

GOD'S ECONOMY IN FAITH, Week 3**Praying with God as Our Faith**

Scripture Reading: Mark 11:20-24

- Mark 11:20 And as they passed by in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered from the roots.
 Mark 11:21 And Peter remembered and said to Him, Rabbi, behold, the fig tree which You cursed has withered.
 Mark 11:22 And Jesus answered and said to them, Have faith in God.
 Mark 11:23 Truly I say to you that whoever says to this mountain, Be taken up and cast into the sea, and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says happens, he will have it.
 Mark 11:24 For this reason I say to you, All things that you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and you will have them.

Day 1

- Matthew 6:9-10** You then pray in this way: Our Father who is in the heavens, Your name be sanctified; Your kingdom come; Your will be done, as in heaven, so also on earth.
- Jude 20** But you, beloved, building up yourselves upon your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,
- Ephesians 6:18** By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,

I. In order to pray with God as our faith, we need to know the meaning of prayer—Matt. 6:9-10; 21:22; 1 John 5:14-15:

- A. Prayer is the **flowing** between man and God and the **mutual contact** between man and God.
- B. The real significance of prayer is to **contact God in our spirit and to absorb God Himself**—Eph. 6:18.
- C. A praying person will **cooperate** with God, **work together** with God, and **allow** God to express Himself and His desire from within him and through him.
- D. Real prayers cause our being to be **wholly mingled** with God and God to be mingled with us—1 Cor. 6:17.

Brothers and sisters, never think that prayer is merely asking God for something. For example, you need a house, and you ask God to prepare one for you. After praying, you receive a word from the Lord saying that what you have asked shall come to pass unto you. The next day a brother comes and says to you, "Do you need a house? My neighbor has two houses for rent; the location is convenient, and the rent is cheap." So you immediately thank and praise the Lord, saying, "Hallelujah, the Lord is really the true and living God; He has answered my prayer." I would not say that this is not prayer, but this is not adequate prayer. Brothers and sisters, if you have really learned the lesson of prayer, whether you can find a house is actually secondary; **the primary thing you should be concerned about is whether you have obtained more of God and whether you have been gained more by God through such a prayer.** If the result of a prayer is only the accomplishment of a particular matter, without obtaining God or being obtained by God, then such a prayer is a failure, a miscarriage. The ultimate result of a prayer should be that the intercessor gains more of God and is gained more by God, although the thing which he has asked of God may also be fulfilled. (*Lesson on Prayer, chapter 1*)

Day 2

Romans 8:26-27 Moreover, in like manner the Spirit also joins in to help us in our weakness, for we do not know for what we should pray as is fitting, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. But He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to God.

James 5:17 Elijah was a man of like feeling with us, and he earnestly prayed that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months.

- E. The more we pray, the **more we will be filled** with God and the **more we will surrender** to God and be gained by Him.
- F. To pray means to realize that **we are nothing** and that **we can do nothing**—Mark 9:28-29.
- G. The governing principle of our prayer should be that **prayer brings us into God**; the issue of proper prayer is that we **find ourselves in God**—Luke 11:1-13.
- H. Prayer is believers **cooperating and co-working with God**, allowing God to express Himself through them, and thus accomplish His purpose—Rom. 8:26-27; James 5:17.

Brothers, real prayers are the **Holy Spirit within man expressing God's desire through man**. In other words, real prayers are prayers **involving two parties**. They are not simply man alone praying to God, but they are the **Spirit mingling with man, putting on man, and joining with man in prayer**. Outwardly it is man praying, but inwardly it is the Spirit praying. This means that two parties express the same prayer at the same time. Please remember that this alone is the prayer which is spoken of in the Scriptures.

We often speak of Elijah's prayer. James 5:17 says, "Elijah was a man of like feeling with us, and he earnestly prayed that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months." Earnestly prayed in Greek means "prayed with prayer," or "prayed in prayer." This is a very peculiar expression in the Bible. Please remember, this is what we mean by prayer of two parties. When Elijah was praying, he was praying with, or in, a prayer. In other words, he prayed with the prayer of the Spirit within him. Thus, we can say that Elijah's prayer was God praying to Himself in Elijah. Andrew Murray once said that a real prayer is the Christ who indwells us praying to the Christ who is sitting on the throne. That Christ would be praying to Christ Himself sounds strange, but in our experience this is really the case. (*Lessons on Prayer, chapter 2*)

Day 3

Matthew 21:21-22 And Jesus answered and said to them, Truly I say to you, If you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, Be taken up and cast into the sea, it will happen. And all that you ask in prayer, if you believe, you will receive.

II. In cursing the fig tree, a symbol of the nation of Israel (Jer. 24:2, 5, 8), so that it dried up, the Lord Jesus taught His disciples to **pray by faith**—Matt. 21:18-22; Mark 11:20-24:

- A. His teaching here was according to God's will, which is to be accomplished for the **fulfillment of His economy**—Rev. 4:11; Eph. 1:5, 9; 5:17:
 1. Not many see that the Lord's teaching on prayer is related to God's economy, which is to be **accomplished by His faithful people doing His will**.
 2. To pray such a prayer, we must be **right persons doing God's will**—His great will for the accomplishment of His economy—Rev. 4:11.

3. We should be those who are carrying out God's will to accomplish His economy—to **produce an organism for His good pleasure**—Eph. 1:5, 9, 22-23.
- B. The Lord Jesus, who is right in the eyes of God, knows God's heart, so His cursing the fig tree was according to His knowledge of God's will in the fulfillment of God's economy to give up the rotten Israel—Matt. 21:19.
- C. Based upon this background, the Lord Jesus taught His disciples to **pray for executing God's will** according to His economy by faith—vv. 21-22.
- D. Our prayer should **carry out God's will** to have the Body of Christ, which will consummate the New Jerusalem—Eph. 1:9, 22-23; Rev. 21:2.

III. We need to **pray with God as our faith**—Mark 11:20-24:

- A. In Mark 11:20-24 the Lord Jesus taught His disciples to **pray by faith** for executing God's will.
- B. When the praying one is **mingled with God and is one with God**, God becomes his faith; this is what it means to have faith in God—v. 22.
- C. The praying one can have **faith in God without doubting**, but believing that he has received what he asked for, and he will receive it.

The first God-man's teaching here was according to God's will for the **accomplishment of His economy**. Not many see that the Lord's teaching on prayer is related to God's economy, which is to be **accomplished by His faithful people doing His will**. The One who taught the disciples to pray by faith was the God-man, Christ. He is the only One who is absolutely right before God. To pray such a prayer we must be right persons doing God's will. This is God's will not in small matters, such as where we should move, but His great will for the accomplishment of God's economy. Many Christians today use the term the will of God in a very shallow and light way. **We should be those who are carrying out God's will to accomplish God's economy**. God's economy is to produce an organism for His good pleasure. Israel disappointed God in this matter, so God came to the church, hoping that the church would be His organism. Eventually, the church, generally speaking, has also failed God. What is the real will of God that we have to carry out? It is to take care of the producing and building up of God's organism, which is the Body of Christ that will consummate the New Jerusalem. (*The God-man Living, chapter 16*)

Day 4

Mark 11:22-24

And Jesus answered and said to them, Have faith in God. Truly I say to you that whoever says to this mountain, Be taken up and cast into the sea, and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says happens, he will have it. For this reason I say to you, All things that you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and you will have them.

- D. In verse 24 the Lord Jesus said, "All things that you pray and ask, **believe that you have received them**, and you will have them":
 1. Received is the crucial word in Mark 11:24; **faith is believing that we have received what we have asked for**.
 2. The promise in this verse is comprehensive because it speaks of "all things."
 3. Mark 11:24 speaks not only of the necessity of faith but also of the nature of faith; **faith refers to the past**, not to anything in the future.
 4. According to the Lord's word, we should **believe that we have received**, not that we will receive—v. 24.
 5. To hope means to expect something in the future; to believe means to **consider something as having been done**.
 6. Faith is not only believing that God can or will do a certain thing but also **believing that God has done that thing already**.
- E. If we pray according to God's will for the fulfillment of His economy, **we are one with God and have the assurance that we have received what we have prayed for**—Matt. 6:9-10:

1. If we ask the Lord for things that satisfy our desire, we can never have the faith in God to believe that we have received what we asked for; this is because our prayer is **not** according to God's will for the fulfillment of God's economy.
2. If we are absolutely one with God, **we can have God as our faith and pray according to the knowledge of God's will** for the fulfillment of His economy, and we will believe that we have already received the things that we asked for and will receive them—Mark 11:24.

What is faith? Faith is believing that **we have already received**. It is not believing that we can receive, will receive, shall receive, or want to receive. **Faith is believing that we have already received**. Perhaps you do not realize how great a difference this makes. If a person believes he can receive, may receive, will receive, or wants to receive, his faith is not real. Only one kind of faith is real—**living faith**. Only one kind of faith can receive God's promise. Only one kind of faith secures the riches of Christ for us. It is the faith that believes that we have already received. The problem today is that many of God's children think that they have faith and that they will receive. They do not realize, however, that even if they believe ten million times that way, they still will not receive. God does not consider this kind of believing as faith; He ignores it. **Only one kind of faith is acceptable to God**. The word "have" in Mark 11:24 is a very important word. If we believe that we have received something, we will have it. If we hope that we will receive it, whatever we have is not faith. (*CWWN, Vol. 43, chapter 74*)

Day 5

Matthew 18:18

Truly I say to you, Whatever you bind on the earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on the earth shall have been loosed in heaven.

Ephesians 6:12-13

For our wrestling is not against blood and flesh but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies. Therefore take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

IV. The prayer in Mark 11:20-24 is a **prayer with authority**—v. 23:

- A. The most important prayer and the most spiritual prayer is the **prayer of authority**—Matt. 18:18; Mark 11:20-24.
- B. The prayer of authority is a **command based on authority**—Isa. 45:11; Mark 11:20-24:
 1. The prayer of authority is a **commanding prayer**—Isa. 45:11.
 2. If we wish to have weighty and valuable prayers before God, we need to be able to give out some **authoritative commands before God**—Mark 11:23.

How can the church have such a prayer with authority? It is by the church having **full faith, being without doubt and being clear that what we do is fully according to God's will**. Whenever we are not clear about God's will, we do not have faith. Therefore, before we do anything, **we have to be clear whether what we are about to do is according to God's will**. If it is not God's will, we cannot have faith toward it. If we are not sure that something is God's will, we will not be sure that it can be accomplished. In order to not have any doubt about its accomplishment, we must first have no doubt concerning it being God's will. When we speak carelessly to the mountain, there are no results, because we do not know God's will. But if we have no doubts and are clear about God's will, we can speak boldly to the mountain, "Be taken up and cast into the sea," and the thing will be done. **God has commissioned us to be those who issue the command**. We command what God has commanded, and we give orders to what God has given orders to. This is a prayer with authority. A prayer with authority is not asking God directly. Rather, it is dealing with problems by directly applying God's authority. All of us have mountains. Of course, these mountains are not the same in size. Our mountain may be this or it may be that. But whatever is blocking us from going on in the spiritual pathway, we can command to go away. This is to pray with authority. (*The Prayer Ministry of the Church, chapter 4*)

Day 6

Mark 11:23-24 Truly I say to you that whoever says to this mountain, Be taken up and cast into the sea, and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says happens, he will have it. For this reason I say to you, All things that you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and you will have them.

- C. Praying with authority is praying the prayer of Mark 11:20-24:
1. A prayer with authority does not ask God to do something; rather, it **exercises God's authority and applies this authority** to deal with problems and things that ought to be removed—v. 23; Zech. 4:7; Matt. 21:21.
 2. A prayer with authority is not asking God directly; rather, it is dealing with problems by **directly applying God's authority**—Exo. 14:15-27.
- D. Prayer with authority has much to do with the **overcomers**; every overcomer must learn to speak to “this mountain”—Mark 11:23:
1. God has **commissioned us to command what He has commanded** and give orders to what He has given orders to—Matt. 17:20.
 2. This kind of prayer is directed not toward God but toward “this mountain.”
 3. The most important work of the overcomers is to **bring the authority of the throne to earth**; if we want to be an overcomer, we must learn to **pray with authority and speak to the mountain**—Rev. 11:15; 12:10.

We have to pay special attention to the binding prayer and loosing prayer. We have to bind many things, and we have to loose many things. We are not begging but binding and loosing with authority. May God be gracious to us so that all of us can learn to pray with authority. Not only do we have to learn to pray, we also have to learn to know the victory of Christ. We have to loose with the victory of Christ, and we have to bind with the victory of Christ. **We have to bind all the things that are contrary to God's will.** To pray with authority is for heaven to rule on the earth; it is for the earth to exercise the heavenly authority. Every one of us is a man of heaven. As such, we have the authority of heaven. We are merely sojourning on earth today. Everyone who is called by the name of the Lord is His representative on earth. We are God's messengers. **We have His life, and we have been transferred from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of the Son of His love. This is why we have the heavenly authority.** Everywhere we go, we can exercise our heavenly authority. We can rule over the earth through heaven. May God be gracious to us. I hope that we can all be prayer warriors for the Lord and that we will all be **overcomers through the authority of Christ so that Christ's victory can be manifested.** (*The Prayer Ministry of the Church, chapter 4*)