

## *Assurance of Prayer*

*1 John 5:14-15*

If there is any area that most Christians fall short in, it would be in the area of prayer. Prayer is so difficult, I believe, because it is the reality being brought to light of our own inadequacy and lack of control in every aspect of life. Simply put, we have to ask for help because we cannot do everything on our own. Prayer is the act of humbling ourselves before God to ask a favor of him and that bruises our brittle egos. Contrary to belief, it isn't just the men, but ladies have egos to be bruised too. But the disciples found prayer so important that they asked for personal instruction on the matter,

***Luke 11:1*** *And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.*

Here the disciples acknowledged the fact that even though they had been with Jesus for over three years they still did not know how to pray effectively or consistently. We face the same problem today because most Christians do not know how to pray. The simple and scriptural reason for our lack of effectiveness in prayer is given by John; we don't pray according to HIS will but our own.

### **I. CONFIDENCE IN PRAYER**

Vs. 14a

(a) **It's a Present Concern**: The King James Bible says, "*And this is the confidence that we have...*" While the New King James says, "*Now this is the confidence that we have...*" This confidence in prayer is brought about by our salvation in its **present** condition.

1. Prayers are heard AND answered based upon our present spiritual condition. If you remember what we discussed in verse 13, we settled the fact that our eternal salvation is forever set on the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross.

a. However, our current spiritual condition is like the ebb and flow of the tides; in and out; high tide and low tide. That is why it is of VITAL importance that we seek to maintain a healthy and active communion between ourselves and the Trinity at all times. This way, our present condition will always seek to

please and serve HIS will and not our own. This allows our confidence to be properly placed in Him.

When once a saint puts his confidence in the election of God, no tribulation or affliction can ever touch that confidence. When we realize that there is no hope of deliverance in human wisdom, or in human rectitude, or in anything that we can do . . . this is the finest cure for spiritual degeneration or spiritual sulks.

Oswald Chambers (1874–1917)

1 John 3:21

## II. LIMITATIONS TO OUR PRAYER REQUESTS

Vs. 14b

(a) **Asking Condition**: Our requests must be according to His will (we run into trouble here). I will be painfully honest with y'all here; sometimes I have problems knowing the difference between MY will for me and HIS will for me; they're not always the same. So, in my prayer life as I attempt to pray and ask for His will to be done, there are some helpful scriptural guidelines that helps me to be more effective in understanding just whose will I am praying towards.

### 1. RULE OF THUMB #1: Pray like Jesus prayed

Luke 22:42 *Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.*

a. For us, this 'cup' can be "financial problems" or "relationship problems with my spouse, children, family, friends, church, etc". This 'cup' could be cancer or migraines or diabetes or hypertension or anxiety or eyesight. I always remember that Paul had his 'cup' too.

2 Corinthians 12:7-10 *...there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, {My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.} Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take*

*pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.*

2. RULE OF THUMB #2: We should go by the "model" prayer given by Jesus.

MATTHEW 6:5-14 (PRAY FOR OTHERS before I worry or pray for my own needs; MY will!)

(b) **Affirming Contrition**: When our burdens are heavy and praying is difficult, The Holy Spirit will do the praying for you. When OUR will becomes HIS will then the Holy Spirit affirms our contrition because we become honest with who we are and who God is.

Romans 8:26-27 *Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. 27 And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what [is] the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to [the will of] God.*

Psalms 51:17 *The sacrifices of God [are] a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.*

### III. RECEPTION OF PRAYER (He heareth us) Vs. 14c

(a) **Placement of Prayer**: There is a position of prayer. Most of us have heard the old saying, “*From my lips to God’s ear.*” That’s a good saying but a better saying is this, “*From my heart to God’s ears.*”

Psalms 10:17 *LORD, thou hast heard the desire of the humble: thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear:*

Psalms 66:18 *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear [me]:*

1. It is not the position of the body, but the heart. When I pray according to His will, then the words that we hear do escape from the lips but the words emanate from the right condition of the believer’s heart. As a matter of fact, it’s the abundance of the heart.

Luke 6:45 {A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.}

(b) **Persistence of Prayer**: Christians are notorious for giving up and giving in too easily. But this is not a fault that is new by any stretch of the imagination.

1. Jesus encouraged the Jews to be more persistent in their prayer life. So it is safe to say that the Jews were also notorious in leaving off prayer time and missing out on God's blessings.

Luke 11:5-13

2. Paul encouraged the Gentiles to be persistent in their prayer time too.

1 Thessalonians 5:17 *Pray without ceasing.*

(c) **Preciousness of Prayer**: Once the believer makes prayer a vital part of their life, that time of fellowship and communication and communion becomes very valuable to them.

Psalms 34:15, 17 *The eyes of the LORD [are] upon the righteous, and his ears [are open] unto their cry... 17 [The righteous] cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.*

#### **IV. PROMISE OF ANSWERED PRAYER**

Vs. 15

(a) **First Things First**: Verse 15 DOES NOT happen without verse 14; period. We are going to spend little time on verse 15 simply because its promises are null and void without following the instructions given in the previous verse.

1. I have said before that there is a HUGE difference in the believer whose God 'can' or whose God 'will' and that is all about confidence.

a. Can God do anything? (“I can be there...”)

Psalm 78:19 *Yea, they spake against God; they said, Can God furnish a table in the wilderness?*

b. Or is your God a God that will do all things?  
 (“I will be there”)

Psalm 23:5 *Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies:*

Philippians 4:19 *But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*