

Lesson 15 WHATSOEVER YE WILL

If Ye Abide in Me, and My Words Abide in You, Ask whatsoever Ye Will, and it Shall be Done Unto You-John 15:7

Does God lie? Does God exaggerate? Have you ever prayed for something and not received it? Then how do you explain the promise concerning prayer “that whatsoever ye will shall be done unto you”?

I. Introduction

- a. It is plain from this text that the “abiding branch” will manifest its dependence upon the vine particularly through **unceasing** prayer.
- b. Without intermission the branch is ever calling: "O my vine, send the sap I need to bear Thy fruit." And these prayers are **never** unanswered: the branch asks what it needs, what it will, and it is done.
- c. The healthy life of the believer in Christ is equally one of unceasing prayer. Consciously or unconsciously, he lives in continual dependence and this dependence **draws** forth continual prayer.
- d. The Word of our Lord, "You can do nothing," has taught us that like the branches' continual drawing of sap from the vine, the believer too must be continually asking and receiving. This is not a command but a **fact** of its existence.
- e. The promise of our text gives us infinite boldness: "Ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you." However, this promise must be understood from its **context**.

II. The Context

- a. It is especially noteworthy that the promise is given in direct connection with **fruit-bearing**. The continual asking of the branch is that it bears much fruit, fruit that remains, fruit that brings glory to the heavenly Vine.
- b. In context, this passage occurs as Christ was preparing to send His disciples out, and they were being readied to bear much fruit. Here, Jesus wanted them to understand that they had **unlimited** access to the resources of Heaven to aid in their bringing forth much fruit.
- c. They had been **trained** by Jesus to pray for the accomplishment of the will of the Father in every circumstance. Matt 6:10 *Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven KJV*
- d. Since they were to be praying in **harmony** with the will of God for them, their prayers would effectually bring the Spirit and the power they needed for their work. They would bear much fruit.
- e. If the branch is abiding in Christ and His words are abiding in them, the **things** that they will pray for will reflect their abiding dependence and their total submission to whatever the will of God is for them in the moment.
- f. Such prayers will always be answered because they are always **consistent** with what God is doing in and through them. Matt 5:44-45 *But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; 45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: KJV*

III. The Contrast

- a. Contrast this with the majority of prayers in evidence among believers in the church today and you will see that very often the focus of today's prayer content is off point and has little or nothing **to do with** fruit bearing.
- b. Rather, the focus is upon personal comfort, personal safety, personal pleasure, personal health, and personal gain or satisfaction. This sad state demonstrates that we are often **more concerned** about our will than the will of the Father.
- c. In terms of our metaphor this kind of prayer would have our branch asking for relief from the heat of the sun or protection from the rain; the very elements that will contribute to the production of **healthy fruit**. James 1:3-4 *Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. 4 But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. KJV*
- d. All too often believers lose sight of the fact that we are branches connected to the vine to bear much fruit; **His fruit**; fruit that can only be produced by circumstance that we must endure and this often calls for our suffering. James 5:10-11 *Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. 11 Behold, we count them happy which endure. KJV*
- e. Since believers are on earth to accomplish the will and purposes of God in and through the circumstance that He ordains, or, in whatever state we find ourselves, we need to **bear up** under the load placed upon us by our loving heavenly Vine. Luke 14:27 *And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. KJV*
- f. No one enjoys pain and suffering. No one relishes having to endure deprivation, or illness, either our own or that which affects those with whom we are connected. But this passage suggests an **alternate** way to pray for those situations.
- g. Instead of asking for **deliverance** from a circumstance, perhaps we should reframe our prayers by seeking Godly fruit **through the circumstance** that God has seen fit to present to us. 2 Cor 12:9 *And he said unto me, My grace is*

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sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. KJV

- h. When our prayer is limited to ourselves and our own needs, our own desire for personal comfort and satisfaction in this life, we **rob** prayer of its power; and we rob ourselves of the power of appropriating it. James 4:3 *Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. KJV*
- i. This said, it does **not negate** the clear teaching of our Lord that we ought to pray about mundane things; only that we need to be vigilant with regard to our own prayer volume whether it is more self-seeking than grace-seeking. Matt 6:11 *Give us this day our daily bread. KJV*
- j. A **grace-seeking** prayer focuses upon our need to demonstrate Christ-likeness in any circumstance. It concerns itself with the glory of God and the will of God in spite of what must be endured. Matt 26:41 *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. KJV*
- k. The self-seeking prayer is all about me; what I desire, what I think I need, my comfort, my health, and the well-being of those that I particularly care about. It concerns itself with deliverance **from** circumstance not the grace to go through it.
- l. If we abide in Him and His words in us we will ask whatsoever we will, and it shall be done unto us. God, teach us to **apply** ourselves to prayer that reflects this abiding.

IV. The Role of the Spirit

- a. The promise of answered prayer in this passage is given in direct connection with the coming of the **Spirit**. The Spirit is not mentioned in the parable, just as the sap of the vine is not mentioned. But both are meant throughout.
- b. In the chapter preceding the parable, our Lord had spoken to the disciples of the Holy Spirit, in connection with their **inner life**, being in them, and revealing Himself within them. John 14:16 *And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; KJV*
- c. In the next chapter He speaks of the Holy Spirit in connection with their work, coming to them, convincing the world, and **glorifying** Him. John 16:14 *He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. KJV*
- d. To avail ourselves of the unlimited prayer promises we see in this parable, we must walk after the Spirit, and be wholly **given up** to the work and glory of Christ in us. Whatever the cost. Rom 8:4 *That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. KJV*
- e. Only then, will the Spirit lead us into the truth of the meaning of answered prayer and the **certainty** of its fulfillment.

V. Appropriating Abiding Prayer

- a. Let us realize that we can only fulfill our calling to bear much fruit, by praying much; but by prayer that seeks the fulfillment of the will of God **first** and foremost.
- b. In Christ are hid all the treasures the world around us needs; and it is in and through the people of God that He manifests His blessings and **continual supply** as they bear up under difficult circumstance.
- c. It is through prayer, much prayer, strong **believing** prayer of believers whose purpose is bearing much fruit that these blessings are brought down from heaven for a witness to the world in which we live.
- d. Let us claim it as one of the revelations of our wonderful life in the Vine: He tells us that if we ask in His name, by virtue of our **union** with Him, whatsoever it be, it will be done to us; that we bear much fruit.
- e. God's children are feeble because there is too little grace-seeking, abiding prayer. We bear so little fruit because there is so little prayer and when we do pray it is often so **self-focused**.
- f. Believing the promise of this parable should motivate us to pray **properly** that we should bear much fruit.
- g. To be a branch means not only bearing fruit on earth, but **power** in prayer to bring down blessing from Heaven. Abiding fully means praying much and having your prayers answered.

VI. Application

- a. For the next week keep a journal of the things for which you pray. How many are self-seeking? How many are grace seeking?
- b. THINK ABOUT THIS: How can you often reframe mundane prayer requests in such a way that they become grace-seeking prayer?