

Series: 1 John
Title: According to his Will
Text: 1 John 5: 14-15
Date: 4-4-2019
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Our subject is “According to his Will.” It is always important when reading scripture to remember who the scripture is addressed to. In our text, John is speaking to believers. He is writing to those born-again of God in whom Christ is formed.

1 John 5: 14: And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: 15: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.

God only hears those who ask according to his will—*this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything, ACCORDING TO HIS WILL, he heareth us.*

And the petitions he hears, he grants—*And if we know that he heareth us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we HAVE THE PETITIONS WE DESIRED OF HIM.*

Proposition: True prayer is a believer submissively asking for God to do his will in whatever it is we are asking.

Divisions: 1) Confidence to approach 2) Confidence he hears us 3) Confidence we have our petitions

CONFIDENCE TO APPROACH

1 John 5: 14: And this is the confidence that we have IN HIM, ...

This is the first thing we need to consider is this: it is only through faith in the name of the Son of God that sinners like us can approach God in prayer, and that, with confidence. Notice verse 14 begins with a conjunction “And.” It means verses 13-14 go together—

1 John 5: 13: These things have I written unto you that BELIEVE ON THE NAME OF THE SON OF GOD; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may BELIEVE ON THE NAME OF THE SON OF GOD. 14: And this is the confidence that we have IN HIM, ...

These things are written to you that believe on the name of the Son of God. Our confidence in prayer is confidence in the name of Son of God. It is only through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, God’s Son, that we have boldness, confidence, welcome access to God’s throne of grace.

But it is impossible to have confidence in prayer, if we do not first believe on the name of the Son of God. Only sinners who believe on the name of the Son of God have confidence in the Son of God and confidence to approach God our Father in prayer.

CONFIDENCE HE HEARS US

1 John 5: 14: And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us:

Our confidence is that by approaching God our Father in the name of his Son, he will hear us.

It does NOT say “*that, if we ask anything, he heareth us.*” Health and wealth preachers teach that prayer is a blank check that you fill in whatever you want. It does NOT say “*If we ask anything, he heareth us.*” It says “*that, if we ask anything, ACCORDING TO HIS WILL, he heareth us.*”

Asking “according to God’s will” involves two things: *the manner* in which we pray and *the matter* for which we pray.

The first is *the manner* in which we approach and ask. It is God’s will that we come to him in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Our confidence to approach God our Father is the name of God’s Son. It is the Father’s will that we come owning his Son to be *OUR Lord Jesus Christ*.

Ephesians 5:20: Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Involved in the manner we approach God is to come owning him to be *our Lord*—our King, our Master and I his servant. We own him to be *our Jesus*—I come owning him to be my Savior, his name is “Jesus, for he shall save his people from our sins.” We own him to be *our Christ*—the one that God anointed and sent to save me, as well as all his people. Approaching God in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ we are saying to the Father that we are sinners and that he is all our salvation, personally.

Involved in the manner we approach God in the name of his Son, is to have *our confidence is his blood*—his wounded flesh is our new and living way into the holiest into God’s presence.

Hebrews 10: 19: Having therefore, brethren, BOLDNESS [confidence] to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20: By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, HIS FLESH

His people deserved to die for our sins. But manifesting the righteousness of God, Christ took our sins upon himself—” *He made him, who knew no sin, sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*” Then, justly, he bore our curse upon himself—”*Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.*” So, it is Christ’s broken body and his shed blood that is our new way into the presence of holy God. And since Christ is risen, he is our living Way—he said, “*I am the Way...no man cometh to the Father but by me.*” When we come to God through faith in the name of his Son, we come making mention of his righteousness alone.

Involved in the manner we approach God in the name of his Son is owning Christ to be our great High Priest.

Hebrews 10: 21: And having an HIGH PRIEST over the house of God;

The high priest entered the holiest of holies alone. The high priest entered with blood of a slain lamb which was slain in place of the children of Israel. The high priest sprinkled the blood on the mercy seat, making atonement for the sins of the people. Christ is our High Priest. He has entered God’s presence alone. He entered with his own blood having accomplished our redemption (Heb 9: 11-12). We ask God the Father to honor Christ who redeemed us by hearing us for his sake. It is Christ who intercedes for us as our High Priest with the Father.

Involved in the manner we approach God is that our confidence is *the full assurance of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ*. Our conscience has been purged by the blood of Christ and our bodies washed in regeneration so that we come to the Father in the full assurance of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 10: 22: Let us draw near with a true heart in FULL ASSURANCE OF FAITH, having OUR HEARTS SPRINKLED from an evil conscience, and OUR BODIES WASHED with PURE WATER.

When one of Will's friends come to our house, they knock on the door. When I tell them to come in they enter timidly. Why? I am not their Father and it is not their house. But when one of my own children come to the door, they open and come in with confidence. Why? I am their Father and it is their house. They have *confidence* that they are welcome anytime. Praying in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, we come to God with the confidence that we are the children of our heavenly Father and he will hear us for the sake of his Son, our High Priest.

Hebrews 4: 14: Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* profession. 15: For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are, yet* without sin. 16: Let us therefore come BOLDLY unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

So, the first thing in praying according to God's will is *the manner* in which we pray—in *the name of his Son*.

Secondly, asking "according to God's will" involves *the matter* for which we pray. When God gives a new heart, it is contrite in submission and resignation to God's will, even when God brings severe trials upon us. When God told Eli of the trouble that would come to his family, by the grace and Spirit of God Eli answered, "*It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good*" (1 Samuel 3:18)! It is not God's will to give us simply what we *want*. There is a vast difference between what we *want* and what we *need*. James said, "*Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.*" (Jas 4:3)

If what we ask is not God's will, God will not give it to us. Instead, the Holy Spirit will teach us God's will and makes us submit to his will. God gave Paul a thorn in the flesh to keep Paul from being puffed up due to the revelations God gave him. Paul asked for the thorn to be removed. But that would have been the worst thing for Paul. Instead, therefore, God taught Paul the sufficiency of his grace and brought Paul to submit in thanksgiving to God (2 Cor 12: 7-10).

Brethren be careful to make certain your petitions to God are not simply the lusts of your flesh. Do not pray simply for your ease or comfort or benefit alone. Instead, ask God to work his will. Praying according to God's will involves *the matter* for which we pray.

God reveals his will in his word so that we know some things that God is willing for us to ask him for. For instance:

- *Ephesians 6: 18: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit*—it is God's will we pray in the Spirit. God's people do not "say a prayer". We do not simply repeat words and say our prayers. It is God's will that we pray in the Spirit.
- *Ephesians 6:18:...and watching with all perseverance*—it is God's will we watch in prayer: watch for the proper time to pray when we will not be interrupted or tempted, watch for what is needed to pray for, watch for God to answer our prayer in his time not ours—and that we do so with all perseverance, with importunity, if at first God does not answer continue asking.
- *Ephesians 6: 18:...and supplication for all saints; 19: And for me that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, 20: For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak*—it is God's will that we pray

for God's saints and God's preachers for the message they are to speak and the boldness to preach in the face of opposition as they ought.

We learn what God is willing for us to pray for from our Lord Jesus. In the model prayer he gave us, he did not mean for us to simply repeat this prayer word for word. This is a model. It shows us some things God is will that we pray for. Christ said:

- *Matthew 6: 9: After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name*—it is God's will that we ask for God's name to be sanctified above all.
- *Matthew 6: 10: Thy kingdom come thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven*—it is God's will that we ask God's will to be done for the good of God's kingdom in earth as it is in heaven.
- *Matthew 6: 11: Give us this day our daily bread*—it is God's will we pray only for today's needs, grace for today, there is enough evil in this day, we need grace for this day.
- *Matthew 6: 12: And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors*—it is God's will we confess our sins to him, that we ask his forgiveness of our sins and that we forgive those indebted to us due to their offenses like as God forgives us for our offenses against him.
- *Matthew 6: 13: And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: --it is God's will we ask him to lead us and keep us and deliver us from evil.*
- *Matthew 6: 13: ...For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen*—it is God's will we give him all the glory and all preeminence in all things.

So, we see praying according to God's will involves *the manner* in which we pray, as well as *the matter* for which we pray.

“And we have this confidence in Christ, that if we ask anything, according to his will, HE HEARETH US” When God's child comes before him asking God's will to be done, in the name of Christ Jesus our Lord, God always hears our prayer. God our Father never turns a deaf ear to his child's cry!

CONFIDENCE WE HAVE OUR PETITIONS

1 John 5: 14: And we have this confidence in Christ, that if we ask anything, according to his will, he heareth us. 15: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.

Knowing that God hears us, we know we have the petitions we desire of him. The key is that we pray *“according to God's will”*. God does all things according to his will and only according to his will. And God only hears, if we ask according to God's will.

But if we ask according to his will, he heareth us. And all who God hears, he grants the petitions we desired of him. Everything in salvation is worked according to God's eternal will.

“Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, ACCORDING TO THE GOOD PLEASURE OF HIS WILL” (Eph 1: 5)

Wicked men with wicked hands did to Christ *“WHATSOEVER THY HAND AND THY COUNSEL DETERMINED BEFORE TO BE DONE.”*—and thus Christ redeemed us by his blood. (Acts 4: 27-28)

“In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated ACCORDING TO THE PURPOSE OF HIM WHO WORKETH ALL THINGS AFTER THE COUNSEL OF HIS OWN WILL.” (Eph 1: 11)

Nothing changes God's will. He is immutable and his will is unchanged. Why then pray? God uses the means of prayer to bring his child into submission to God's will. Men say, "Prayer changes things." It only changes God's child but it never changes God! Prayer is God making his child submit to God's will.

God declared his will for his people. Nothing would change God's will. That is what God declared long before that he would bring to pass. But God said the house of Israel would ask him to do his will for them. So, it would not be God's will that would change. It would be the will of his people that would be brought to submit to God's will.

Ezekiel 36: 25: Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. 26: A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. 27: And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do *them*. 28: And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God...37: Thus saith the Lord GOD; I WILL YET, FOR THIS, BE ENQUIRED OF BY THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL, TO DO IT FOR THEM

But we forget what to pray for as we ought. Therefore, the Spirit of God puts prayer in our hearts according to the will of God (Rom 8: 26-27).

For instance, we ask in Christ's name and for God's glory, that according to his will, God give one of his lost children a new heart. Since that is God's will, we know God hears us for the sake of his Son. And knowing God hears us, we know we have the petition we asked for. In God's preset time, God will give his lost child a new heart because it is God's will to do so.

That is a general petition. But it is the same for personal petitions. Christ said, "*your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.*" Therefore, the Spirit of God puts prayer in our hearts according to the will of God with groanings that cannot be uttered. He makes us pray as we ought for what we ought according to God's will. Also, Christ intercedes for us with the Father so that our prayer comes to God in the perfection and sweet incense of Christ our High Priest. John's word to us here came directly from Christ Jesus who said, "*What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye [shall] receive them, and ye shall have them.*" (Mr 11: 24) In other words, knowing that God our Father hears us, we know that he will not turn away from us, but we shall have whatever it is we need. He is a perfect Father. Seeing how he has provided us righteousness and forgiveness of sins through the great, unspeakable gift of his Son, we know he shall provide all our lesser needs.

Believer, do you want to know that God always hears you and that you always have the petition you ask—then in everything you ask, ask God's will to be done! Prayer is as simple as that! Lord teach us to pray!

Amen!