

The Prayer of Faith (Part 1)

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Date: 07 April 2019

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[0 : 00] So, the ocean liner was sinking, by the way, what?

So, the ocean liner was sinking, and the captain called out, does anyone know how to pray? And the minister raised his hand, says, I do. The captain said, good, you pray, the rest of us will put on life jackets because we're one short.

A new bar was built in a little town where there wasn't one before. So, the Christians of the church in that little town held an all-night prayer meeting and asked God to intervene.

Lightning struck that bar, and it burned down to the ground. The owner of the bar brought a lawsuit against the church saying the church is responsible for this.

The church hired a lawyer, and the lawyer claimed the church is not responsible for this. The judge concluded, no matter what this case does, one thing is clear.

[1 : 17] The bar owner believes in prayer. The Christians don't. Do you believe in prayer?

Do you trust God answers your prayer? Do you have faith when you ask Him for your request?

Do you believe without doubting? Do you pray with certainty? These are the questions before us in what Jesus is teaching us today.

He teaches us to pray with faith. As I mentioned, we come to Mark chapter 11, where last we learned that the end of the old house of prayer was coming.

Jesus did signs of judgment. In verse 12 to 14, he curses the fig tree. The fig tree that appeared to be fruitful, it was full of leaves.

[2 : 29] And remember about the fig tree that when there are leaves on the fig tree, there is budding fruit there. In fact, the budding fruit would already have been there. It's not mature fruit.

It's not ripe yet. As Mark says, it wasn't the season for fruit. But the natives would often, if they're real hungry and in a pinch, they could take that early fruit and eat it.

And they said Jesus was hungry. So he came expecting to see fruit because there was leaves and there was nothing but leaves. So the tree was in fact deceptive and barren.

And so Christ pronounced judgment on that tree, no more fruit. And we saw that the tree withered. Sandwiched in between the story of the fig tree being cursed and the fig tree being observed as having withered, is the story of Jesus going into the temple and, quote unquote, what our texts tell us, or title it as, the cleansing of the temple.

Right? It's always been called the cleansing of the temple. Well, he's not cleaning anything. He's destroying. And he's cursing. He's judging. Mark very emphatically tells us by the way he structures fig tree, temple fig tree, that we're to understand the work that Jesus does in the temple by what he does with the fig tree.

[3 : 53] They're linked. So just as the fig tree is withered away by the word of Christ declaring it no more fruit, so the temple will wither away because it is no longer a house of prayer, but a den of thieves.

This house of prayer, this temple where people come to meet God, where people come to approach God, where people come to find forgiveness of sin by offering sacrifices, is now coming to an end. Why? Not just because it's become a den of thieves, but because God has sent its replacement. God has sent its fulfillment. God has sent the real temple, whom Jesus said to the rulers, destroy this temple and in three days I'll raise it up.

But this is the temple where sacrifices are actually accomplished for true forgiveness. This is the temple by which people will come to God through him with boldness.

No more stay out, stay alive like the signs in the temple. You Gentiles, stay out there. You women, stay over here. You men who aren't priests, stay over here. Priests, go here.

[5 : 17] And if you are not high priest, you shall not go into the very presence of God. Once a year. With bells on. In case you die. And a rope so we pull you out because we ain't going in there after you if you die.

See, the whole message of the temple is stay away. You are not welcome. Under threat of death. You approach this holy God, you will die.

The new temple. The new temple. There's no more barriers. There's no more walls. There's no more separating.

The Gentiles over here. It's a house of prayer for all the peoples. That's what God intended. Even the eunuch should come. Even the foreigner. Even the outcast. Even the misfits. Should come. And be welcome. To him. Well, that's not the sermon today. Let's move on. So we come to verse 22.

[6 : 23] Where Jesus begins to teach about faith. And notice in verse 22. It says, and Jesus answered. Answered. So he's responding to Peter's statement in verse 21.

Peter has just said and remembered that Jesus the day before cursed the fig tree. And he points it out. Lord, Rabbi, look. The fig tree you cursed has withered. In verse 22, Jesus is answering. And his answer is not what we would expect. We would expect him to comment on the fig tree. Well, he does. In a way.

He does. He begins to talk about faith. He begins to talk about what happened to the fig tree is an example of the prayer of faith.

What I said to this fig tree happened because of my faith. And therefore, what you say to that mountain will be, if you have like faith, without doubting.

[7 : 33] Mountain moving faith. Fig tree withering faith. Sin overcoming faith.

Sin overcoming faith. Sin overcoming faith. Power to do the impossible. In this new house of prayer. Which is his church. The new temple of God. It's the church. Not a building. It's not a place anymore. It's a people. It's a people.

It's a people. So. So. Here we come. Verse 22. Jesus teaches us on the effect of the prayer of faith. What does it mean to pray with faith?

What marks effective prayer? Because that's essentially what Jesus is describing. The prayer of faith is effective prayer. It shall be to him. It shall be to you.

[8 : 35] Who pray with faith. It's effective. It works. It accomplishes. There's conviction and certainty.

So what are the marks of effective prayer? That's what I think Jesus is teaching here. In verse 22 and 23. The first mark of effective prayer is conviction.

Believing without doubt. Verse 24. The second mark of effective prayer is certainty. Certainty. Praying and believing that you have already.

Excuse me. My voice too high. Praying and believing. That you have already received it.

Certainty. And then the third mark, which we won't look at today. Verse 25. Forgiveness. Is that surprising? For effective prayer, forgiving.

[9 : 41] Yeah. So Jesus is bringing up some things that make us think. What is prayer? How can I pray like that?

When can I pray like that? Okay. Okay. Lots of questions. Huh? So first of all, effective prayer is marked first by conviction.

Believing without doubting in your heart. Verse 22. He says, have faith in God. Truly I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, be taken up and thrown into the sea, and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done.

It will be done for him. It shall be to him. So, I want us to see three things. First of all, I want you to notice in verse 22, the object of the faith.

Do not miss this. This is missed by the name and and claim it kind of preachers. What's the faith in? God.

[10 : 54] In God. Not in your prayer. Not in your words. Not in your formula. See, I was taught growing up, as I was seeking Christ, I was convicted.

I walked the aisle and I was told. Not deceptively. Just misunderstandingly. I was told, if you pray the prayer, you are saved.

Believe that you're saved. Well, what am I trusting in, pastor? You're trusting in your prayer. But that's not the object of my faith. I'm not to trust in my prayer.

I'm to trust in God. So, that was a nice five, six, seven year learning experience for God teaching me about conviction and true conversion. God was working. God was working. I just had misplaced the faith. Because I wasn't taught correctly. Not by bad men. I love my pastor. We just had a different understanding.

[11:55] And I think not quite accurate. Same thing here. What is the faith in? It's in God. Not in myself.

Have faith in yourself. No. Don't have faith in myself. I'm not the one able to accomplish. Have faith in God. Don't even have faith in faith. Well, see, if you have enough faith.

Oh, okay. So, I got to believe in the right kind of believing with enough believing. Right? Well, no. Because Jesus says it's not about how much faith you have. Because just the faith of a mustard seed can move them out. So, you don't have to have a lot of faith. You have to have a long of faith. It's not how big your faith is. It's how long it lasts. Peter walked on water but had little faith. Why?

[12:53] Because it wasn't about how big his faith was. It was about how long it lasted. The woman from the Syrophenician woman that had been possessed. Great faith.

Why? She kept coming. She kept coming. She kept coming. She kept coming. That's great faith. Because it lasted. It went through the barriers.

It went through the nonsense the disciples said about her. Didn't listen to men. Believed something about Jesus Christ. It just kept coming. Okay?

That's faith. Notice that he says have faith. Verse 22. Have it. It's a present imperative.

It means keep having it. Keep holding it. Keep holding it. Hold on to God with faith. Grasp on to God with faith.

[13:49] Cling to him by faith. That's what he's saying. And keep on holding on by faith in him. He is the one who's able to do more than we ever asked or thought.

Do you believe that? See, what do I believe in God? This is the question. When I pray, who am I believing in?

Is He able? Yeah. Is He willing? Okay. Is He willing?

Yeah. Does He say He wants to do these things for us?

Oh, He is our Father who wants to give good gifts to His children. So do we believe that? See, faith in God.

[14:56] Secondly, Jesus describes in verse 23 this conviction, this believing without doubting. Now I want you to notice verse 23 is a general statement.

He says, He says, He says, He's not giving them a direct command at this point. He's not giving them a direct instruction, but He is teaching them about prayer.

He's giving a general statement. Whoever, whoever says to this mountain, be taken up and thrown into the sea and does not doubt in His heart.

Stop there. Does not doubt in His what? Heart. What does that mean? Forget what doubting is for a second.

What does He mean to me? Heart. What does it mean to me? Heart. That is an issue of doubting. When we talk biblically about the heart, what does Jesus mean? Don't insert what we mean in our culture by heart.

[16:06] What did Jesus mean? The Hebrew thought of heart. Hebrews 4.12. The Word of God is living and active.

Right? Piercing soul and spirit. Able to discern the thoughts and the intentions of the heart.

The heart is the thoughts and the intentions. Okay? In Hebrew, in biblical thinking, the heart is not where my feelings are. That's the soul.

My heart is where my intentions are. where my thoughts are. That's why Jesus talks about heart all the time. In your heart, so in your intentions. He who has faith to move mountains but does not love, the heart, does not have intention, does not thinking about what He's doing, heartless.

Okay? So doubt's in His heart. So what do we mean by doubt? What's doubt? We all doubt. Right? I pray for certain things. Can I pray without?

[17:17] Doubting? How do I do that? What does that mean? Let me give you a couple examples of this word doubt in other contexts. So in Acts 10, Peter is told by a vision, remember the vision where he gets the, all the birds coming down and all the unclean animals coming down and he's told to arise, kill, eat.

Remember when Peter as a good Jew says, no, no, no, no, no, no. I'm a good Jew. I won't do that. Those are unclean. And God says, what God is, what was called unclean is now called clean. Second time he gets the vision. Same thing. Arise, kill, and eat. No, I can't. I'm a good Jew. What God has made, God has made the unclean clean. Does it a third time. And then he's told, Peter, here's what you're going to do.

I want you to go to the Gentile house, to Cornelius, and you're going to tell the gospel to him. Well, Lord, Jew, I can't go into a Gentile house. That's unclean.

What did I just tell you three times? God has now declared it clean. Go. So go, and then he says, go without doubting. Go without hesitating.

[18:23] Go without any misgiving. Carry the baggage of your past into it. Go. No, I said, it's good. I have declared it clean.

Go without any hesitation. Another example, Romans chapter four, it describes how Abraham, when God gave him the vision in Genesis 15, remember, took him outside and showed him all the stars of the sky, and he said, number the stars if you can.

Okay, one, two. And what you see, as many stars are in the sky is as many descendants as you will have.

And the text tells us, Abraham believed God, period. And it was reckoned to him as righteousness. He was saved that moment.

He was justified by faith. Paul builds his whole theology of justification by faith in Romans on Paul. Excuse me, on Abraham's example.

[19:31] sorry, mix it up in A. It's like I keep calling Mark John, you know, whatever, or Matthew. But he's Mark, right? So, what does it mean to doubt?

Doubt, to doubt means to go with some hesitation, to have some misgivings, to waver. See, Abraham believed without wavering.

He just believed it. He took God at his word. So when we pray without doubting, we are taking him at his word.

He has said, I want this for you. I'm praying for that. I'm praying for that. Because God has said. And then Jesus adds the confidence to the end of verse 23. He says, let me find it, does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him.

[20:38] It shall be to him. He does not doubt, but believes. So what's doubt? The opposite of doubt is belief. So doubting is not believing. Right? By this context.

So not doubting, but believing. But trusting. But having faith. And here's the kicker. That what he says, now my text says will come to pass.

Is that what yours has? Does that have a future? That he believes it will come about, will happen, will... It's not future. Actually, the original text says if he does not doubt in his heart, but believes it is happening.

It is happening. In other words, not just believing that someday it will come true, but believing it's already happened. It's already done.

See, that's the confidence I have when I pray with faith. It's done. It's good as done. Now, the next phrase says it will be.

[21:47] Okay? So when we experience it, it's not right now. It's not name it and claim it. It's not right now. It will come at some point whenever God says, okay, now.

But as far as my faith is concerned, done. It's done. Now, it doesn't mean I don't keep praying because me being the never-doubting kind of person, right?

Sarcastic. Me being weak in the flesh will doubt the next day. We'll be uncertain the next day. And so I've got to pray it again.

Because of my weakness, I need to pray it again. And keep praying it. And keep praying it. And believe it's already done. Pray for my benefit. I mean, prayers for my benefit. It's my relationship of trusting in Him.

So it raises the question, is Jesus teaching name it and claim it here? This is the text they use. It sure sounds like it, doesn't it?

[23:01] If you say, and you don't doubt, but you believe, it shall be done. Sure sounds like it. Just got to say it, name it, claim it.

Is that what He's teaching? This is not a universal guarantee of all and every prayer. And this is not beyond our reasoning, but understand that this prayer, this teaching assumes we are not praying

sinfully.

It's not about imposing our will on God. God. Okay? We're, we still aren't God in naming the shots. He is. He is. The point is, I'll come back to that later, but the point is that, is that faith is indispensable.

Faith is vital. Prayer is the expression of our faith. Prayer activates our faith. I'm always harping on it. If I got something, ax to grind, it's this. Faith is active. Faith is not static.

[24 : 19] Faith is not just something we've had and it's in my mind and yeah, I trust that. No, it's active. It's continuing. It's, I am trusting in Him. I'm depending on Him.

I am leaning upon Him. I'm looking to Him. It's active. And when I pray, I'm activating my faith by the very fact that I'm coming to Him. It's absolute trust in Him.

I believe that He is a Father who gives. He is a Father who tells me to ask Him. Even though He already knows what I need before I ask Him, He tells me, ask.

I want you to come. I want you to come every day. I want you to come all the time. I want you to come without ceasing. Why? Because I want you. And you want me.

I'm that void that you can't name. If you don't know me, I'm, God is that void. I'm that emptiness that you can't fill until you know me by name.

[25 : 23] You know that. James chapter 1 also speaks about asking without doubting.

So, he comments on this that's in a helpful way. So, James 1 says this. Oh, we love this part, right? Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you meet trials of various kinds. Right?

Hallelujah. So excited I'm going through trials. Love that hard stuff. Got to stretch my muscles and, right, Mark? I got to do the stuff that hurts.

No gain, no pain, no gain. Um, count it all joy, my brethren, when you meet various trials. Why?

Because you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.

Yeah, yeah, it helps me grow. Helps me get stronger. Yes, it does. And let's, and let steadfastness have its full effect. Let it, embrace that trial.

[26 : 27] That you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. See, God wants that for you. If, now listen carefully, if any of you lacks wisdom, you ever lack wisdom?

Okay, that was a dumb question, sorry. Preaching to the choir. If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God. Now watch what he says about God.

Don't miss this part. Let him ask God, who, what, gives generously,! Without, what?

Without reproach. In other words, he's not going to shame you for lack of wisdom? Oh, you need wisdom. Come on, aren't you better than that?

That's not what the Father does. Without reproach, it's not going to make you feel bad because you don't have the wisdom. In fact, he tells us, you lack wisdom? Come on!

[27 : 35] I'll give it generously. A little bonus. And then notice what he says. Who gives generously to all, without, by the way, to all, without reproach, and it will be given.

Same words. It shall be done. Okay, it will be to him. But, let him ask, there we go. Let him ask in faith with no doubting. There we go.

Why? Why no doubting? For the one who doubts, is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. Here we go. Back and forth. For the person that, let, for that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord because he is a double-minded man.

Back and forth. Back and forth. Back and forth. Will he? Won't he? Will he? Let's get the flower out. Will he will or he won't? He's unstable in all his ways.

Why? Because he has no conviction. When he's asking, he's hesitating. Will he? Won't he? I don't know. I'm not sure. What can I rest my faith in?

[28 : 53] Does God want to give this to me? Well, he says, James has just said, he gives generously to all without reproach if you ask for wisdom.

In other words, God says, I will give you wisdom if you ask me. Period. Why would you doubt? He's just said, I'll give it to you. Okay.

Can I ask for it? What? Ask for it. I don't know.

You know, not to me. No, he says, to all. Well, you know, I'm such a, you know, failing Christian. Without reproach.

See the word? Hear the word? Take him at his word. So, let's give an example. So, by the way, this ask in faith is present.

[29 : 55] Keep on asking. Persist in asking. It's not about asking one time. You know, I've asked God, so I've named it and claimed it. I'm done. Eh. Every time Jesus talks about prayer, he talks about it in the present tense.

The one who keeps on asking will receive. The one who keeps on seeking will find. The one who keeps on knocking the door will be answered. Not, who asks once. Well, you said it.

Do you believe God? Put it in context. So, let me give you a negative example. Or just, let me ask you a question. I want to ask God that I might be rich.

Can I do that without any hesitation? Can I do that? physically, earthly, riches? Good question.

I want to be rich. Because doesn't he promise us health, wealth, and prosperity? Spiritually, absolutely. So, if I prayed that, knowing what I know about scripture, if I prayed to be rich, can I pray without doubting?

[31 : 13] It's just not, can you do that? I couldn't. I couldn't pray without doubt. I'd have hesitations all over the place. Misgivings? I couldn't pray that with certainty. Okay, that's an easy one.

Because, you know, wanting to be rich is a sign of covetousness and selfishness and sinfulness. And God has warned us in scripture to not desire riches.

so, okay, I have reason to be hesitant and doubtful that he'll make me rich. What about things like praying for healing?

Oh, that's a better question. He tells us to pray for healing. In fact, he encourages us to pray for healing.

It's part of the daily prayer. Give us this day our daily bread, which includes all physical needs. Can I pray that without hesitation, without doubting?

[32 : 23] Is he able? Yeah. Is he able to heal? Does he want to heal? Yeah. Like that. Just say the word. Does he want to heal?

That's another question. See, this text, Mark 11, 23, 24, is not a universal guarantee.

It's not the only teaching on prayer. But it does incite us to pray with faith.

When can I ask without doubting? Let me put it that way. When can you pray without any doubts?

What can you pray for without any doubts?

When I know he wants me to have it. When he has taught me to live a certain way, I can pray to live that certain way. Because he wants that. Right?

[33 : 28] What does he desire? What pleases him? Well, if I pray for those things, I can be certain he will answer that. Not right now. Lord, give me patience. Wait a minute.

What did I ask? Lord, give me more faith. Coming to you. Help me to bear fruit in season.

Coming at you. You got that. Help me walk in a way that's worthy of you. I will be glad to do that.

See, I can pray with conviction about those things.

So, effective prayer has conviction. Verse 24, there's a second mark of effective prayer. It's also marked by certainty. believing you have already received it.

Or as he says at the end of verse 23, believing it's already happening. And then he kind of takes it to the next step in verse 24. Believing you've already received it.

[34 : 36] You already possess it. You already have it. It shall be. So, I want you to notice, first of all, which prayers are the ones we can be certain about.

Verse 24, therefore I tell you, whatever you ask, whatever, all things that you ask, okay, let's get back into the name and claim it.

It sounds like it's wide open. Whatever you pray, all things, every, in other words, every kind of prayer that you pray, every area of prayer that you're praying about, that you are praying and that you are asking, again, present tense, that you've been praying about, that you've been asking, you continue to pray about, you continue to ask, all things that you're praying about, believe.

So, what kind of things? Well, let's look at some examples from Mark, Mark chapter 5. To the dad, Jairus, who wanted his daughter healed, who was at the point of death, remember her?

Little 12-year-old girl? And when he gets, remember he gets interrupted by the woman with the 12-year bleeding? And he deals with her and then, by the time he's coming to the house of Jairus, his servant comes and says, don't bother the master anymore.

[36 : 05] I'm sorry, master. She's done. She's gone. It's too late. What does Jesus say to Jairus? To dad, don't fear. Only believe.

Don't fear. Only believe. You've asked me to take care of your daughter. I'm already coming. I'm on my way. Too late?

No. Don't fear. Only believe. What about Mark chapter 9? To the dad who has this boy that's suffering from an unclean spirit from a demon that throws him, right? This violent kind of action of this boy that convulses him and throws him to the ground and tries to choke him. What does he say to that dad? Because remember, the disciples couldn't heal that. The disciples weren't able, right? The nine, remember? Jesus come down from the mountain. And Jesus, so the man says to, so the dad says to Jesus, if you can, would you please? [37 : 13] If you can. And what does Jesus say when he says if you can? If you can. If you can. All things are possible to the one who believes.

Believes. Do you believe I can do this? Yeah. You're Jesus. Mark chapter 10. After Jesus talks about the difficulty of riches and the rich man who walked away and then he talks about how difficult it is for the rich man to enter into heaven just as hard as a camel going through the eye of a needle. A real camel going through a little tiny needle of a sewing kit. And the disciples say, man, if a rich man can't be saved then who could be saved? Who could be saved? And Jesus says, well, with man it's impossible. Of course. But not with God. Do you think it's impossible? Do you believe in God? See, what kinds of things? All things. And then Jesus urges them in verse 24 to certainty. So he says, whatever you ask in prayer, believe, continue to believe that you have already received it. [38 : 40] Believe you've already received it. Remember the definition of faith in Hebrews 11.1? faith is the assurance of things hoped for.

Assurance. The certainty of things hoped for. Faith is the certainty, the assurance of things hoped for. And the conviction of things not seen.

So that first mark, conviction, without outing, it's the conviction of what I don't see will come. It's the assurance of things hoped for.

Here's how I like to think of prayer. When I was going through the depression thing and when I was on the side of coming to recovery, what helped me was 1 Peter 5 where he talks about humble yourself under the mighty hand of God and he will lift you up and I was attracted to that lifting you up part because I was way down.

So I wanted the lifting up. So okay, humble myself, I gotta do that. Humble myself under the mighty hand of God, he will lift you up and then there's that little phrase, in his time. At the proper season. [40 : 03] He's always gotta bring that up, his sovereignty thing. But then it said, in the meantime, right, so humble yourself under his mighty hand and he will at some point lift you up.

In the meantime, casting all your anxieties on him because he himself cares for you. And that appealed to me.

This picture of casting as a picture of prayer. The prayer of faith. Casting. In other words, it's an anxiety, it's a care, you know, casting all, take all your cares, all your anxieties, all your fears, all your uncertainties.

Take them and off of your shoulder, cast them on him. I just love that picture. That helped me. It's like, okay, this whole depression thing. Okay, I'm gonna take that here.

Here. This relationship that I can't fix, okay, all right, that's yours too. And it's like, okay, that's not on me.

[41 : 18] By the way, when I woke up the next day, guess where it was? Back on me. So I had to do it again. Right? So I gotta keep doing that. But that image helps me.

I cast it on him. Okay, he's gonna take care of that. Because he just told me he cares for me and to cast it on him. He's gonna take care of it. So it's gonna, this relationship, I don't know how to fix that. I don't know how to help that person. I don't know how to, reconciliation happened there. But he does. So I'm gonna put it on his lap.

And then when he's ready to do that, he'll let me know. So I'm done. I'm done with it. Till tomorrow morning when I gotta do it again. Are you with me?

Doesn't that help? Isn't that a picture that, man, just take that sack. Stephen Curry. Sorry. And I want you to notice here in verse 24, the you here he's talking to.

[42 : 27] You. You have faith. You believe. And it will be yours. Plural. He's talking to them not as individuals, but as a group.

He's talking to them as a community of believers. See, where this really comes into power is when the community of believers pray together.

When we agree together and pray about things. Do you know what happens? What we pray for happens. It's about, this is the new house of prayer.

This is the new temple. He's giving to us as believers to be that house. To come together and to pray together. And to believe that we've already received what we asked for.

Power of prayer together. So, okay, finally, a question. What if your prayer's unanswered? What if I've been praying about something and I believe it's a right prayer?

[43 : 37] Say, I'm praying for a loved one to be saved. I'm praying for reconciliation of a relationship. I'm praying for some kind of thing that I know God wants.

So what if it's unanswered? Well, as I said before, this is not the only text on prayer. This is not the only teaching on prayer. So when we come to a passage like this that we have lots of questions about, let scripture interpret scripture.

In fact, one of the most important principles of interpreting scripture is to let scripture interpret scripture for you. So in other words, this isn't the only passage on prayer. So if I've got questions about this passage on prayer, how about if I look up other passages on prayer and see what light it sheds on this one?

Is this the only thing he says about prayer? No, it's not. Actually, there's a lot of other things to say about prayer that might shed light on what this means. Especially about unanswered prayer.

Praying with certainty. So if you're ever reading a text and you're unsure, you're confused and you're not sure how to understand it, you have cross-references in your Bible?

[44 : 53] Check those out. You got a concordance in the... If you have a good Bible, you should have a concordance in the back. Look up the subject and look at all the text on that. Let's see what the Bible says about whatever you're studying.

That'll help you. So what else does the Bible teach about prayer? Well, let's just look at Jesus. What does Jesus teach about prayer? Luke 11. The disciples ask him to teach them how to pray.

So he teaches them the Lord's Prayer. He teaches them how to pray. And then he tells them a parable about prayer. He tells a parable about a man who has a visitor come and he doesn't have any bread in his house.

So he goes to his neighbor at midnight and asks for bread. And the neighbor says, my doors are locked, my children are in bed. Don't bother me. And this man goes, still here, still need bread.

Go home. Still here, still need bread. Go home. not going to give up until he gives them bread. Why?

[46 : 00] Jesus says, why? Because he was importunate. That's a nice way of saying, bugging the heck out of somebody. Luke 18, he tells another parable about prayer.

See, prayer is not a one-time name and claim it. It is a keep persisting, keep coming, keep asking, keep seeking, keep knocking.

And so he talks about a widow in Luke 18. He teaches them a prayer about prayer, about not losing heart in prayer. So consider the widow who comes to an unjust judge, not a good judge.

A judge who didn't care about what her problem was, just didn't care, tells her to go away. What does she do? Comes back the next day.

Judge, I need you to deal with this injustice my neighbor's done. Go away. Comes back the next day. Judge, I need you to, got the picture? Keeps coming, keeps coming, keeps coming, keeps coming.

[47 : 03] And finally the judge says, she's going to wear me out. Fine, have it. And Jesus said, if an unjust judge can be persuaded like that, what do you think your Father in Heaven will be like for the children who ask Him, who cry night and day?

Don't pray once, but cry night and day. What do we learn about prayer from Jesus? How about in Matthew 26 in Gethsemane?

Jesus said, let this cup pass from me, but not my will but thine be done. What's the cup? The cross, right?

Let this cup pass. Did Jesus not have enough faith when He prayed that? See, if we're going to say this whole name it and claim it and faith and every kind of prayer, then we've got to look at Jesus and say, okay, Jesus didn't have enough faith then.

because He prayed, let this cup pass and it didn't pass. In fact, Jesus prayed three times.

[48 : 16] That reminds me of Paul. 2 Corinthians 12, Paul prayed for the thorn in the flesh, right? Please, Lord, take this, remove this thorn in the flesh.

Pray three times. Please, Lord, remove this thorn in the flesh. Is that an inappropriate prayer? No. He wants relief from the suffering. Nothing wrong with that. The Lord answer him? Yeah. The Lord said what? Nope. Nope. I'm removing it. Nope, nope. It's all yours because it's good for you because it's going to keep the big head humbled. And Paul says, God, I'm glad for when I'm weak, He is strong. I'm good. I'm good with that. See, sometimes God says, no. There are certain trials that we go through that we cannot pray with certainty that God will grant it because He hasn't granted that He will remove all our trials. [49 : 32] In fact, what He teaches to the opposite is that you're going to go through trials. That's my plan. That's my road. That's how I strengthen you.

That's how I test and prove your faith. Can He relieve us from some trials? Yeah, sometimes He's going to say, yeah. So pray. And bigger things, when we're going through trials, we're praying for, okay, give me strength. Okay, yeah, that's coming. I'll give you that. Give me more faith. Okay. I can give you that. Take the trial away. No, go back to the other part. Give me joy. Help me to consider it all joy. Help me see that. Really believe that. Okay.

Okay. So, we find the same language from Mark 11, 24 in 1 John 5. The same language. [50 : 35] When we ask for anything, we have what we're asking for. So listen to how John approaches it in 1 John 5, 10. Whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself.

Whoever does not believe in God has made God a liar, and because he has not believed in the testimony that God has borne concerning His Son. And this is the testimony that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. Therefore, whoever has the Son has the life. Whoever does not have the Son does not have the life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life.

Listen now. And this is the confidence that we have toward Him. That if we ask anything, okay, same in words, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have. We've already received. the request that we have asked of Him.

[51 : 56] What's the teaching that sheds light on the other text? If we ask anything, what? According to His will.

Okay, then what's His will? His will is what He desires for you. His will is what He wants. His will is everything that He instructs you to do.

That's His will. There are several texts that specifically say what His will is. He wills to save those who come and believe in Him.

He wills to help us be surrendered people who present our bodies as a living sacrifice, not conformed to the world, but transformed into the ruining of our mind.

This is God's will. It is His will that we be sanctified in our behavior toward the opposite sex with a pure way. It is His will that we bear fruit.

[53 : 01] It is His will that we grow in faith, overcome sin, learn to think and understand and put things together. Remember how Jesus said to the disciples, do you not yet get it?

Do you not yet think? Do you not yet put these things together? I imply from that that Jesus wants that for us to put things together, to be thinking.

So if I pray, help me think, help me put these things together, I can pray with absolute certainty He will answer that because He wants it.

That's how we apply this. Pray the six things Jesus taught us to pray. Cause Thy name to be set apart.

Cause Thy kingdom to come. Cause Thy will to be done. Give to us this day our bread for today. Forgive us our debt as we forgive our debtors.

[54 : 06] Lead us not in temptation but deliver us from evil. I can pray that with absolute certainty. Why? Cause that's what He taught me to pray.

That's what He wants. I have no hesitation. If I say, Lord, cause Your name to be, Your reputation to be magnified and set apart so that people will see it.

Reveal Yourself. I wonder if He's going to fulfill that. You think He wants to do that? Cause Your kingdom to come. Your kingdom to come through the preaching.

Your kingdom that comes for preparing the good soil so that they can hear the Word that's implanted in them and grows. Do you think He wants that? Yeah, because that's what the kingdom is. Cause Your Holy Spirit to work in our lives so that there is righteousness, peace, and joy. Think He wants that? Yeah, He declared that He wants that. You can pray that with certainty. Pray with conviction.

[55 : 11] Without misgivings. Because you know what God wants. Pray with certainty. Believe in that you already have it. Because God promises to give.

It shall be to you. Take courage, child of God. The Father gives good gifts to His children. Be encouraged to pray with faith, with conviction, and with certainty. because God said, it shall be done to you.

Let us pray. Father, we thank You for this Word. We pray, Father, that You would continue to teach us along these lines. Increase our faith.

Teach us how to pray. Teach us what You want so that we might more boldly come to You and pray with certainty. And teach us to pray together.

[56 : 15] To understand the power of praying together. That You might move mountains in our midst. This we pray in Christ's name.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.