

- 2) The *sinner* here is called a *brother*. That means he is a true Christian.
- 3) Because the sinner is a Christian, *death* must be physical not spiritual. A true believer may lose his fellowship with God but he will never lose his relationship with God.
- 4) Sin led to the physical death of several Bible characters. **Achan** died for stealing. **Aaron's sons** died for offering strange fire to God. **Uzzah** died for touching God's Ark. **Ananias** and **Sapphira** died for lying to God. God alone knows when it is time to take a disobedient Christian home to heaven.
- 5) God wants us to pray confidently for erring Christians, v.16. Our prayers may bring that sinner back to God. Only God knows when He must chasten a rebellious Christian or take him to heaven. Our part is to pray for God's will to be done and that the erring Christian will repent and return to fellowship with God.

b. We should pray for the erring brother until we are sure that it is not God's will.

- 1) If the brother or sister has sinned unto death and is unwilling to repent, God will deal with him or her as He knows best. Sometimes that is with death.
- 2) It may be impossible for us to know God's mind on this; therefore, we ought to keep praying for erring brothers.
- 3) Read verse 17 again. Certainly, not every sin that a Christian commits is unto death. Praise God for that or there would not be any Christians alive.
- 4) However, the fact that God says there is a sin unto death ought to put fear in our hearts when we are tempted to rebel. It ought to stir us to pray for each other.

Conclusion: We have looked at the meaning, source, result, and application of confidence in prayer. If you have not been praying confidently, listen to this sermon again and study the notes. Ask God to conform your will to His will so that you can pray "thy will be done", receive God's answers to prayer, and cheerfully accept God's answer when it conflicts with your fleshly desire.

Song: Teach Me to Pray – 346

Praying Confidently

11 August 2019 PM – 1 John 5:14-17 – 1Jn2019 – Scott Childs

Introduction: Commenting on prayer, Warren Wiersbe said, "The pages of the Bible and the pages of history are filled with reports of answered prayer. Prayer is not spiritual self-hypnosis. Nor do we pray because it makes us feel better. We pray because God has commanded us to pray and because prayer is the God-appointed means for a believer to receive what God wants to give him."

God does not want us to pray timidly nor faithlessly, but confidently.

Transition: This evening I want us to examine **four aspects of confidence in prayer** that ought to help us pray more confidently.

1. The Meaning of Confidence, v.14

a. Its definition

- 1) The word primarily means *freedom in speaking*.
- 2) It refers to *fearless confidence, cheerful courage, and boldness*.
- 3) A person who has prays confidently has freedom to speak to God, without fear, with courage and boldness.

b. Its use elsewhere

- 1) The word is found some 31 times in the NT including four times in John's first epistle.
- 2) Twice John uses it in connection with future judgment.
 - a) (1 John 2:28) "*And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.*"
 - b) (1 John 4:17) "*Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.*"
- 3) Twice John uses it in connection with prayer.
 - a) (1 John 3:21-22) "*Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.*"
 - b) Again in our text (v.14).

2. The Source of Confidence, v.14

a. Confidence begins with knowing Christ, v.13

- 1) Read 1Jn 5:13.
- 2) Knowing that we know the Lord and have eternal life begins our confidence with God. Those who do not know the Lord have never been forgiven of their sin and thus have no assurance that God will hear them (cf., Ps 66:18).
- 3) Christians who are not right with God have a similar problem. Note what God said to His people when they were doing wrong. (Isaiah 59:1-2) "*Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.*"
- 4) As we just read in 1Jn 3:21-22, knowing Christ enables us to maintain hearts that do not condemn us. Praise God for 1Jn 1:9. Being right with God gives us confidence to come to God in prayer.

b. Confidence is based on praying in God's will.

- 1) Read again v.14.
- 2) Our confidence is in God – the only one who can answer prayer.
- 3) God's will refers to His desire on any subject. God has a desire in every situation. He knows and desires what is best. He knows all the facts related to every situation. He sees the future as clearly as the past and present.
- 4) God has revealed much of His will in the Bible. As we carefully and consistently study the Bible, we can discover God's will for many situations. (Psalms 119:105) "*Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.*"
- 5) God's will never contradicts His Word.
- 6) **Beware!** We do not discover God's will by taking verses or phrases out of their context. For example, if you were praying about selling your house and you read (2 Kings 4:7) "*Then she came and told the man of God. And he said, Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy children of the rest.*", do not claim that "go sell" is God's will for your life. That is totally out of context.

- 7) Praying in the will of God is looking at the situation from the same point of view as God. It is being in harmony with God. John Candlish adds, "*It is our asking as one in interest, in sympathy, in character, in end and aim ... with him whom we ask.*" George Mueller said, "*Prayer is not overcoming God's reluctance. It is laying hold of God's willingness.*" (In Wiersbe)
- 8) When we are still uncertain of God's will, it is praying "*not my will but thine be done*" as Jesus prayed in the Garden.
- 9) When we pray, even if we do not know the will of God, if we with a clean, obedient heart, humbly and submissively ask for the will of God, we can pray confidently, being ready to accept whatever God deems best.
- 10) Robert Law wisely reminds us that "*Prayer is a mighty instrument, not for getting man's will done in heaven, but for getting God's will done on earth.*" (In Wiersbe)

3. The Result of Confidence, v.15

a. We know that God hears us

- 1) When we pray in God's will, God said He will hear us, v.14. We must believe what God said.
- 2) We must know factually that God hears us. The idea of "*hear*" is not just that our words reached Him but that He received the request and will act upon it.

b. We know that God will answer us

- 1) *We know that we have the petitions that we desire of Him.* If our petition is in harmony with God's will and we are willing to accept whatever He desires, then we will cheerfully accept His answer even if it is not what our flesh desired. A "no" answer is just as good as a "yes" answer if it is God's will.
- 2) This applies to *whatsoever we ask*. When we pray this way, we can confidently say, "God always answer my prayers."

4. The Application of Confidence, v.16-17

a. We can pray for erring brothers

- 1) This is just one application of praying confidently, but an important one.