

BECKY COMBEE MINISTRIES, INC.

Answered Prayer

God answers prayer! Jesus Himself said, "Ask, and it shall be given you."¹ He DID NOT say, "Ask, and it might be, it could be, or perhaps it will be." He said, "It shall be." What a glorious promise! As we pray, we can expect to receive. Yet, by the apostle James, we are duly warned. We can ask amiss. Certainly, God will not answer any request that is illegal, immoral or in any way contrary to His Word.²

The apostle James helps us to understand this when he reminds us that our request can be self-centered and carnal. This means it opposes the New Testament law of love that guides our life. It is simply a request that is all about me. Certainly our first thought is that Christians would never ask God to forfeit His great love for man and contradict His Word for our personal benefit. Yet, after years of experience, I have found that our vision is often blurred and our determination so aggressive that we forget God's highest command, "Love one another."

The Scripture is clear! All our requests must be within the boundaries of God's will. God's Word reveals His will to us and of course, the Holy Spirit guides us into the glorious truth of God, illuminating how to apply it to our lives. We are so dependent on our great God and His Spirit.

The will of God is a fence around our request,

establishing the boundaries of heaven in our heart. Years ago, we had a dog that died quite suddenly because of an accident. Before we got another dog – in fact two dogs – we fenced in our back yard. We wanted to provide a safe haven for them and to be at peace about their welfare. In like manner, the Word of God provides a safe pathway to our answer. It is our harbor during the times of storm, assuring us of peace.

In John 15:7, Jesus said that if His Word abides in us we could ask for whatever we wanted

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and He would grant our desire. It is obvious that if we live in God's Word, we will not ask beyond the boundaries it has established in our heart. Our desire is to please God and to fulfill His will. Therefore, every prayer request is grounded in His will. We place our lives in His hand and He leads us in every endeavor, even prayer.

The apostle John confirms this saying, "If we ask anything according to (God's) will, He hears us."³ He goes on to write that when he hears us, He will grant our petitions. Once again, NOT he might, but He will! Therefore, it is important to know the will of God before we pray. This is the

reason we so often lean on God's glorious promise in James 1:5. "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him."⁴ Prayer begins with heavenly wisdom, and God is not reluctant to give us the understanding we need so that we can pray successfully. He is a wonderful Father!

Many years ago, I was asked to pray for a young man that would defend Himself in court. At first, I knew how to pray. Then His mother said, "Oh, yes, He is guilty." I was completely baffled. I did not know God's will for him, so I did not know how to pray. I had only recently begun speaking in tongues, but it seemed that praying in tongues was the key to this young man's answer. Does this young man deserve mercy? Is he obstinate and willful so that a lengthy sentence is necessary? What does justice require? I don't know!

The Scripture teaches us that when we do not know how to pray, we can depend on the Holy Spirit to help us. He prays through us the perfect will of God.⁵ We could not pray successfully without Him. If we must depend on our understanding and knowledge, we will certainly fall short.

THE WAY OF PRAYER

Prayer is very simple when we understand its four basic avenues. First, we can pray using the promises of God that apply to the situation as we understand it. The Word of God declares that we should pray with our understanding.⁶ We pray until our heart is satisfied that we have obeyed God. Everyone knows when he has eaten a wonderful meal and is satisfied. It is similar in the ways of God. There is within us a deep sense of satisfaction, a lightness or joy of spirit that celebrates God's answer even if His answer is unknown to us.

If our heart is not satisfied when we pray with our understanding, we pray in other tongues. God orchestrates our prayers in the Spirit and He leads the way to the answer. As we pray, He may lead us back to our known language and by divine

inspiration we speak far beyond our understanding. This gives us a point of faith and anchors us as we await the manifestation of His answer. It is a Holy Ghost hint, not always necessary, but cherished if God deems it appropriate.

The final step in prayer is sometimes groaning in the spirit. The Word of God says, "A similar thing happens *when we pray*. We are weak and do not know how to pray, so the Spirit steps in and articulates prayers for us with groaning too profound for words."⁷ These supernatural sounds are granted by the Spirit. Far beyond words, our heart responds to God's great love and His knowledge of the pain and agony of our concern. He leads us and we follow!

Prayer is speaking to God. It is cooperating with Him so that His will can be done in the lives of our family, friends, churches, and nation. Oh, how we depend on Him and we are not ashamed to be dependent. In ourselves, we are insufficient. Yet with His leadership, we are able to help those around us. Every step of the way we follow Him. We are never alone.

¹Mt 7:7 ²Jas 4:3 ³1Jn 5:14-15 ⁴NKJV ⁵Rm 8:26,28 ⁶1Co 14:15
⁷Rm 8:26 VOICE

