

## John Ch 14:13-31

“Heaven’s Help For Troubled Times”

There’s a plaque (perhaps you’ve seen it), it reads, “Why pray when you can worry?” and Though prayer is with out a doubt the most powerful and effective weapon in the Christian’s arsenal, it is simultaneously with out a doubt the most neglected aspect of the Christian life and experience. Now that’s not to say that Christians don’t pray, but it is to say that if you were to line up priorities beside percentages and the way that these things breakdown in the average Christians life, though prayer would be 1<sup>st</sup> on the list of priorities, I have little doubt that in most of our cases it would be last in percentage. Meaning that we don’t spend much time on our faces before God in relationship to the time we spend allotting to other things throughout the course of a given day. Maybe a few minutes in the morning, perhaps over meals, (of course we burn a quick prayer in the face of a dilemma) and then perhaps before we sack out at night, a total of which would be somewhere between 10-20 minutes a day (and I’m telling you that’s being gracious).

You’d be surprised the # of “believers” who don’t pray before they start their day, or over meals, or just try to tackle a situation on their own never really even thinking about including God in on the deal. and This isn’t to throw stones but by way of example, there’s 200 or so people that come to church here every given Sunday and our Monday evening men’s prayer consists on the average of 8-10 sometimes 12 guys. and Yet Jesus said, “...*without Me you can do nothing.*” John 15:5 Now I realize we all have lives to lead, and we don’t have to gather in groups to pray, but I think you understand what I’m saying. Now by way of comparison if we had a church BBQ, or said, “Let’s go see the Passion of Christ” 180 people sign up and more want to come but the theatre is out of tickets. Now understand what I’m saying, I don’t want to break out of the starting blocks here with both barrels blasting, though if the exhortation is relevant I pray you receive it, but I’m seeking to instill in your heart the absolute necessity and need to prioritize prayer in our lives.

It’s like the life-blood of the church, and you know, if you’re lacking iron in your blood you’ll be weak and anemic, and surely the church is at best weak and anemic today in the overall impact we’re having in the world, why? I suggest to you that no small part of that is due to the lack of prayer that accords with the scriptural protocol ascending before the throne via the church. The bible says, “...*if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.*” 2 Chron 7:14

You see, we’re quick to pray for what *we* want, but how much time do we really spend interceding on the behalf of the things that are on God’s heart, concerning ourselves with the things that He wants? and It’s no wonder that the enemy would seek to disarm the body of Christ in this way, because *it is* the most powerfully effective weapon we have in moving the very hand of God. Jesus said here in vs 12 (read).

Now last week we established the fact that what Jesus is not talking about here is that we'll do works that are somehow *more sensational* and will "wow the crowds" even more than He did. But that the work of Christ would be carried out in greater *magnitude* or in a manner that was much more *expansive*, and as to where Jesus' life was focused on a very fixed parameter, He would send His disciples (you and me included) into all the world.

But we noted 2 ways by which Jesus would equip His followers to do the works that He did. Preaching the gospel, reflecting the nuances and nature of the Father, expanding the Kingdom via seeing people come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

They were #1 The Power of Prayer, and #2 The Person of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Vs 13-14.

Now what's He talking about here? Prayer, and the power therein, notice the word "whatever" in vs 13 and "anything" in vs 14. That's a scope that is so broad, and so limitless, that we can't even wrap our ability to comprehend around it. and We spoke a bit about this Wednesday evening, remember this vs regarding the ability of the God you serve? "*Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,*" Eph 3:20 Which speaks to us of course of the person of the Holy Spirit moving in your life as Jesus speaks of here, along with prayer.

But this is the scope, I told you last time that the scope, the condition, the grounds, the certainty, and the objective of prayer are all listed for us right here in vs 13. Of course the scope we just spoke of, "Whatever." What's the condition, "You ask," you have to ask. James said that so often it's that simple, "...*you do not have because you do not ask.*" James 4:2 Which takes us back to the person who's just trying to tackle everything on their own, to proud to pray and seek God's help. Or feels perhaps it's to trivial to bother God over, but oh what peace we often forfeit, oh what needless pain we bear, all because we do not carry *everything* to God in prayer. Or to say that another way, "*Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*" Phil 4:6-7 So we have to ask, that's the condition.

#3 What's the grounds for prayer, or the foundation and justification of our prayer? That we pray in His name (and we'll speak more on that in a moment). and Notice the certainty of prayer, "That I will do." Not I *might* do, or *if you're lucky* I'll do, but *I will* do. and Finally 5<sup>thly</sup> the objective of prayer is what? "That the Father may be glorified in the Son."

Now another angle by which we might choose to view this portion is that there are (as I see it here) at least 3 prerequisites of effective prayer. #1 Is back there in vs 12. What type of person does Jesus point out as the one who will be doing the greater works than Him? The one who what? “Believes *in Me*,” not just believes in whatever, there’s nothing emptier than the hopeless phrase, “you just have to believe.” Believe in what? Believe in whom? What do you mean, “just believe.” There needs to be something to believe *in* something that we look to and trust, something greater than ourselves that can do for us that which we could never do for ourselves. and Jesus says, “That’s Me.” He who believes *in Me*, which speaks of what? Faith, so the 1<sup>st</sup> prerequisite to effective prayer is to actually *believe* or have faith in Christ.

Not just a saving faith, but the faith that says He is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all I can ask or even think. I’m not tossing this request your way Jesus, and hoping it’s not too much for you to handle, I *believe* in You. The bible says, “*But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*” Heb 11:6 and As you well know if you can get passed Gen 1:1 you’ve got this one licked. If you actually believe that in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, and that with out Him there was nothing made that was made, and you really in your heart know that with God nothing will be impossible. Then you’re well on your way to an effective prayer life.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> prerequisite is as we’ve stated, that we have to ask, but we have to ask in a specific way and that is *in His name*. Now He has said that anything that we ask in His name He will do. and This has stumbled a lot of people because they look at this like a blank check that we’re able to endorse by tagging the phrase, “in Jesus name,” at the end of our prayer. and They’ll say, “We’ll I’ve asked for this, or for that in Jesus name, and He didn’t answer my prayer.”

But we need to consider this phrase, “in My name.” If I gave you a lifetime gift card to the Olive Garden (if they had such a thing), you could go there whenever you wanted and order whatever you wanted with no boundaries, but it’s not going get you a thing at Café’ Del Rio, no matter what it’s worth at the Olive Garden. So though the scope of Jesus statement is unlimited, the condition is that the request has to be made in His name, and as long as you’re asking in His name, you can ask whatever you want. Now then, what does it mean to ask in Jesus name? It means that you ask in accordance with His character, His personality, and His heart, it’s to be identified with Him totally. When a couple gets married, the lady in essence says, “I’m going to give up my own identity, I’m going to lose myself that I might be found in my husband, that I might be identified with Him in totality, I’m taking his name upon myself.” Now we are the bride of Christ, so when we’re joined together with Christ, we’re no longer our own, it’s no longer about my name, it’s about being identified with His name, with His person, that which is on His heart.

So understand that this isn’t a blank check to get whatever *you* want, or I want, but rather this is saying that as long as what we ask is in accordance with His heart, with His will, and

with His desire, He'll do it. It's not saying ask for a million dollars in Jesus name and He'll give it to you, you have to remember that Jesus is speaking to disciples here, those who believe in Him. and To be a disciple is to submit to certain ordinances, remember Jesus said, "*If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.*" Matt 16:24 So the 1<sup>st</sup> thing one submits to in following Jesus is denial of self, well that clears up a lot of the confusion on why I so often don't get what I ask for. James said, "*You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.*" James 4:3 So much for representing Jesus, and asking in His name huh? Jesus said that we're to take up our cross, the crucifying of the self will, and of course to follow Him was to go to Calvary, self-sacrifice, laying down my life for others, placing others needs above my own. Do you remember when God passed by Moses and proclaimed His name before him and Moses saw God's afterglow and all?

There the Lord proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, not justifying sin, and dealing *with* sin, but this is God's name. This is who Jesus is, and so if your prayers are merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy, and full of forgiveness, then you can trust you're praying in Jesus name, and He will respond to that prayer in a manner that *complies* with that prayer. and Then 3<sup>rdly</sup> we see that the final prerequisite to effective prayer, is that prayer that is truly in Jesus name will glorify the Father through the Son. Now if you're praying in a manner that complies with steps 1 and 2, then # 3 will take place naturally. But let that be a litmus test, is what you're bringing *before* the Father glorifying *to* the Father, or if you break it all down is it self-centered and not really concerning the heart of Jesus Christ? Jesus says (Vs 14 read)

Notice, the words, "I will do it," this is deity speaking here, He's saying that He'll do the work both *for* you and *through* you, Phil 4:13 says it like this, "*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*" How does Christ strengthen me? Hold up now you're getting ahead of me.

Vs15

Now I'm willing to be wrong here but I can't help but see a relationship of mutual love and respect between vs 14 and 15. and If you read them together it kinda comes into focus that way. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it, if you love Me keep My commandments. It's like, "I'm responding to *you*, now you respond to *Me*." and He'll expound on this in a second so I'll let it go at that for now, but this is the *exhortation*, "keep My commandments," now here comes the *enablement*.

Vs16-17

and So we see the triune Godhead here again, God the Son, praying to God the Father, who will send God the Spirit. So how does Christ strengthen you? Through the person of the Holy Spirit, also seen here as the Spirit of truth, even as Jesus is the way and the truth, and the book of Rom Ch 8 and 1 Peter Ch 1 both refer to the Holy Spirit as, “The Spirit of Christ” and so the mystery of the Godhead is an awesome thing, 3 distinct persons, yet the bible is clear, there’s only 1 God.

But even as the Holy Spirit empowered Christ’s own life and ministry, here He’s saying that that’s exactly what the Holy Spirit wants to do in your life as well. Empower you, and enable you, to help you, the words, “Another Helper” here means another of the same kind. That as Christ had been to them *presently*, the Holy Spirit would be to them *perpetually*. He would fill the void that Christ had occupied, meet the needs that Jesus had been there to meet, calm the storms in their lives, heal their hurts, and give them guidance and direction, boldness and fortitude, teach them and lead them, revealing to them the heart of God. But I want you to notice here that the Holy Spirit is not an impersonal force, or an overflow of emotional warm fuzzies. Jesus uses a masculine identity here to reveal to us that even as He is a person, and the Father is identified as a person, so the Holy Spirit is a person as well.

Now that’s not to say that the Holy Spirit has arms and feet and that sort of thing, but that the characteristics of a person are all ascribed to the Holy Spirit in the pages of scripture, He has knowledge, He has emotion, and He has a will, any entity that thinks, wills, feels, knows and can be known is a person, and the Holy Spirit does all these things. and Jesus says here that He is here to abide with you, not for just occasional help now and then, but notice, *forever*. He will never leave you, never forsake you, doesn’t mean you’ll always *feel* His presence, or else you don’t need faith, but that He is with you forever is a promise of the Word of God.

Now why can’t the world receive Him? #1 Because it can’t *see* Him, the world walks by sight, not by faith, and #2 nor does it *know* Him, because the world will not receive the knowledge of the truth, and since He is the Spirit of truth the world will not receive Him, but because you know the truth, and have received the truth, have trusted in Jesus Christ then you know the person of the Holy Spirit as well. 1<sup>st</sup> of all He dwells with you, but then also upon receiving Christ He literally comes into you. and There’s a 3<sup>rd</sup> aspect of the ministry of the Holy Spirit that Jesus mentions and it’s found in the 1<sup>st</sup> ch of the book of Acts and that is the Holy Spirit’s coming *upon* you. and Since we don’t have time to cover all of the various distinctives of that today, I’d refer you to the book “Living Water” by Pastor Chuck Smith if you have a desire to study further into the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit in the believers life.

Vs18

How will He come to them, or to you? By the power, and in the person of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, you know there are some radically deep theological nuances in these things. The mystery of the triunion of the trinity.

Vs19

The world never seen Jesus after the resurrection, only His disciples, and the life that's in Him He shares with us, Paul said it like this, "*I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.*" Gal 2:20

Vs 20

and He'll speak more on this *abiding* aspect of our relationship with Him in ch 15, but you in Christ speaks of salvation, and Christ in you speaks of sanctification, you being in Him is your salvation, (if any man be in Christ) but He's working in you and through you and bringing about your sanctification, continuing to prepare you for His plan and purpose for your life.

Vs21

Now as we often say, this is where the principle becomes practical, your love for Jesus is demonstrated by your obedience to His word. and I hate to be the one to bring down the hammer but if you don't have regard for the word of God, or seek to live in obedience to it, the you don't love Jesus, and it just doesn't matter what you may profess. Jesus says here real clear the who has My commandments, *and keeps them*, that is *values* them, *treasures* them, *guards* them and *does* them. In 1<sup>st</sup> John we read, "*Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.*" 1 John 2:3-6 and Again, "*For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments.*" 1 John 5:3

Love *for* God and obedience *to* God is like hand in glove, lip service is just that, how do I know that you love the Lord, you obey His word. If not what evidence is there, sentiment, an emotional upheaval every now and then? Those things don't qualify according to Jesus, Paul speaks of those are all about lip service, and he says, "*They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work.*" Titus 1:16 They speak all the right things, know all the right words, but there's no practical evidence in their lives of simple obedience to the word of God. Wednesday we seen that Solomon loved the Lord, *and walked in the statutes of his father David*, he obeyed God's word because he loved the Lord. Now if *you* love God, then do what He says, and Jesus will reveal Himself to you in a real and intimate and personal way, I don't know how to say it any plainer.

Vs22-24

So this particular Judas is confused, wants to know what's going on here, I thought the Messiah's business was to be manifest to the world? Are casting off the world? and Jesus says, "No, but I'll be shown to them through you, and your obedience to My Word, by your love for one another, that's how they'll see Me." Jesus is saying, "My home will be your heart." Question: Is Christ at home in your heart? I'm not asking if He is *in* your heart, I'm asking if He's *at home* in your heart, is He comfortable in His surroundings. Or is there a few pictures on the walls and skeletons in the closets of your heart that make His presence in your life an awkward thing? Let Jesus clean house, throw out those things of the flesh, and give Him full reign in your life.

#### Vs25

Now apart from other things, here we see a practical 2-fold purpose of the person of the Holy Spirit in your life. #1 To *teach* you, and #2 To *remind you* of that which He's taught you. Later John would echo these words when he said, "...*you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him.*" 1 John 2:27 Now that's not to say we don't need Pastor's and teachers in that sense of the word, Eph tells us that they are God's gifts to the church, Jesus was a Teacher, the ultimate Teacher. What this is saying is that the opening of your understanding to the principles and precepts of God's word is the work of the Holy Spirit.

If you come here and walk away having learned something in God's word, or have been reminded perhaps in a fresh way of that which you already know. It's not because I'm such a smooth articulator of the Word of God, it's because the Holy Spirit has opened your understanding and taught you. I can make things as simple as I know how, but if the Holy Spirit doesn't teach you, you won't get it, and neither will I. It's the Holy Spirit who teaches us and leads us into all truth, and He'll remind you of the things you've been taught when you need it. Be it for witnessing, or to keep you out of trouble or whatever.

#### Vs27

This is how He began His discourse, with the exhortation to not let your heart be troubled, and here He adds, neither let it be afraid. and Then He equips us with the necessary tools to enable us to be overcomers in the most adverse of circumstances. The things of this ch are Heaven's help for your troubled times. The eternal perspective, the promise of His return, the power of prayer, the person of the Holy Spirit, and finally here, His personal peace. Not a peace that's based on circumstances, but that peace that causes you to sleep in the bottom of the boat in the midst of a raging storm. That peace that knows that even though you'll be on a cross in 12hrs or so, you maintain a tranquil composer and comfort and encourage others not being mindful of yourself. The peace of God that passes all understanding and garrisons your heart and your mind (how) through Christ Jesus, it's His peace. That same peace that kept Him will keep you, it's His gift, you just can't buy peace, but Jesus Christ will give it to you freely if you surrender your heart and your life to Him. Isa 26:3 "*You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose mind is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You.*"

## Vs28

Not in essence or being, but in the fact that Jesus subjected Himself to mortality, willing submitted Himself to the Father, and became a little lower than the angels (the bible says) in that He was able to taste death. We so often weep when people who die go to be with the Father. But Jesus says, “Hey if you love Me you would rejoice.” We have such a misconception of death for the believer; we’d bring them back to this decrepit fallen state of a world so that they would suffer more, experience more heartache and heartbreak, but hey, they’d be with us. Puke, they go to *the Father*, rejoice.

## Vs29

Which is the point of prophecy, to make a believer out of you, and the bible is the only book in the world that places its veracity on its ability to foretell the future and it’s never missed. and It never will.

## Vs30-31

Jesus is saying here that the Satan has zero influence in His life, nor is he in anyway in control of what’s about to take place. He’s saying the cross is the plan of the Father, and I go there in obedience to Him, because I love Him, and so of My own volition, “Arise, let us go from here.” and He sets out on the path to the Garden of Gethsemane whereby He’ll be betrayed and delivered into the hands of the chief priest, to go through a mock trial and be crucified for the sin of the world. and He’s saying I’m telling you this in advance so that when you see it come down, you can know that I’m not an victim of circumstance, that I was taken advantage of by the enemy or anything else. But out of loving obedience to My Father, I lay down My life with out spot, and with out blemish for the sin of the world, for you, and for me.

Jesus loves you so much, and He said, Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. He will make your heart His home if you’ll just open the door of your heart to Him and let Him in. He laid down His life that you might have life, and He tasted death so that you could live forever, is Jesus dealing with you today? Imploring you to give your life to Him? Then let me encourage you to repent, to lay down your life, and be forgiven of your sin, let Jesus into your life.