

GOD WILL HEAR OUR PRAYERS!

(Scripture: 1 John 5:13-15)

Introduction: we have heard so many sermons on prayer, but still there is so much more to learn! If we study Jesus' life on earth, he withdrew to pray alone. The only time He was praying collectively was when they ate together, or gathered in a synagogue, or an occasional outburst of thanksgiving! But if we read the book of Acts, we come across communal praying more often.

Which is the best method?
Should there be a balance between both?

It is an interesting study, perhaps we can have a discussion when we meet face to face! Last week, we came across faith in Jesus Christ, and we saw how faith turns into real fact because of the Spirit of Christ! Today, we will hear more about the eternal life, and prayer.

1 John 5:13.

13These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.

There is one witness I failed to bring to your attention, that is Apostle John himself, who may have written these passages! He wrote to them so that they may know that they have eternal life!

He that has the Spirit of Christ, has eternal life in them! This eternal life is now, and present, and they do not realize it. Also, John has put it in writing, so that people can read it, understand, and believe it for sure.

Believe means to trust and follow rest of our lives! These things are written to the believers to strengthen their faith, and for a purpose:

The Purpose is to let them know the good news that Jesus, the Son of God that Saves, and those who believe and receive him has the Spirit of Christ within them and that is the eternal life within them!

This eternal life is only for those who believe in the name of the Lord. To believe in the name means, believing in the person, His substance, essence, character, and the holiness. His name is Yashua, that means He saves! His name is Yah-weh which means, I am that I am. There is no one before Him, and there will be no one after Him.

John wrote this to the believers! Why? So that they may continue to believe. It is easy for us to believe for a while and then stop believing. John wants us to continue to believe this fact of eternal life, which has already begun!

1 John 5:14.

14This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.

This is such a comforting verse! Our God is not deaf. He can hear everything we say. Even if we sigh, He can interpret that sigh and know why we are sighing. Our God is not too far away from us. You don't have to look up anymore, and shout unto Him as though He is many billions of miles away from us. If we are indeed believers, He lives in our heart in the form of the Holy Spirit, and we can speak to Him softly, and request our petitions! He is our Friend now, and He does hear every word we speak. So He will be glad to answer every one of our prayers! Some of us doubt this part. They feel that they are not good enough, so God will not answer their prayers? No! God will answer our prayers if we have the Son of God in our heart! He will answer for the sake of His Son! If we are indeed washed by the blood of His Son, then we are declared righteous, and holy, and He will hear our prayers! Remember, Jesus has already washed away our sins, and we are provided imputed righteousness! (Not that we are righteous, but we have been declared righteous by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ!). So, we can boldly go before the throne of grace, and mercy of God, and offer our prayers of thanksgivings, and supplications! God will answer our prayers!

We can have confidence in God that He hears us! The word "confidence" in Greek is an interesting one! That word is "paresis" in Greek, which means freedom of speech! It is as you think, freedom to speak boldly in a democratic country! Later, it came to denote any kind of confidence. With God, we have the freedom of speech! He is always waiting to hear us eagerly! How eager we are to receive our packages at the front door? Likewise, God is waiting eagerly to receive our burdens. Just imagine, how eager we are to hug a child who comes to us and tells us about all her feelings! Likewise, God encourages us to come to Him, and gives us full liberty to say what we have to say in His presence!

But there is one important condition! We have to ask everything according to His will and purpose. If it is according to His will, it will be answered in His time. If not, the answer will be no! Three times, John mentions the conditions for our prayers to be heard in this epistle:

Obedience is a condition We receive whatever we want because we keep His commandments! (1 John 3:22)

Abiding in Christ is a condition. If we abide in Him, and His words abide in us, we will ask what we will, and it will be done for us! (John 15:7)

Praying in His name and praying through Christ (John 14:14) that is another condition.

The ultimate way to pray is that, Give me this for your sake, and in your name!
Praying must be in accordance with His will and purpose! That is another condition
The answer for prayer will be yes, or no, but if the answer is yes, sometimes we may have to wait for it a long time!

We saw the conditions and now let us look at how to pray in His will

So, what is His will?

It is His will for us to believe on the name of the Son of God. (1 John 5:13)

It is the will of God for us to be delivered from sin, death, and hades

It is the will of God for us to be His children!

It is the will of God that our daily needs are taken care of. It may be bountiful, or it may be just enough! He knows how much to give and when!

It is the will of God that we are protected and saved.

It is the will of God that we serve Him with gladness and with thanksgiving!

It is the will of God that we love one another.

It is the will of God that we proclaim His Son's name and plant His Kingdom of God on earth! (His church!)

The Lord's Prayer itself teaches us about prayer! Thy will be done in our lives, in our family, in our church, in our neighborhood, in our country, and on this whole earth!

1 John 5:15

15 And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him.

We can be guaranteed that God has heard our petitions. We do not have to repeat the same prayer again and again. If one person has prayed for something in a prayer meeting, God has already heard that prayer and He will answer in His time. But it will be processed in His time, according to His will and purpose. If we do not hear from Him, the answer is either "wait" or "no". Just praise Him continually.

Always pray according to His will and purpose! It is perfectly ok to ask anything you want, just like your children. Jesus asked what He wanted in His life. But He said, "Take this cup away, but not my will, your will be done". Learn to be assertive to get what you want in your life, at the same time, do not try to insist if what you want is against God's will.

Sometimes, God may grant that request, even though He does not want you to have it, and it can become a detrimental trap in your life!

Prodigal son story makes this point very clear. The father did not want the son to move to a faraway place for good, but still the son insisted. The father reluctantly gave away his share of wealth and sent him. The son did not know how to handle his wealth, and he squandered. He spent it all in pleasurable habits and came down to the level of eating pig's food. It is the baby Christians who will pray that I want this, I want that. A matured Christian will always pray that your will be done. Watchman Nee always prayed, **"I want nothing for myself, Lord! I want, your will be done in my life!** Let us learn to pray like that.

Some of us may point out the parable of Widow seeking judgement and say that we must pester God always about what we want. Yes, in a life and death situation, we must. Even then, we must pray, Lord not my will, but your will be done! When we genuinely accept God's will in our lives, we will have real peace, and our struggle with God will be over. Then we start speaking like Paul: **to live is for Christ, but to die is to gain!**

But again, some of us may point out the story of Jacob and say that he wrestled with God and prevailed? It is not a good thing to wrestle against God and prevail over Him. Jacob was afraid to meet Esau. He tried to win his brother's heart with lot of gifts. He was willing to give it all to Esau so that his life would be spared. Jacob did not get any sign from his brother saying that he would forgive him. God wanted Jacob to meet his brother boldly, but Jacob was so afraid, he wanted to run away. There was a strong wrestling match between the will of God and the will of man. Finally, the will of man prevailed! But then something happened to Jacob! God touched his thigh, and Jacob could not run or walk much! He would have been an easy prey for Esau, had he run from him! Now he had no other choice but to meet Esau face to face! Yes, Jacob prevailed over God, but ultimately God's will be carried out! Jonah is another story. When we fight against the will of God, we will suffer!

Conclusion:

Prayer is not asking God for what we want, rather, asking Him what He wants!

True prayer is not we talking to Him always, but it is God talking to us and we are to listen!

Prayer leads to decision and action. Prayer without action is nothing but empty cloud. When Prayer and action go hand in hand, that is the most beautiful prayer!

Prayer must be always according to His will and purpose, and not according to our will!

Know for sure that God hears your prayers and will answer. If you doubt that, you will not receive anything from Him.

Righteous man's prayer avails much! We are declared righteous because what the Son of God did for us. He shed His blood and redeemed us!

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