

Personal Possibilities in Prayer

John 14:13-15

Hello friend, and welcome to *Hope for Today*. The program you're listening to is produced by Heralds of Hope. We're an international Gospel media ministry. Each week our Bible teaching broadcasts circle the globe in English and 22 other major languages. Tens of thousands tune in each week for spiritual nourishment and blessing.

But radio ministry is just one part of what we do at Heralds of Hope. We also distribute Bibles and literature. And our newest publication is called *Hope Herald*. It's a study guide designed to complement the teaching you'll hear on this broadcast. We would be happy to send a copy of this study guide to you if you just write and ask for it. I will give you the contact information at the end of the program.

During today's lesson we will take a closer look at prayer from John 14. In this discussion he tells us our goal in prayer is God's glory. In other words, we want to glorify God through our prayers. This can be one of the phrases we hear so often, we don't hear it anymore. It becomes cliché and casual. This is not good. God's glory is very motivating and gives us great purpose.

When God's people are motivated and doing what they do to bring Him glory, good things happen. This is the highest motivation we can have. Good things will happen when this is our motive is to see God glorified.

In scripture we see many people motivated by God's glory. For example, David as a young man would not allow Goliath to insult the armies of the living God. He declared he would defeat Goliath so that the whole world will know there is a God in Israel. The Philistines were not giving God the glory He deserved, this motivated David, and he was filled with courage.

Another example is Solomons prayer during the dedication of the new temple. Solomon prayed for God to hear from heaven and act, "so that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you" Solomon understood the glory of all people belongs to God. He deserves it! Are we motivated by God's glory?

Here is another example of how being motivated by God's glory can affect us. It is the story of Hezekiah. King Sennacherib and the Assyrians were destroying many people and many lands. They were coming for Jerusalem and King Hezekiah. Hezekiah begged God to deliver them so all the earth would know the HE alone is God. Our God is not wood, or stone made by us, He is the living God.

God heard Hezekiah's prayer and responded in a mighty way. In one night, 185,000 Assyrians were destroyed by the angel of God. God cares about His glory and is working to bring more glory to himself. He alone is worthy.

There are many more examples from the Bible of men and women doing great things because they were motivated by God's glory. Jesus himself prayed, "Glorify thy Son, that your Son may glorify you." His life was centered on bringing God glory.

In the same way you and I also must live our lives for God's glory. When He is not glorified, we should be a little irritated, like David, and fight for His glory. Wherever we are we attempt to maximize our resources so more people can come to Him and bring Him the glory He deserves.

Being motivated by God's glory is all through scripture and we also want to be people who increase that glory. In our prayer life is one of the ways we can make this happen. Here is Pastor J Mark Horst to tell us more about the Personal Possibilities in Prayer.

Have you wished you could contact God? Have you ever felt deserted by all your friends? Have you ever wished for help, and there seemed to be no one who could or would help you?

King David knew what it was to need help. Once he wrote these words, "The sorrows of death surrounded me, and the pains of *Sheol* got hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow. Then called I upon the name of the LORD: O LORD, I beseech thee, deliver my soul" Psalm 116:3,4. And David found help.

Do you know that help for you is as close as a prayer? We all have times of distress. We often need help. Where we go for help is very, very important. Jesus understood what our needs would be.

The disciples were expressing sorrow because Jesus had told them that He was going away. They were quite distressed because they were sure they would lose Him. Never again would they be able to contact Him. But they were wrong for Jesus showed them a new way. It was the way of prayer. In this way they could have immediate contact with Him. Listen to the words of Jesus from John 14:13-15.

13 *And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.*

14 *If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.*

15 *If ye love me, keep my commandments.*

Here the Lord Jesus lays down certain necessary DIRECTIVES by which we may reach the highest possibilities in prayer. This holds great opportunities and challenges for you and me.

Jesus said we must **Connect with God**.

Notice the invitation in verse 13, “Whatever you ask.” This is a large invitation. Please notice that Jesus did not say, whatever you demand. He said, “Whatever you ask”. Asking assumes humility. This is very important if we are to reach the possibilities of prayer. The asking can be anytime, immediately, right now, with- out any delay. Whatever you ask. And we may add, whenever you wish to ask.

Notice the connection as Jesus said, “Whatever you ask in my name.” Our names do not really count very much in heaven. Our names are useless. We are sinners. We need first of all to come to the Savior, then we can ask in His name. No name but His name. Be very sure that you catch that in the words of Jesus. We don’t go any other route. We have no other name that we can use in prayer to get through to God. Jesus said, “Whatever you ask in my name.” It makes no difference how holy anyone else may have been—nobody’s name can take the place of Jesus’ name in this directive He gave us.

There is an object or goal in contacting God: His glory. Jesus said that He would answer the prayer in His name that the Father may be glorified. The glory of God is the object of prayer. So, when you connect with God, be sure that you pray for His glory.

I learned once of a lovely home high in the mountains in Europe where needy people could find help. It was built specially to care for missionaries and Christian workers. Some were broken in spirit and some broken in body. The testimony reported many wonderful answers to prayer because they prayed for the glory of God. When they prayed for the healing of the broken spirit or the broken body they would simply ask the Lord to do what would be for His highest glory. Many of them were wonderfully healed.

“Whatever you ask in my name, “Jesus said, “that I will do that the Father may be glorified in the Son.” So, connect with God, my friend, for your possibilities in prayer.

Then Jesus said we must **Accept the Limit.**

There is a restriction in verse 14, “If you ask anything in my name.” We found that phrase in verse 13 too, “in my name”. Let us think about that again. When Jesus prayed to God before He was crucified, He prayed, “Not my will, but thine be done.” I wonder whether this phrase, “in my name”, may not reflect something of that same attitude. When we ask according to our needs we must do so in the name of Jesus. That means that we will submit ourselves to whatever He knows is best.

I learned when I studied verse 14 that there is a condition attached to the asking, “If you shall ask anything.” Our dependence on the Lord is expressed that way. We do not order God around or issue commands. We make requests. We ask the Lord in His name. Then we get the answers to our prayers.

This directive means that in order to do business with God in the name of Jesus, our requests must be in harmony with His will. Be sure you understand this, my friend: accept the limit.

Jesus said also we must **Reflect His Love**.

Again, there is a condition expressed, "If you love me." The word love used in verse 15 is the word for divine love, called in Greek, "Agape". It's that love that does not really require response to be exercised. The expression of this kind of love simply pours itself out.

Jesus is here really saying, "If you keep on loving me," as though the act was already in progress. The evidence of that love will be keeping His commandments. It will be love in action: the action of obedience. Listen, my friend, don't pray what you don't do. Obedience to the commandments of Jesus expresses our love, reflects His love, and relates to prayer.

These directives carefully followed will bring you great possibilities in prayer: first, connect with God; second, accept the limit; third, reflect Jesus' love.

We all need the help of meaningful prayer. Here are great possibilities for you in your personal prayer life. What does prayer mean to you? I challenge you to operate on these directives so you will achieve real possibilities in personal prayer.

My friend, was this teaching helpful? If you'd like a copy, either in print or on an audio CD, just contact us and ask for it by the title. Or log onto our website heraldsofhope.org

The quickest way for you to connect with us is to send an email to mail@heraldsofhope.org. That email address is mail@heraldsofhope.org. Or write to *Hope for Today*, Box 3, Breezewood, Pennsylvania 15533. Remember, you can request a printed manuscript or an audio CD of this teaching. We'd be happy to send one to you.

And when you contact us, you can request our Bible Study Guide, *Hope Herald*. It follows these radio programs and will help you learn more about what we're studying from John's Gospel. So, ask for your free copy of *Hope Herald* today.

Here's the contact information again. Our email address is mail@heraldsofhope.org. Or write to *Hope for Today*, Box 3, Breezewood, Pennsylvania 15533. Remember; you can request a free copy of this teaching. It's available in print or on an audio CD. And you can also request a free copy of our newest publication, *Hope Herald*. It will help you gain more value from our study in John.

And don't forget our Bible teaching programs are available to you all the time and any time at the website, heraldsofhope.org.

Now, I urge you to tune in next week as Pastor J. Mark continues our study from John's Gospel. You won't want to miss it. And until then, keep looking to Jesus, He'll give you hope for today!