

PRAYER THAT PREVAILS

TEXT: *Mark 11:24: Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.*

Introduction:

This verse is a stumbling block to many — but it can be a stepping stone to all who stop to think of its deeper meaning.

It is a stumbling block if you try using it to evade responsibilities.

Example: No use praying the dishes will be done!

It is a stumbling block if you want to use it to cover past mistakes or change the facts.

Example: A little boy realized he answered a test question wrong and prayed, “Please let St. Augustine be the capital of Florida, just for today.”

It is a stumbling block if you want to use this as power to bend another’s will to your own.

The best way to change others is to pray that God will change you so that others will react to you differently.

It is a stumbling block if you try to use it as a magic formula to get things you happen to desire.

Some grown-ups pray like a child talking to Santa Clause, or even like an employer talking to a servant!

In allowing the promise in this scripture, Jesus gave His disciples the compliment of believing they would receive it in accord with the instructions He had given about prayer.

It is a stepping stone if we use this prayer power to secure gifts according to His Will.

An earnest prayer for peace — in faith believing the Holy Spirit



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is providing this — will mean peace is already being supplied in our heart. When we want the gift of joy: the Holy Spirit will be already bringing to our mind the joy of companionship with the risen Savior and the joy of knowing we have eternal treasure in Heaven. When we lack strength — whether strength to overcome or strength to endure — it is immediately accessible in God's enabling love.

1 Corinthians 12:9: To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;

Philippians 4:13: I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

This promise is a stepping stone when material needs are a problem.

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

For example:

George Mueller prayed for specific amounts of money, for gifts of furniture, for workers, even for applications from needy children when he was establishing orphanages. But this was not for personal use; it was for the Glory of God and for the aid of the children.



Material things were also supplied to Moses and the Children of Israel in the wilderness — again for the glory of God, and to be a parable of His loving care to all of His children.

This promise is a stepping stone when existing conditions are holding back work for the Kingdom.

Remember how Peter was released after prevailing prayer. His release from prison was not for Peter's own safety and satisfaction, but for the glory of God and to further His plan to proclaim the Gospel.

The Scripture text today is really a sharp call to faith in God. Not faith in our faith — but faith in our God.

Mark 10:27: And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.

Christ is going to one day possess all things; so — if we are in Christ — we will possess all things since we are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.

Romans 8:17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together.

There are other conditions in Jesus' instructions about prayer:

John 15:7: If ye abide in Me, and My Words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

Abide — this means to live, to move, and to have our being in Him. If this requirement is met, we will not ask anything of Him that is not in His Will or that He would not allow.

John 16:23: Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My Name, He will give it you.

Douglas Steere, author of the book Dimensions of Prayer, says, “*It is amazing the sifting and sorting of prayer requests that is made when we realize we pray in the Presence of, and in the Name of our Crucified Lord.*”

Conclusion:

The prayer spoken of by Jesus in this text is not a brief thought directed to God — not just a passing interest you want God to notice. Prayer that will prevail with God — to move mountains of distress from your life and from the lives of others, are like the prayers of:

Martin Luther, who — when most pressed — gave three hours a day in prayer, that he might do God's Will.

John Knox, who prayed for Scotland.

John Wesley, who prayed and was enabled to direct thousands upon thousands to the Lord.



It is sometimes a life of continuing prayer, like the woman who prayed ten years for the conversion of her husband — always praying in confidence and joy for the answer that surely comes!!

The outstanding example of prevailing prayer is that of our Savior:

The requisite of forgiveness:

Luke 23:34: Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.

The requisite of abiding in God:

John 17:21: Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee,

The requisite of praying in His name:

John 17:17, 21-26

17 Sanctify them through Thy Truth: Thy Word is Truth.

21 That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me.

22 And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one, even as We are One:

23 I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me.

24 Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My Glory, which Thou hast given Me: for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world:

25 O Righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee: but I have known Thee, and these have known that Thou hast sent Me.

26 And I have declared unto them Thy Name, and will declare it: that the love where with Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them.



In giving the precious promise of our text to His disciples, Jesus knew they were aware of the conditions of prayer. He wanted them to know that once the conditions were met, God's answers to their prayer would be limitless.

William Carey, that great missionary, caught His message, and his creed became:
“Attempt great things for God... Expect great things from God.”

Thank God for the privilege of prayer.



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