

THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL INTERCEDE FOR YOU

On July 2, 1816, with 400 men, women, and children aboard, the French ship *Medusa* ran aground many miles off the west coast of Africa. Sensing their doom, some passengers sought salvation on the limited supply of lifeboats. 150 others, unable to find room in the life boat, sought salvation on a makeshift raft. After two weeks, unable to find land, only 15 of these 150 remained on the raft. Surrounded by the dead and the dying, and in the midst of dehydration and cannibalism, the remnant were excited with a glimmer of hope as they spied a small ship on the horizon.

There may be times in your life when you feel emotionally “shipwrecked” with no hope on the horizon. The apostle Paul agrees that life can become so discouraging and even full of despair that “*we do not know how to pray,*” (Romans 8:26). Family relationships become strained; marriage relationships seem only to get worse; and long-time friends desert you. In the midst of these difficulties, you have no one to turn to and no one who truly understands your situation.

Don’t despair! In these shipwreck-like situations, when “you do not know how to pray,” the good news is that your heavenly Father promises that “*the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words,*” (Romans 8:26).

Maybe you have not spoken to your heavenly Father for weeks, or even months. Maybe you don’t come from a Christian background and you don’t even know how to begin to speak to God in prayer. Don’t be discouraged when you feel you don’t know how to pray. Jesus’ own disciples said to their Master: “*Lord, teach us to pray...*” (Luke 11:1). Jesus responded by saying, “*When you pray, say: ‘Father, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, for we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation,’*” (Luke 11:2-4).

Because Jesus has given this prayer to you and all His followers, it is the most powerful prayer in the world. Pray the Lord’s Prayer several times a day. With Christ’s prayer as the perfect example, the Holy Spirit will continue to intercede for you “*with groanings too deep for words,*” (Romans 8:26). The Holy Spirit will then also enable you to add new prayers, always using Jesus and the psalmist as the pattern for God-pleasing prayers.