

Rogate
St. John 16:23b-30
May 22nd, 2022
Sts. Peter and Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, UAC
Simpsonville, SC
St. Michael and All Angels Evangelical Lutheran Mission, UAC
Augusta, GA
Pastor Jerald Dulas

Ask, And You Will Receive

In Nomine Iesu!

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:

Lord God, our heavenly Father, Who by Thy Son hast promised to give us whatsoever we shall ask in His Name, we beseech Thee, grant us the power of Thy Holy Spirit, that we may make known our requests unto Thee in faithful prayer, and desire of Thee that which is well-pleasing to Thee and profitable for us, lifting up holy hands without wrath or doubting, and being firmly assured that Thou wilt hear our prayer; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever One God, world without end. Amen.

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ. Amen.

Our Lord + Jesus Christ, Who knows all things, Who is from God, is God. He came from the Father to the world. He has left the world and returned to the Father. He accomplished the Father's will so that the Father Himself loves those who love His Son and He gives them whatever they ask in the Lord + Jesus' Name. The Man + Jesus, born in time of the Blessed Virgin, is flesh of our flesh. He is one of us. He is to be worshiped by us, for according to His Divinity He is equal to the Father and the Holy Ghost. There is no other god to worship; no other god we should worship. There is no other Name under Heaven by which men are saved, no other way to the Father, no other religion, except that of the devil. There is no one else to whom we should pray.

Now, in our society, they are willing to pray to any other god than the One True Triune God. They seek help from every and anything that they believe will offer them hope. They are willing to pray and beg to any false god who they think will listen and answer their prayers. Their prayers fall on deaf ears. Their prayers are prayed to gods who have no ears; they cannot hear even if they were real. Having someone read their palms, or tea leaves, or horoscopes, and what is going on in the stars are acceptable forms of prayer for unbelievers. Gurus, yoga instructors, therapists, and any person who professes, or book which promises, to supply some form of self-help are believed by some to provide the relief from the troubles of this world. It is easy to turn to someone or something that will provide an immediate answer to what ails them.

And so it is that when some Christians find themselves in a crisis, they are sorely tempted to call together all the clerics, all the "religious" leaders and have them pray to their myriad of gods, hoping that one of them works. When some Christians are troubled by this world, they are tempted to behave like patients diagnosed with a terminal disease going from one doctor to the next and hanging on every word of every pharmaceutical company in the business. Perhaps people are hoping that if they ask the right question to the right person or thing, they will get their answer. This world hopes that all the false gods would all get together and cooperate like and usher in a new age of prosperity. Fear causes men

to do seek for help in all the wrong places.

Whatever causes the fear to arise, it ends up looking like the worship of the Romans and Greeks with their prayers to the plethora of false gods. The more things change the more they stay the same. Prayer which seeks help from every and anything is not prayer based in faith. It is faith placed in a false god. It is prayer which does not really believe that one's prayer will be answered. It is shotgun prayer, praying to as many people or things as possible, so that maybe one will give an answer. Such prayer is not prayer in our Lord's Name. For the Lord + Jesus will not share the stage. He is not one among many. He is not regional or ethnic. He is not satisfied to be the chief god, like Zeus. He is the only One. There is none other! When Moses asks, "Who shall I say sent me?" He says, "I AM." Moses must be thinking, "I am what? I am the creator? I am a stronger god than the gods Egypt? I am Joe? He must be something. He is. He is I AM because HE IS, and apart from Him nothing, no one else, is. Prayer in any other name is idolatry. The Lord + Jesus ate with repentant sinners. He heard their prayers for forgiveness, because they sought it from Him. But He refused to answer the questions of the chief priests and Pharisees, because they did not actually want an answer from Him. They only sought to find a way to put Him to death.

The One Who is, Who hears His people's prayers, is our God by grace. He has made us His people. He is everyone's God. It is just that everyone does not know it. In the end they will. Every knee shall bow and every tongue in shall confess that the Lord + Jesus is Lord, is I AM. To pray to the heavenly Father through the Holy Ghost in the Lord + Jesus' Name is to confess that the Lord + Jesus is Lord, is I AM. And that confession cannot stand alongside of false teachers who hold that the Lord + Jesus is only a son of a Nazarene carpenter. The confession that the Lord + Jesus is the Lord God cannot stand with those who believe that He was executed as a criminal and is still dead. Nor can it stand next to the idea that the Lord + Jesus is merely a misunderstood prophet or good teacher Who did not make atonement for the world and Whose Father does not hear and answer prayers in His Name. Prayer in the Lord + Jesus' Name cannot stand with witch doctors and shamans in buffalo skins peering into the intestines of animals. Prayer in the Lord + Jesus' Name, by definition, must condemn those demonic lies; must condemn all false gods, and false sources of hope.

For the Lord + Jesus is the real Lord God. He will tolerate no pretenders. The One Who is, Who gave His life to make us His, hears and answers our prayers. For we have a Lord God Who is not like us, Whose thoughts are not our thoughts and Whose ways are not our ways, but Who is good, and Whose mercy endureth forever. Prayer in His Name is prayer through His death and resurrection, by bestowal of that same Name in Holy Baptism, and it is prayer conformed to the prayer in Gethsemane. For heavenly Father's will is always good and gracious. It is always done by Him. We pray in the Lord's Prayer that it may be done among us also. And even when life seems bad, when it seems that the Lord's will is not being done among us. His will is still being done by Him. His will is that we may daily live in repentance of our sins, and cling to Him in faith. In this faith we pray to Him daily, knowing that He will grant to us all our petitions. For the Lord + Jesus promises us today in the Gospel reading from the Apostle and Evangelist St. John that whatever we ask in His Name, we will receive.

Let us then, my dear friends, pray then for whatever we would pray for knowing that our prayers are not prayed to some false god, which cannot hear, but are prayed to the One Who has promised to hear us, and give us all that for which we ask. We need not worry about forming the perfect request; or using the perfect words. For even before we ask our heavenly Father, He knows what we need. He has even supplied the words with which we can pray, when His Son, our Lord + Jesus, gave to us the Lord's Prayer, which prays for all that we need to support this body and life. Furthermore, we are not approaching an angry God when we pray, but a God Who has been satisfied on our behalf and who welcomes our prayer, praise, and thanks for the sake of His Son, our Lord + Jesus the Christ. In Him, God is our Father and He, Himself, loves us. Here in the Son of the Lord God is comfort for this lost, and hurting world! He is the message it so desperately needs. The world needs the Truth of the Word

boldly proclaimed. The world needs the promise of a real God Who does not randomly hear some and ignore others, but Who welcomes petitions from His children through His Son by the working of the Holy Ghost.

Nor do we need to think we are sending off our prayers into unanswered silence, or seek vague signs in nature, thinking every time the phone rings or the dog barks it is a specific answer to prayer—a miracle. He answers our prayer through His holy Word. He speaks to us by His Word; by His preaching and His Sacraments. He provides for us because He loves us. We pray because that is what faith does. We call upon God because we believe that He will give us all things that we need and we know and believe that it will be good.

We are not alone in our prayers. For God speaks in His Word. With that holy, inspired, inerrant Word. Prayer is not a one-way conversation. It is not a lecture, or sermon, by us where we are not really sure anyone is really listening. In the Bible God reveals His will for us. He reveals His loving mercy and kindness through His Only-Begotten Son, our Lord + Jesus, Who came from the Father, and returns to the Father to intercede on our behalf to the heavenly Father. This gracious Lord God speaks to us by His Word and answers our prayers. He provides friends, family, food, all things. But most significantly, He Who provided the ram in the thicket that Isaac would go free, has provided His Son as a perfect sacrifice in our place, and delivers that same Son to us in His Body and Blood given in bread and wine. By His Word, He provides, He forgives, He renews, and He strengthens and encourages us. He hears and He answers. Ask, and you will receive. My dear friends, rest and take comfort in this. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus Christ. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:

Almighty God, be pleased to accompany Thy Word with Thy Holy Spirit and grant that Thy Word would increase faith in us; bring into the Way of Truth all such as have erred; turn the hearts of the unrepentant; and for sake of Thy Name grant succor to all heavy hearts and those who are heavy-laden, that they may through the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ be relieved and preserved so that they succumb not to the temptation of despair but rather that they gain the victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil; through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with the Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever One God, world without end. Amen.

The Votum:

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Amen.

Soli Deo Gloria!