

ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS TO ACCEPTABLE PRAYER -- # 3

**I. INTRODUCTION:**

Another essential requirement of acceptable prayer is that it be according to God's will. We have noted that our prayers must be offered in reverence, humility, sincerity and faith. The assurances that God will hear and answer our prayers are numerous, but the limitation is "according to His will:". Let's note in this lesson the statement of the limitation and some observations relative to the answer of prayer that is according to God's will.

**II. DISCUSSION:**

- A. Prayer must be according to God's will.
1. The assurance of being heard is conditioned upon asking according to the will of God -- I John 5:14.
  2. Our attitude must always be "Thy will be done..." -- Matt.6:10; 26:39, 42.
    - a) Must recognize the supremacy of God's will -- His will is better than OUR will! cf. Isa.55:8-9.
    - b) The standard or pattern = "as in heaven, so on earth".
    - c) If sincere, this attitude will manifest itself in life in obedience -- I John 3:22; Luke 6:46; I John 5:3; 2:3-6.
  3. Asking according to God's will is to ask in harmony with what He has taught regarding prayer -- He has not promised to grant anything that is contrary to His will.
  4. Asking according to God's will is accomplished as we abide in Christ and His words abide in us -- John 15:7.
- B. Note the following observations with reference to the answer of such prayer.
1. *It will be according to what is consistent with His declared will.*
    - a) Answers in the form of miracles ruled out. See I Cor.13:10.
    - b) We need not expect an answer to the prayer which is an attempt to circumvent God's ordained arrangements and laws. [Illustration: "If any will not work, neither let him eat." - 2 Thes.3:10.]
    - c) We certainly cannot expect an answer to requests that are designed to fulfill evil or selfish desires. This is not consistent with His nature. See James 4:3 and compare this with Matt.7:7.
  2. *It will be according to what is best for us!*
    - a) God knows better than we what is for our REAL good -- we are not always good judges!
    - b) Illustrate by requests by children.
    - c) Paul, personally, is an illustration of this in 2 Cor.12:7-9.
    - d) The assurance: God will withhold no good thing - Psalms 84:11; Matt.7:7-11; Luke 11:11-13.

3. *It will be according to what is best for the whole!*
  - a) A just father would withhold any request which is not consistent with the good of other members of the family!
  - b) Illustrated in the requests of Jesus -- **Heb.5:7**.

### **III. CONCLUSION:**

My will must bow to God's will, the good and perfect One. This limitation is necessary because His will is supreme. It is beneficial because He knows what is best for us. It still allows a large sphere for the exercise of prayer for there are many things which are "according to His will". We need simply to learn God's will, submit to it, and thus our requests will conform to His will!