



How The Holy
Spirit Rescues
Our Prayers



Romans 8:26-27

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

Romans 8:26

but the Spirit himself intercedes for us
with ***groanings*** too deep for words

Romans 8:22-23

For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. **23** And not only the creation, but we ourselves... groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

Creation groaning -

Nature itself is eagerly longing for the day of universal transformation.

We ourselves groaning-

Believers are longing for the day of universal transformation.

It is truly amazing that, having written of the groaning creation and of the groaning church, Paul should now write of the groaning Spirit. The Spirit intercedes for us in unspoken groanings. That is, his intercession is accompanied by them and expressed in them. He identifies with our groans, with the pain of the world and the church, and shares in the longing for the final freedom of both. We and he groan together.

– John Stott



Romans 8:26a

For we do not know what to pray for as
we ought...

James 4:3

You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.

Mark 10:35-38

And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came up to him and said to him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." And he said to them, "What do you want me to do for you?" And they said to him, "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory." Jesus said to them, "***You do not know what you are asking.*** Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?"

This inability to know what to pray for cannot be overcome in this life, for it is part of “our weakness.” Therefore, Paul does not command us to eradicate this ignorance by diligent searching for God’s will or by special revelation. Instead, Paul points us to the Spirit of God, who overcomes this weakness by his own intercession.

– Douglas Moo



Romans 8:26b

but the Spirit himself *intercedes* for us
with groanings too deep for words.

Intercedes-

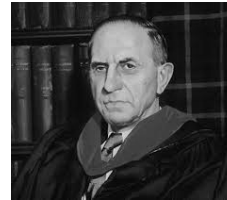
Stands in the gap
between us and
the Father and
represents our
case.

Hebrews 9:24

For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now ***to appear in the presence of God on our behalf.***

The children of God have two divine intercessors. Christ is their intercessor in the court of heaven while the Holy Spirit is their intercessor in the theater of their own hearts.

– John Murray



Romans 8:27

And he who searches hearts knows what is
the mind of the Spirit...

Romans 8:27

because the Spirit intercedes for the saints
according to the will of God.

God is so gracious and so sovereign, that He makes groans without words to be understood and to prevail by the work of the Holy Spirit. Even when through the pressures of life, and the accompanying spiritual darkness, we grow helplessly and inarticulately in prayer, God still hears. For confused or even mistaken as we may be, He discerns the voice of the Spirit in our prayers, and He is not confused, even if we are.

– J. Ligon Duncan

