

**A Call to Pray**  
**Part 1**  
**“God Answers Prayer”**

**1 John 5:14-15 “Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. 15 And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.” (NKJV)**

**TODAY I want to begin a series of messages on prayer.**

**I feel deep in my heart that the Lord is calling us to a prayer life that is consistent...fervent....sincere....Spirit-empowered....and life-changing.**

**In my spirit, I sense a strong need for us as a Body of Believers to step forward to become a greater prayer force—That we would saturate our church in Prayer!**

**I’m challenging all of us today to take prayer more seriously.**

**I am calling for us to seek the Lord in prayer more fervently in our personal lives, and also as a body.**

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**You know, when a baby is born the first thing it does is cry.**

**Likewise, when a person is born again, the first thing they do is begin crying out to God in prayer.**

**For the believer, prayer is the oxygen of the soul, as natural as breathing.**

**So let's step up what we do naturally as believers and pray!**

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**Now, I'm going to begin today with a very basic, foundational understanding of prayer.**

**I've learned through the years that, worse than knowing NOTHING about prayer, is to be taught WRONG about it.**

**Because when prayer is mis-taught, you expect things from God that aren't going to happen.**

**Then you get discouraged and ultimately quit praying altogether.**

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**That said, the verse we just read lays out in great simplicity what prayer is and how it works.**

**So let's look today at the ABC's of prayer...**

**But First a little history...**

**If prayer didn't work, mankind would have quit praying long ago, but the Bible reveals that:**

**I. People have always prayed...**

**The Bible tells us that after the murder of Abel by Cain, Adam and Eve had another son named Seth.**

**Seth's descendants became the righteous lineage, where Cain's descendants became the wicked lineage.**

**The Bible says that during the days of Seth, "Then *men* began to call on the name of the Lord" (Gen 4:26).**

**This is the Bible's first record of prayer: "Men began to call on the name of the Lord" in prayer.**

**Following this beginning, the Bible records 650 prayers to God, with 450 recorded answers to prayer (that averages around 10 recorded prayers for every one of our 66 Bible books).**

**Our Lord Jesus was a praying Savior; we have 25 of His prayers recorded in Scripture.**

**Paul the Apostle mentions prayer, prayers, prayer reports, prayer requests, or exhortations to pray 41 times.**

**The Bible even describes different prayer postures: People prayed Sitting, Standing, Kneeling, Bowed with their face to the ground, and praying with hands lifted up.**

**From cover to cover the Bible is a book FILLED with prayer, calls to prayer, exhortations to pray, answers to prayer, and promises about prayer.**

**And right now as I speak, millions of people around the world are calling out to God in prayer, and God is answering thousands of those prayers right now!**

**PRAYER WORKS!**

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**This is why John tells us in our text that we should be:**

**II. Confident in our praying**

**“Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us” (1 John 5:14 NKJV).**

**It's not uncommon for Christians, even Christians with a long walk with God, to experience doubt when praying—so don't feel discouraged today if that is you!**

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**But God doesn't want us filled with doubt, uncertainty, or double-minded unbelief regarding prayer...**

**John says we're to be confident IN HIM...“This is the confidence we have in Him...”**

**Our confidence in prayer is “IN HIM”—in His character, His faithfulness, His goodness, His reliability—NOT in results or lack of them.**

**FACT: The ground, confidence, and foundation of all praying is in the God of the Bible who keeps His word!**

**ILLUS: Dominos pizza—we're not confident in the man who delivers it. Our confidence is in the company that promised it! So we're not shocked when it arrives. We EXPECTED it because they PROMISED it!**

**Likewise, the God who calls us to pray is a promise keeping, covenant keeping God!**

**God assured Jeremiah, “I am watching over My word to perform it” (1:12 NASB)—And that includes the promise to answer prayer!**

**Moses wrote in the Book of Numbers, “God is not a man that he should lie, or a son of man that he should change his mind” (Numbers 23:19 ESV).**

**John assures us that, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins...” (1 John 1:9 ESV)**

**Paul told young Timothy, “Even when we are too weak to have any faith left, he remains faithful to us and will help us, for he cannot disown us who are part of himself, and he will always carry out his promises to us” (2 Tim. 2:13 LB).**

**The Bible literally shouts to us that there is a God in heaven who hears and answers our prayers, and He can be depended on to keep His Word!**

**“This is the CONFIDENCE we have in Him!”**

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**Finally, John tells us what kind of prayer God hears—the prayer that is prayed...**

**II. According to His will**

**“...if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us” (1 Jn 5:14 NKJV).**

**Now here we’re given a stipulation, an “if” which means there is a condition to answered prayer—it must be in line with His will for us!**

**—When we ask for something that God also wants for us, what He knows is best for us, those things that line up with His purpose and desire for us...**

**Those are the prayers He hears and answers!**

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**Now listen: It’s not that He doesn’t hear us when we *DON’T* pray according to His will—he does.**

**In fact, all prayers are answered by God with either a Yes, a No, or a Wait.**

**If He says no, then rest assured you didn’t pray according to His will, and one day you will thank Him!**

**You may be convinced that what you’ve prayed for HAS to be His will, but God sees what you don’t and knows what is best for us.**

**So if we miss His will when we pray, God will say NO to protect us!**

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**When we DO pray according to His will, there's only two possible answers—Yes or Wait.**

**Now, we always want the first one....We want "YES" and we want it delivered quicker than a Big Mac at the window!**

**But often God says WAIT.**

**LISTEN: When He says "wait," it's because He either needs time to prepare us for the answer...**

**Or time to prepare others that will be involved in the answer,**

**Or time to prepare circumstances for the answer.**

**FOR INSTANCE, when Moses began to understand that he was called to deliver God's people from Egyptian bondage, he totally misread God's timing.**

**He killed an Egyptian that was abusing one of his brethren and had to flee to the land of Midian where God began to prepare HIM for the answer to his prayer—it took 40 years!**

**In the meantime, God was also preparing His people for the answer by bringing them to the place where they called out on God daily for deliverance.**

**And God prepared the circumstances by allowing Pharaoh to come to supreme power so that God was all the more magnified when He delivered His people from their grip.**

**So Moses is a perfect example of the “wait a while” answer to prayer!**

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**A “yes, but wait a while” answer from God requires the same simple understanding you have when ordering steak at a fine restaurant—you know it’s coming but you don’t expect it in 5 minutes!**

**You know the cook needs time to prepare it!**

**We don’t like “yes but wait a while” answers to prayer because we’ve got a fast food mentality but walk with a crook pot God!**

**He says “Wait” and we say “Why?”**

**But he who learns to wait on God will enjoy answers that “fast food” type pray-ers will never know!**

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**John assures that when we pray according to His will, we can KNOW that He hears us, and KNOW we will have it in His good time.**

**LET'S PRAY**