

# The Work of the Holy Spirit in Prayer

Wednesday Study in Theology  
Oceanside United Reformed Church

## November 4—An Exposition of Romans 8:26

### I. A Definition of Prayer

“Prayer at present I take to be a *gift, ability, or spiritual faculty of exercising faith, love, reverence, fear, delight, and other graces, in a way of vocal requests, supplications, and praises unto God*” (Works 4, 271).

Compare Westminster Larger Catechism, Q&A 178:

Q. What is prayer?

A. Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God, in the name of Christ, by the help of his Spirit; with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of his mercies.

### II. Romans 8:26

Compare Westminster Larger Catechism, Q&A 182

Q. How doth the Spirit help us to pray?

A. We not knowing what to pray for as we ought, the Spirit helpeth our infirmities, by enabling us to understand both for whom, and what, and how prayer is to be made; and by working and quickening in our hearts (although not in all persons, nor at all times, in the same measure) those apprehensions, affections, and graces which are requisite for the right performance of that duty.

### III. Threefold Defect in Us

A. We Do Not Know Our Own Wants

1. Outward Wants

2. Internal Wants

3. Spiritual Wants

B. We Do Not Know the Promises of God

C. We Do Not Know the End of Prayer