

Asking in His Name

by
Jim Sayles

Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I go to the Father. Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it.
John 14:12-14 NASB (emphasis is the author's)

On the day He was betrayed and crucified, the Lord explained to His disciples how they would “hear” and obey His commands after His resurrection. He told them that He would come back to them as the Counselor, the indwelling Spirit of truth who would “guide” them into all truth, even revealing the future to them, and then He gave them the great promise recorded in our Bibles as John 14:12-14.

This amazing promise has been explained away through the ages by those who are spiritually impoverished as they seek an excuse for their failure to produce the miraculous works of the Lord.

But the promise remains. He that believes in Jesus Christ will do the “works” of Jesus Christ in the world and whatever they ask in His name will be done.

The first thing we need to note in this passage is that the “greater works” are directly related to asking in His name. Another way of saying it would be, “Petitioning the Father in the name of the Son produces the works of Jesus through our faith.”

All of us also know that we have frequently petitioned the Father unsuccessfully by using the phrase, “in the name of Jesus.” Therefore, praying “in the name of Jesus” must mean something other than merely saying the words.

We can also note that there is a correlation between the Lord's own prayer life and the “works” that were produced through Him. It will shock some to know that He did not produce the “works” during His earthly ministry any more than we can produce the “works” during our earthly ministry.

The phrase, “the only begotten Son of God,” from John 3:16, may be paraphrased as, “the singular, unique Son of God who was born of a woman.” Angels are also referred to as “sons of God,” but these are created beings. And we are “sons of God” in the sense of our adoption as sons through our spiritual incorporation into Christ, but Christ was uniquely “God” birthed into flesh as the Holy Spirit impregnated Mary's egg.

Understand this: every human sperm and egg conception results in the formation of a new, unique, body, soul, and spirit-being, made in the image of God, but separate from God. Thus, at the moment of conception, a new spirit being with a soul and a body is created, a being who is intended for eternal, covenant-granted communion with God.

(Take a moment to meditate on what this means and the spiritual importance of human procreation.)

This covenant-granted communion between God and His creation, though, was broken by God's covenant man, Adam, and, from that time forward, all human spirit-beings are born into a broken covenant relationship with the Father.

The Father, in His mercy, provided a unique sacrifice to restore our eternal covenant relationship with Him. This unique sacrifice, called "the last Adam" by Paul, was that part of the Holy trinity known as the "Son."

As unique as we are in the creation, Jesus of Nazareth is singularly unique as an eternal spirit (having no beginning or ending) who at a single point in time was joined to Mary's egg to become the unique Son of Man, the only "begotten" Son of God, the very Spirit of God becoming a spirit being with a human soul and a human body. He was "God," and He was "man." Thus the name He called Himself, "the Son of Man." (See [Mysteries of the Virgin Birth Revealed](#) for more details)

The common perception in the church, from Catholic to Charismatic, is that Jesus of Nazareth, as the Son of God, manifested His numerous miracles and His amazing teaching on the basis of His own divine prerogative and power as "God." It is true that the miracles and teachings were "proof" of His deity, but His "works" were NOT a manifestation of His own godhood. His "works" as the Son of Man were a manifestation of faith, a manifestation of "hearing" and "obeying" the Father just as we are to "hear" and "obey" the voice of the Lord today.

Any believer who receives a revelation of this truth from the Spirit of truth will begin to understand the real significance and importance of "hearing" and "obeying" the voice of the Lord, and his/her faith life will be changed dramatically as the promise of John 14:12 begins to manifest in their lives.

Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Phillipians 2:5-7 NASB
(emphasis is the author's)

Two phrases in this passage need explanation. The first, "...emptied Himself..." comes from the Greek word transliterated as *kinoo*, meaning to empty, to make empty or to make void, which means that He deliberately stripped Himself of His powers as God.

The second supports the first. He stripped Himself of His powers as God, and yielded Himself, as the Son of Man, the last Adam, to the Father as a "bond-servant", in exactly the same way that we are told that we are to become bond-servants to the Lord (i.e. choosing to become a servant to the revealed will of the Lord).

You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him. Acts 10:38 NASB
(emphasis is the author's)

We see two things in this passage. First, God anointed Him, and second, God was with Him. Both of these statements are describing the Son of Man as a prophet, not as “God”. He was God, having eternally taken on the flesh of man, but why would He need the “anointing” of the Holy Spirit if He was manifesting His works on the basis of His own divine prerogative?

Therefore Jesus answered and was saying to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner. For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself is doing; and the Father will show Him greater works than these, so that you will marvel. For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes.

John 5:19-21 NASB (emphasis is the author's)

So Jesus said, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me. John 8:28 NASB (emphasis is the author's)

I can do nothing on My own initiative As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. John 5:30 NASB (emphasis is the author's)

Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work." John 4:34 NASB (emphasis is the author's)

Jesus answered them, "I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?" John 10:32 NASB (emphasis is the author's)

Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know...Acts 2:22 NASB (emphasis is the author's)

In these passages, Jesus is clearly ascribing the “good works” (miracles) to the working of the Father and not to His own divine prerogative and power.

Jesus answered them, I told you, and you do not believe; the works that I do in My Father's name, these testify of Me. John 10:25 NASB

We have already seen that it is the Father doing the works through the obedient faith responses of the Son. What does it mean, therefore, when Jesus says, “the works that I do **in My Father’s name...**”?

When we know and understand that, then we’ll understand what it means for us to ask for something or to do something in the name of Jesus Christ.

Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it. John 14:13,14 NASB (emphasis is the author’s)

This promise, following and providing the “how to” for the preceding promise in verse 12 (“...greater works than these...”) has been grossly misunderstood. When we ask the Lord for something in His name, we do not simply say, “in the name of Jesus.”

Just as Jesus never asked for anything in His Father’s name without knowing the express will of the Father, neither can we ask for anything in the name of Jesus without knowing the express, specific will of the Lord.

If we ask in our own will, it simply will not happen.

We have an example in the testimony of Pastor Cho, the senior pastor of the largest church in South Korea.

Although he did not have the gift of healing, Pastor Cho kept hearing the voice of the Lord urging him to call a group of deaf people sitting at the front of the church forward for healing.

At the end of his message Pastor Cho called the twenty-five or so deaf people forward, and then he laid hands on them and prayed for their healing.

All twenty-five were healed instantaneously, and the church was stirred up by this amazing miracle of healing.

The following week more than one hundred deaf people were sitting in the front of the church, and, after his message, Pastor Cho called them forward for healing.

Although he prayed exactly the same way and laid hands on them the same way, none of this second group was healed.

Pastor Cho went to his prayer closet ashamed and embarrassed, and, after his emotions settled, he clearly understood that the Lord had not commanded him to call the second group forward for healing.

In another case I asked a Charismatic friend what his fellowship practices when the elders are called to pray for someone’s healing.

He said that they follow the formula of James 5:15, and I asked him if everyone they pray for is healed.

He, of course, said, “no.”

“Why not?” I asked.

He didn’t know.

And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. James 5:15 NIV (emphasis is the author’s)

The promise is that the prayer offered in faith WILL make the sick person well, and the answer to my question of “Why not?” is, of course, that the prayer has to be offered in faith, not

that the Lord can heal the sick through our prayers, but the faith that comes in each particular circumstance as we “hear” and “obey” the specific voice of the Lord in that circumstance.

Faith is not a formula. Faith is “hearing” and “obeying” the voice of the Lord just as Jesus of Nazareth heard and obeyed the voice of the Father..

Remember the words of the Lord. He said that He did nothing and He said nothing without seeing the Father do it first or hearing the Father say it first.

The simplicity and the profundity of His example must not escape us.

This is totally different than using faith “techniques” to claim the promises of God on the basis of our own needs or our own emotions, and if we do not want to be embarrassed and defeated by demons that refuse to be removed and healings that do not take place, we had better pay attention to the Teacher.

Try to understand it in terms of authority. If a general gives a lowly private an order, then that private, if obedient, is acting out the express will of the general and he will be received with the general’s authority.

The centurion recognized that Jesus had spiritual authority as a man, not as God, and Jesus remarked that the centurion’s faith (and by implication, his understanding) was greater than any in all Israel. (Think about that for a moment.)

Few there are in the body of Christ who are experiencing the awesome promise of this passage, but, instead of making excuses for ourselves, as though this promise no longer applies to us, we need to ask Him why we aren’t walking in this promise.

Our covenant relationship with the Father is through Jesus Christ, the mediator of the New Covenant.

Because of our mystical union with the Lord that came as a result of our initial faith in Him, we now have covenant access to the throne of grace in His name.

Our confident approach to the throne of grace in His name also implies our heart knowledge of His will, or, when wisdom is being requested, the heart knowledge and expectation that He will impart His will to us in the circumstance.

Therefore, asking in His name is not just saying, “in the name of Jesus Christ.” It is our request to the Covenant Father on the basis of the authority, confidence, and expectation imparted to us through our heart knowledge of the Lord’s specific will in the circumstances.

Our covenant relationship with the Father is “in Christ.” We do not have an individual covenant relationship with the Father. The New Covenant is between God the Father and Jesus of Nazareth, the Messiah, the only “begotten” Son of God, the last Adam, the Son of Man, who is the mediator and our High Priest of the New Covenant.

We do not have to be concerned that the New Covenant will fail, because the covenant is between God the Father and the Son of Man. We were included in the New Covenant when we were baptized by the Spirit into the body of Christ through faith.

In prayer we petition God the Father, the covenant provider, in the name of the Lord. Our commands, though, come from the Lord, our High Priest, and the mediator of the New Covenant. The Lord also comes to us in the form of the Holy Spirit as our Counselor, the Spirit of truth, who was sent to “guide” us into all truth, even revealing things to come.

The gifts of the Spirit, therefore, are the Lord’s supernatural provision or equipping of each believer for His purpose and His glory.

What is IMPORTANT, is “hearing” (knowing) the Spirit-revealed truth, promises and commands of the Lord and obeying our heart knowledge of His will in all that we think, say, and do.

Let me quickly de-mystify this supernatural process.

“Hearing” with spiritual ears and “seeing” with the eyes of our hearts is nothing more and nothing less than receiving by the supernatural revelation of the Spirit of truth, the truth, promises, and commands of the Lord.

For born again believers we “hear” the voice of the Lord through the still small voice of the Spirit, our spiritual conscience (which is how the law of God is written on our hearts), through inductive Bible study and meditation on the written word, through prayer, through inspired preaching and teaching, through the spiritual gifts of others, through our own spiritual gifts, through spiritual dreams and visions, through certain circumstances, like answered prayer or the specific recognizable discipline of God, and, even, through angelic visitation.

When the disciples failed to cast out a demon, and the father of the demoniac had to ask Jesus directly to heal him, Jesus did so, and then, when the disciples asked Him why they were unable to cast out the demon, He rebuked them.

Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Matthew 17:19-20 KJV

A mustard seed, being about the size of a grain of salt, is an indication that it is not the size of our faith that matters. We are either acting by faith or we are not. In His example the Lord pointed to a specific mountain, “this” mountain, but in two thousand years the specific mountain He pointed to has not been moved.

Why? The Lord made a literal statement. He told them that if they had faith no bigger than a tiny mustard seed, they could speak to “this” mountain (and in my mind’s eye I see Him pointing to a specific mount) and it would be moved.

This was not merely an illustration. It was a literal promise, not merely a metaphor. So why has “this” mountain not been moved?

Because no one in two thousand years has been given revelatory authority by the Lord to say to “this” particular mountain, “Be removed and cast into the sea.”

But, if they ever are given revelatory authority, “this” mountain WILL surely be cast into the sea.

The disciples had clearly been acting by faith prior to this event, but, when the demons resisted, they lost their faith, like Peter walking on water and then, when the seas became rough, losing his faith (i.e. double-minded wavering).

Therefore, asking in His name, is not a formula. It is a process, the process of “hearing” and “obeying.” And, if nothing is impossible for God, then nothing is impossible for the believer who clearly “hears” and “obeys” the revealed truth, promises, and commands of the Lord.