be blasphemy. To think. So highly of ourselves so much of ourselves. That we would say that. God within himself a grieves. To do us, good. You see? I grew up loving. Verse 28. One of those early ones that you memorize, right?

We know that all things work together for good. For those who love God and they're cold, according to his purpose. But verse 28 is an expression in time. A result in time. Of something that comes out. Of. The eternal. God. In verse 27. Where the spirit is making intercession for us.

And god. Knows the mind of the spirit. Because the spirit is making that intercession according To his divinity.

What a gift there is then. What a gift there is then in this groaning prayer. This prayer that longs, especially for Those first three petitions. In the lord's prayer. How to be your name? The kingdom calm, you will be done on earth. As it is in heaven. Grant. That the day of the redemption of our bodies would come.

That adoption. The glorious liberation freedom. Of the children of god in which the whole creation. Will participate. As we pray for those things. The spirit helps us. The spirit prays for us. And the triune god. Has fellowship within himself. Concerning us. And so, groaning prayer does not just bring us into That fellowship of dependence upon the spirit, which was sweet.

And that dependence of participation. In god's work. As he has ordained to do things in response to his children's prayer, and that is a high privilege. But groaning prayer. Brings us even. Into joining the holy fellowship of god's own agreement. Within himself. It is. Part of the answer to the lord jesus's prayer.

And John 17. When he prays that. We would be in him and he and us and that we would be agreed and united with one another And brought into that fellowship of purpose and desire. Remember what he was praying for what he was desiring. That those who are his Would be with him.

Where he is? To see his glory. And when you, and I pray, Groaning prayer. And in the The sense of the word that we've been hearing these last three weeks. Jesus's prayer. John 17 is being answered. Does that not make you? Desire. To grow and praying with eager groaning.

And persevering groaning. That Jesus's prayer. Jesus's desire would be answered as you groan, more. With more eagerness and more perseverance. Do you not love him and desire? That he would get all that. Which he desires all that, which he has earned. By his life for you and his death for you.

And so let us ask God. For the help of his spirit. They trust that we have some little ones. Among us, who are Studying this the this week. I forget what the Question is. How can you get God's holy spirit? Or Uh, something like that. How can you get the help of God's?

Holy spirit. The answer is that. God has told us. That we must pray to him. For his holy spirit. And he is that good. Father who knows how to give good gifts. And what better gift could there be?