

# The Bulletin

## Meeks Street Church of Christ

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August 20, 2023

### **“Asking According To God’s Will”**

By W. Curtis Porter



God, in His word, has promised to answer prayer. However, He has not promised to answer the prayers of all men; neither has He promised to answer every prayer of any man. There are certain men upon whom God has called to pray and whose prayers He has promised to answer. But even these have certain conditions to meet if they would have their requests granted by the heavenly Father.

God's children, those who are endeavoring to serve Him, are required to pray. But the Lord has specified a number of things for them to keep in mind and to observe when they pray. For example, they must ask in faith, they must pray in the name of Jesus Christ, they must ask in sincerity, and they must pray in humility, if they would have their prayers answered.

But in addition to all of this, they must ask according to the will of God. They might observe all other requirements God makes of men who pray, but if they fail to observe this, God will not hear them.

The language of the apostle John is very specific and plain. Listen to his statement: *"And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he hears us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him."* (I John 5:14, 15.).

Thus John expressed his confidence in God and in His willingness to answer prayer. But that confidence was based upon strict adherence to the condition mentioned-*"if we ask anything according to his will."* ‘

The passage certainly means that we cannot expect God to answer our prayers if we do not ask according to His will. Even Jesus, our Lord and Master, the world's Redeemer and the Savior of men, kept this point in mind when He prayed. In the garden of Gethsemane, just a short time before He suffered on the cross, knowing that soon the time would come when He was to taste the cup of death for every man, Jesus prayed to the Father. He said: *"Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done."* (Luke 22:42.)

He did not pray for the Father to ignore His will and answer the prayer; but he prayed for the cup of death to be removed if it would be according to God's will. Jesus always recognized this principle, for He tells us that He came down from heaven not to do His own will but the will of the Father who sent him.

God's will for us has been revealed in His word. If we desire to know what the will of God is, we must read His word to find out. In no other way can we know the will of God. When we are told, therefore, to ask according to His will, it means we must ask in harmony with His word. A prayer could not be contrary to His word and yet in harmony with His will.

His will is made known in His word, and when we go according to that word in our prayers and in our living, we go according to His will; but when we ignore His word, we likewise ignore His will. It is certainly possible for a man to pray contrary to the will of God or we would never have been taught the importance of asking according to it.

That we may discover the fact that God will refuse to answer prayers that are contrary to His word let us study a prayer offered one time by that great servant of God, Moses, the leader of Israel. The greatness of this man, and his

willingness to "sacrifice and suffer for the cause of Jehovah, along with his great faith in God, are all revealed to us in Hebrews 11:24-26.

Concerning "him the inspired writer of the book of Hebrews said: *"By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward."*

This is the description of a great character. His humility in the service of God was so great that he was said to be the meekest man "upon the face of the earth." (Numbers 12:3.) Moses was the kind of man that God has promised to hear. Peter said: *"The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil."* (I Peter 3:12.)

Moses was a righteous man; he was a man of faith; he was the kind of man unto whom the ears of the Lord are open. In fact, God had often heard and answered his prayers. His prayers to God had saved Israel from destruction when God's anger had waxed hot against them because of their rebellion.

But even a man like this might pray contrary to God's will. That wretched disease called leprosy was often found among the children of Israel in those days. The person who was afflicted with leprosy was regarded as unclean, and God had a law to govern such cases. His will was made known in a specific commandment regarding leprosy.

In Num. 5:1, 2, we read this language: *"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Command the children of Israel, that they put out of the camp every leper."* Again in Leviticus 13:46, these words are found: *"All the days wherein the plague shall be in him he shall be defiled; he is unclean: he shall dwell alone; without the camp shall his habitation be."*

These, with many other Old Testament statements, reveal to us God's law concerning leprosy. When leprosy appeared on a person the person must be put out of the camp for seven days. And if the leprosy continued to exist and develop, the person must be declared unclean and put out of the camp as long as the leprosy remained.

On a certain occasion the brother and sister of Moses, Aaron and Miriam, spoke against him. They felt that Moses had assumed too much authority, that God had spoken by them as well as by Moses. The Lord was displeased with them because of this, called them to the door of the tabernacle, rebuked them for their arrogance, and allowed his anger to become kindled against them.

When he departed and the cloud from the tabernacle vanished, *"Behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow: and Aaron looked upon Miriam, and, behold, she was leprous."* (Numbers 12:10.) This led Aaron to confess before Moses his act of foolishness, his sin, and to plead with Moses for her. At once Moses went to God in prayer about it, to some extent we can understand the anxiety of Moses.

His sister that had stood watch over him when he was a babe cast on the river Nile and secured a nurse, his own mother, to assist Pharaoh's daughter in caring for him, is now smitten with leprosy, a disease that is terrible and wretched. His heart is touched with her sad condition, and he prays to God in these words: *"Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee."* (Numbers 12:13.)

I have never read on the pages of any book, nor heard fall from the lips of any man, a prayer that seemed more sincere and earnest than this prayer of Moses. He is the kind of man who could pray to God an acceptable prayer; he approaches God with deep sincerity and earnest anxiety to heal his sister; he displays a humility that ought to characterize all men who pray. He was eager for immediate results; he prayed: *"Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee."*

Can you for a moment's time doubt the sincerity of that prayer? Yet, as strange as it may at first seem, God did not answer that prayer. Although it was a petition of earnestness from the heart of the meekest man upon the earth, God did not answer. Do you wonder why? Simply this: It was a prayer that was contrary to God's will.

## Memory Verse of the Week:



**Galatians 5:24-25 (NKJB)** *"And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit."*

**News and Notes:**

Sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Daniel Holloway, Debbie Keplinger, Robbie, Sheila, Sherry Doles, Sandi Poole, Nathan Cox, Sandra Oliver, Chad Harris, Eli Johnson, Burt Ward, Jamie Jones, Janet Boren, Fred Johnson, Todd Bryan, Alton Bailey, Joe Shane, Bill Woodall, Mary Ann Holley, and Larsen Plyler.

Jimmy Briggs had heart cath this past Friday.

**Those Who Serve:**

**Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:**

**Opening Prayer:** Tim Harris Jr.  
**Preaching:** Brian Meade  
**Sermon #1:** "What Should Not Be For Sale"

**Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am:**

**Workbook:** Jerry Kennemur  
1 & 2 Thessalonians  
**Author:** Mark Mayberry  
**Starting Page & Question:** Page #27, Question #5

**Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:**

**Announcements:** Doug George  
**Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading:** Lee Busby  
**Scripture Reading:**  
**Song Leader:** Paul Busby  
**Lord's Supper:** Paul Johnson  
**Assisting:** — —  
**Preaching:** Brian Meade  
**Sermon #2:** "You Are Not Alone"  
**Closing Prayer:** Nathan Meade

**Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.**

**August 23, 2023**

**Auditorium Bible Class:** Paul Johnson  
**Workbook:** Preparing To Teach Our Neighbors  
**Author:** Max Tice  
**Starting Page & Question:** Page #5, Question #1  
**Invitation:** Paul Busby  
**Song Leader:** Dan Cottrell  
**Closing Prayer:** Doug George



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# **“What Should Not Be For Sale”**

Lesson Text: **1 Kings 21:1-4.**

## **I. Truth Should Not Be For Sale.**

- **Proverbs 23:23 (ESV).**
- **Truth Is Absolutely Necessary For Our Salvation:**
  - **1 Timothy 2:4; Titus 1:9-16.**
- **If We Give It Up For Anything, We Lose Everything!**
  - **1 Timothy 6:8-10.**
  - **Matthew 16:24-26.**

## **II. One’s Loyalty Should Not Be For Sale.**

- **Numbers 22:1-35.**
- **A Warning To Us Today- 2 Peter 2:14-16.**
- **Judges 16:4-6; vs. 18.**
- **Simon The Sorcerer Tried To Get Peter To Be Disloyal To Truth- Acts 8:18-23.**

## **III. One’s Good Morals Should Not Be For Sale.**

- **Micah 3:8-12.**
- **Matthew 28:11-15.**
- **What Price Someone Would Have To Offer Us To Sin?**
  - **Murder For Hire, Fornication, Prostitution, Lying To Make A Deal...**
- **Some Will Sell Out To Be Popular- 1 Corinthians 15:33.**
- **We Must Keep Our Good Morals And Purity To Be Saved- Titus 2:11-12.**

## **IV. One’s Good Name Should Not Be For Sale.**

- **Proverbs 22:1.**
- **1 Kings 21:25-26- Ahab & Jezebel.**
- **Judas Iscariot- Mark 14:10; vs. 21.**
- **Not Judas- Son of James in Luke 6:16.**
- **Cretans Are “Always Liars” – Titus 1:12.**

## **V. One’s Birthright Should Not Be For Sale.**

- **Genesis 25:29-34.**
- **The Spiritual Application: Hebrews 12:14-17.**
- **Hebrews 10:35-39.**

Conclusion: **Philippians 4:1.**

# ***“You Are Not Alone”***

Lesson Text: **Deuteronomy 31:6-8.**

## **I. You Are Not Alone In Proclaiming The Truth.**

- **Matthew 28:18-20.**
- Jesus Would Leave Them “As Orphans” In Their Mission- **John 14:16-20.**
- There Would Be A Consciousness Of Christ With Them- **Matthew 10:16-32.**
- **Acts 4:29-31**, The Church Prays For Boldness To Preach Amidst Opposition.
- **Acts 18:8-11; Acts 23:10-12; Acts 27:20-25.**

## **II. You Are Not Alone In The Battle Against The Enemy.**

- David Was Not Alone Against Goliath- **1 Samuel 17:45.**
- Elijah Was Not Alone Against Baal’s Prophets- **1 Kings 18:22; 1 Kings 19:1-18.**
- Elisha Was Not Alone- **2 Kings 6:8-18.**
- Paul Was Not Alone- **2 Timothy 4:14-18.**

## **III. You Are Not Alone In Times Of Suffering.**

- The Lord Was With Joseph In All His Suffering- **Genesis 39:1-6; 20-23.**
- **Job 19:7-21.** Job Was Wrong! God Was With Him.
- We Are Not Alone- **Philippians 4:4-7.**

## **IV. You Are Not Alone In Times Of Temptation.**

- God Provides Way Of Escape- **1 Corinthians 10:12-13.**
- We Must Draw Near To God- **James 4:7-8.**

## **V. You Are Not Alone In Your Worship To God.**

- **Matthew 18:20.**
- **Psalms 95:2; 100:2-4.**
- **Colossians 3:16.**

## **VI. You Are Not Alone In Finding The Way Home.**

- **Nehemiah 9:12; 19-20; 1 Corinthians 10:1-4.**
- We Don’t Know The Way By Ourselves- **Jeremiah 10:23.**
- **Psalms 139:10; Psalm 119:105; John 14:3.**

## **VII. What Does This Mean To You And I?**

1. Helps Us To Deal With Isolation And Loneliness.
2. Helps Us To Realize God Cares, And Is With Us!
3. Helps Us Through The Hardest Moments Of Our Lives.