It’s week 8 of our weekly prompts on Prayer, and this week we find out where all this prayer is leading … 😲

But first, were you amongst the 25 of us who went to our Prayer Evening at Whirlow last Friday?  No?  You missed a very special evening then .  Exploring God through silence, using various stimuli (God’s spoken word, images, icons – even Play-Doh!) created a ‘holy stillness’ in which God could work amongst us.  We must do this more often!

**How's it going?**

Getting serious about prayer: hmm, I wasn’t joking when I said it was tough, was I!  Meaning business with God in prayer is hard, but the rewards can be amazing!  So don’t say to yourself “Nah, that’s not for me”.  It’s true that you don’t have it within you to develop a disciplined prayer life, but God has given you his Holy Spirit just for that purpose!  **“Those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.”**  **Romans 8:5**  So, keep on asking God for the desire to make prayer more central in your life.  You can be sure it will happen – and you’ll want it!

**Let's move on**

**“Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.”**

**James 2:17**

In previous weeks we’ve looked at the importance of prayer being relationship with God.  Not speaking at him but drawing close to him, discovering how awesome he is and listening eagerly to what he is saying to us.  That’s a great place to be - but it’s only part of the story!

As in the rest of life, a safe and solid relationship is the foundation on which so much can be built.  The encouragement, wisdom and inspiration offered by a partner or close friend will often prompt us to take steps we might not otherwise have the courage or desire to do.  It’s the same with God: he wants that close relationship with us because **he wants us to develop that “your kingdom come, your will be done” mindset which transforms our actions and positively impacts others**.  So prayer should always lead to action – by us as well as God!

This is where you might say: well, I can’t do much, but at least I can pray.  Yes, it’s true that we can all pray.  But it’s also true that we can all work!  (Well, if we can pick up the phone and give an encouraging word to someone, we can.  Remember that prayer should be a catalyst, not an excuse!).  **We are partners with God in his Creation; he designed it that we achieve things together with Him, to be part of the answer to our prayers**.  He doesn’t leave it all to us – but, in the same way, he doesn’t expect us to leave it all to him either!

So, in your praying be expectant to sense God’s prompting for you to act.  Be ready to capture those promptings as they arise.  When you’ve prayed reflect on what you’ve ‘heard’ and decide if/when/how you should act (if it’s a big step then you’ll probably want to discuss it with someone else first).  But try not to ‘lose the moment’ – God’s prompting is usually for now, not later!

Right, **here's this week's challenge:** ask yourself at some point each day “what action has God prompted me to take today?”  Don’t panic if you’ve not sensed anything: the important thing is to develop that attitude of prayer-inspired action.  You will soon find that those challenges to action come – and perhaps when you least expect it!

And, don’t pre-judge what those calls to action might be – there are infinite possibilities!  Perhaps you will be challenged to address an issue in your life, or in a relationship with someone.  Perhaps you will be inspired about how to resolve a problem in your work or at home.  Maybe you’ll receive a sense to take a new direction in life (career, location, whatever) – or even to begin or help with a work in the church.  On the other hand, it might just be that God puts the name of someone in your mind to visit or phone.  Whatever it is, get ready to listen – and to act!

God bless you as you seek Him this week.

**What else can I expect?**

Well, can you believe it, we’ve almost reached the end of our journey through this most wonderful Holy Habit of Prayer.  Next week I’ll be drawing together all the thoughts from our explorations of previous weeks, and **it would be really good if you could tell me how any of these have helped you find more purpose in your praying**.  Please do drop me a line this week if so.  Thank you!

*Please do pray for the Holy Habits Planning Group as we work through the Holy Habits programme, with our sole aim to help the church at Bents Green be better disciples of our Lord Jesus.*

*Produced by Martyn Read on behalf of the Bents Green Holy Habits Planning Group (Debs Barnett, Glenn Evans, Martyn Read, Graham Wassell, Daphne Wilkins, John Wilkins), and based on the* [*Holy Habits*](http://www.holyhabits.co.uk/) *discipleship material supplied by Sheffield Circuit.  You can find more information on the Circuit Holy Habits Programme* [*here*](http://www.sheffieldcircuit.org.uk/newsroom/holy-habits-an-adventure-in-christian-disciple.html) *(be warned: there’s some seriously challenging stuff in there!).*