

O Lord Jesus Christ, who said to Your disciples, *“Whatever you shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son”*: Give us grace, we beseech You, to ask aright; teach us to bring our requests into harmony with Your mind and will; and grant that both our prayers and our lives may be acceptable in Your sight, to the glory of God the Father. Amen. (Parish Prayers, ed. Frank Colquhoun, p. 89)

[Jesus said:] *“Whatever you ask in My name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it. If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. You know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Yet a little while and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you also will live. In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. Whoever has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.”*

In Christ Jesus, whose name carries an eternal weight of righteous authority for us, dear fellow redeemed:

If you have ever had someone direct you to approach a person unknown to you and say: *“Tell him/her that I sent you.”* you know this means the person sending you has some important standing with the person you are to approach. At the very least it is assumed you will get a better hearing for your request, and may also imply you will even get a more favorable response in the granting of your request.

In a sense Jesus is telling us in our text *“Tell the Father that I am sending you and ask for what it is you desire.”* Jesus’ name truly carries an eternal weight of authority before the heavenly throne of the Father. So to boost your confidence in your prayer life dear Christian, consider this: **Pray Boldly: Jesus Teaches Us to Pray “OUR Father”**.

I

There are many false teachings floating around out there which seek to instill Christians with a false sense of confidence in regard to prayer. For example: Some will say: *“If you have strong enough of faith, God must give you what you ask.”* Known in some circles as *“Name it and claim it.”*; or another false impression is that our prayers can change the hidden will of God; or we are only blessed by God’s answers to our prayers when He gives us that for which we have asked. All such false teachings about prayer discourage the Christian

to pray since in the end they often appear not to work as falsely promised and the Christian is led to despair.

Understand first of all what it means to pray in Jesus' name. It means trusting in Jesus as the One who not only took all your sins away through His suffering and dying for them, but also dresses you in His holiness. Jesus accomplished this for you according to the will of the heavenly Father, who sent Him for all sinners. In such faith you are united with Him intimately, so that the Father in heaven looks upon you as His own dear child. So when Jesus' teaches us to pray "Our Father", we are coming to Him in Jesus' name, the name of the only begotten Son through whom we have been officially adopted by the payment of His holy precious blood.

Having been made His dear child you now seek to do and live according to His will. Your requests are shaped from that fresh perspective. We like the very Son of God ask for things not promised us by the Father with words like these: "*Not my will, but Yours be done.*" This is what Jesus means when He says: "Whatever you ask in My name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it." Or in our Gospel lesson when He says: "Whatever you ask of the Father in My name, He will give it to you."

Think upon your relationship with your earthly fathers. You may have made a demand like this: "*Daddy, pick me up!*" but it was based on your knowledge of his will and ability. But in a toy store you knew better than to demand a certain toy. You would frame it in such a way asking according to the will of your father. However, most of us have been in "*Toys 'R Us*" and heard children who did not follow that protocol and with loud cries and demands made it known throughout the store that what they wanted had to be given them. Through a temper tantrum there are those who assume they can manipulate the will of the father. It is more likely that we can identify with the child who hears "*No*" and assumes this is an unloving response to our desired request.

Our heavenly Father only intends good for us, eternal good. So when we come to Him in Jesus' name and pray "Our Father" along with our holy Brother in the flesh we should trust that He will hear and He will act according to His good and gracious will for us.

II

Do you have this confidence as a true child of God in your prayers? Or have you been discouraged by the lies of Satan in regard to prayer? Satan desires that you pray with timidity. He desires that you pray making demands for things God has not promised and

when you do not receive for what you ask you are led to distrust God's gracious will. Satan tries to trick you into thinking that your goal in prayer is to manipulate the will of God, so that when you fail to achieve that goal you think prayer has failed you.

Jesus promises that our prayers, as His holy brothers and sisters in the flesh, are shaped by the Holy Spirit whom He promises to send us. He said to His disciples: "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. You know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you." It is the Spirit who gives us Christ and all His blessings of forgiveness, life and salvation. Since He gives us the Son, we receive the Father as well, they abide with us not leaving us as orphans in this world.

As we see in our Epistle lesson from James a dreaded experience in this life is to be left an orphan. So we as Christians are called upon to attend to fatherless children. We are to do all we can to provide that loving care and concern of a father. But as bad as it is to be an orphan in this world, imagine what it would be like to be Fatherless spiritually, seeking to survive not just day to day, but for all eternity without love and care. Your Lord Jesus does not want that for you. He endured that eternal abandonment for you. You have been called by His name and adopted in His name. You have a Father who hears you and lovingly acts for you in the name of His Son.

Fold those hands not in timidity but in all confidence. Close those eyes not in terror but in trust. Boldly speak to your Father who is in heaven along with Your brother, Jesus Christ, and ask in accordance with the loving will of Him who truly wants all good things for you. Acknowledging your sins of having prayed timidly and even doubtingly in the past: pray *"forgive my trespasses"* and trust that in Christ all your sins are forgiven you. Amen.