

THE PROMISE OF PRAYER

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John 16:19-33

1. Jesus was a man of prayer.

a. After a very busy and demanding day we find Jesus in prayer. Mark 1:35-39

In the early morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house, and went away to a secluded place, and was praying there. 36 Simon and his companions searched for Him; 37 they found Him, and said to Him, "Everyone is looking for You." 38 He said to them, "Let us go somewhere else to the towns nearby, so that I may preach there also; for that is what I came for." 39 And He went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee, preaching and casting out the demons.

NOTE: We often allow the demands and responsibilities of life to keep us from prayer. Also, we sometimes let others determine our activities and priorities. Jesus understood that His oneness with the Father was essential and that fulfilling the Father's will was the reason He came into the world.

b. Before choosing twelve of His followers to serve as Apostles Jesus spent the entire night in prayer. Luke 6:12-16

It was at this time that He went off to the mountain to pray, and He spent the whole night in prayer to God. 13 And when day came, He called His disciples to Him and chose twelve of them, whom He also named as apostles: 14 Simon, whom He also named Peter, and Andrew his brother; and James and John; and Philip and Bartholomew; 15 and Matthew and Thomas; James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon who was called the Zealot; 16 Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.

NOTE: Momentous decisions call for much prayer.

c. Just before His arrest Jesus prayed for His disciples and for all who would become His followers through them. John 17

d. He prepared Himself for the cross by agonizing before God in prayer.

e. While on the cross Jesus prayed for those who had put Him there.

2. The Lord's prayer life was such that it inspired His disciples to want to learn to pray like He did. Luke 11:1

"And it came about that while He was praying in a certain place, after He had finished, one of His disciples said to Him, 'Lord, teach us to pray just as John also taught His disciples (to pray).'"

3. Jesus responded by: Luke 11:2-13

a. Providing the disciples with a model prayer.

b. Encouraging them to persist in prayer.

c. Pointing out that God has their best interests at heart.

4. In these closing moments with His disciples prior to His arrest and crucifixion Jesus stressed again the importance of prayer.

I. The promise.

- A. "Truly, truly, I say to you, if you ask the Father for anything in My name, He will give it to you." 23
- B. Jesus had made this promise previously and established its conditions.
1. John 14:12-14
12 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I go to the Father. 13 **"Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.** 14 "If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it."
 2. John 15:7-8
7 **"If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you."**
 3. John 15:16
16 "You did not choose Me but I chose you, and **appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain**, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you."
- C. What does it mean to ask in Jesus' name?
1. When we go to the bank with a check we present the check in the name of the person who gave it to us.
 2. Suppose a wealthy person was to say to me, "John, I want to help fund the work of your church. Here is a checkbook for a special account I set up for your church's exclusive use. There is \$250,000 in the account and I have already signed all the checks. As needs arise just fill in the checks and present them in my name to the bank. All I ask is that you and your church pray prior to writing each check and that you use the money for the glory of God and to advance His kingdom."
 3. In a sense Jesus has given us a signed checkbook. Philippians 4:19
"And my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus."

II. The command.

- A. Until now you have asked for nothing in my name; ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be made full." 24
- B. After making the promise Jesus commanded His disciples to claim the promise by asking the Father in His name.
- C. One of the results would be fullness of joy.
- D. The problem is that we do not properly appropriate prayer (use it for its intended purpose). James 4:1-4
What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? 2 You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. **You do not have because you do not ask. 3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures.** 4 You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

III. The confidence.

- A. In John 16:26-27 Jesus alluded to why we can pray in His name with confidence.
1. You can pray directly to the Father in my name because the Father Himself loves you.
 2. He loves you because you love Me, and have believed that I came forth from the Father.
- B. Notice that this idea of praying with confidence is found in other places in the Bible.
1. Heb 4:14-16
14 Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. 15 For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. 16 **Therefore let us draw near with confidence** to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.
 2. 1 John 5:14-15
14 **This is the confidence which we have before Him**, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. 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.

APPLICATION

1. As we pray in Jesus' name:
 - a. The work of Christ will be accomplished, the kingdom of God will be advanced, and God will be glorified.
 - b. The plans and purposes of God will be realized in our individual lives.
 - c. Our real needs and the real needs of others will be met.
2. I have a devotional book at home, written by Charles Spurgeon, that is titled, "Faith's Checkbook."
3. Each day Spurgeon highlights a different promise, or heavenly check, that God has promised to honor.
4. We need to learn to draw on heaven's resources through prayer in Jesus' name.