

TOPIC: GUARANTEED ANSWERS TO PRAYER

We receive everything we ask of Jesus when we ask "in His name".

KEY POINTS

- ▶ Names have many functions. Among other things, they are quick code words that can encapsulate identity, office, authority, dominion, power – even gender and religion.
- ▶ In the past, people’s names often described their vocation, character, destiny, calling and/or blessing.
- ▶ So if you ask, “What’s in a name?” the answer is, “A lot!”
- ▶ What Jesus said to His disciples in John 14 is absolutely striking in its brevity, clarity and meaning. He said: “... whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it” (vv. 13-14).
- ▶ This is the kind of statement that makes you stop dead in your tracks and say, ‘Run that by me again?’ So He did: “You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you” (John 15:16).
- ▶ And in case it still hadn’t sunk in, He said it again: “Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you. Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full” (John 16:23b-24).
- ▶ Jesus said the very same thing three different times in the same speech! He was really trying to make a point. And this was the last time He would speak to His disciples before His death. (The last words someone speaks before they die are precious words, words that are really important to them.)
- ▶ This is the heart of the matter: if you speak or act in someone’s name, you do so in accordance with their position, power and authority, not yours.
- ▶ So Jesus said in John 5:43, “I have come in My Father’s name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive.”
- ▶ And again Jesus continues in the latter half of John 10:25: “The works that I do in My Father’s name [under my Father’s authority], they bear witness of Me.”
- ▶ Jesus’ works proved and affirmed that God was working through Him and that He was speaking and acting in God’s stead, on God’s behalf, taking God’s place. When you saw Jesus at work, you saw God at work.
- ▶ We need to remember this every time we pray in Jesus’ name. We are praying just as if it is Jesus Himself praying through us!
- ▶ In Exodus 33-34, we read about an incredible interaction between Moses and God. At the end of an intense dialogue, Moses requests to see God’s glory. God hides him in a safe place and protects him with His hand as His glory passes by. And as He does this, the Lord proclaims His name to Moses: My name is YHWH; YHWH EL. I Am Who I Am; I Will Be What I Will Be; God. When you use my name, I want you to think and know this about Me: I am merciful; I am gracious; I am longsuffering; I am full of goodness; I am full of truth; I forgive sinners; I am the God of justice and judgment.
- ▶ God then re-writes the Commandments on stone tablets before Moses leaves His presence to return to the people.
- ▶ This is noteworthy, because Jesus refers to these commandments in the scriptures mentioned earlier (John 14:15, Matthew 7:7).

KEY SCRIPTURES: John 14:6-15; Matthew 7:7-12, 6:9-13, 26:39; Exodus 34:6-7

- ▶ In effect, in both Old and New Testaments, God says, “I will show you My glory and proclaim My name to you. For your part, keep My commandments.”
- ▶ All of us have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23), but all is not lost. Our ability to pray as ‘keepers of the Law’ is not dependent upon our own performance and perfection, but on Jesus’ perfect performance which He did on our behalf.
- ▶ Now for the most critical point: Praying in the name of Jesus truly means that we pray as if it were Jesus Himself praying through us –which means that we need to emulate His prayers.
- ▶ In the prayer Jesus taught His disciples, the first request was “Thy kingdom come,” followed by the second, “Thy will be done.”
- ▶ In His prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus said, “O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.”
- ▶ Jesus’ prayer was answered and God’s will was accomplished, even though it was totally against Jesus’ human, fleshly desires.
- ▶ When we pray in Jesus’ name, we can ask what we desire – praying first and foremost for God’s will to be accomplished – and it will be done.
- ▶ As Jesus did, we may pray at the very same time both “my will be done” and “Your will be done.”
- ▶ We don’t really know how to pray as we should, but the Holy Spirit helps us and prays through us -- according to the will of God (Romans 8:26).
- ▶ Summing it all up, we are guaranteed answers to our prayers under the following conditions:
 - We pray according to the power and authority of Jesus Christ, praying in the Holy Spirit (Jude 20).
 - We pray as Jesus prayed, that first and foremost God’s will be done (Matthew 6:9-13).
 - We live in a covenant relationship with God; that is, we live according to His laws and commandments (John 14:15).
 - We pray in faith, without wavering (James 1:6-7, Mark 9:23-24).

DISCUSSION/REFLECTION TOOLS

1. Read through John 14:6-15. Discuss what these verses teach us about the relationship between Jesus Christ and His Father, including the authority Christ had on Earth then (and has now, if different).
2. Referring to John 14:12-15, Matthew 7:7-12 and other relevant scriptures, what authority do we have i) to pray; and ii) when we pray; “in Jesus’ name”?
3. Review and discuss this lesson’s teachings (both OT and NT) about God’s nature, His commandments and our relationship with Him. How do we truly pray “in Jesus” name and guarantee answered prayer?

Prayer Time

Dear God, please teach me and help me to pray effective prayers “in Jesus’ name”. Amen.

WEEK OF SUNDAY, JUNE 4, 2017

NOTES

Meditate as you read through/listen to this week’s message. If it helps, use symbols for your notes.

- ✔ (Reminds me/Confirms) 💡 (New idea) 🧠 (Think about)
- ⊗ (Do this) ❤️ (Speaks to my heart) ↺ (Must share)

PRAYER NEEDS/THANKSGIVINGS

L.G. Ice-Breaker: if you could speak/act by the authority of any human currently alive, who would you choose to represent, and why?