

Prayers God Always Answers— Prayers in Jesus' Name



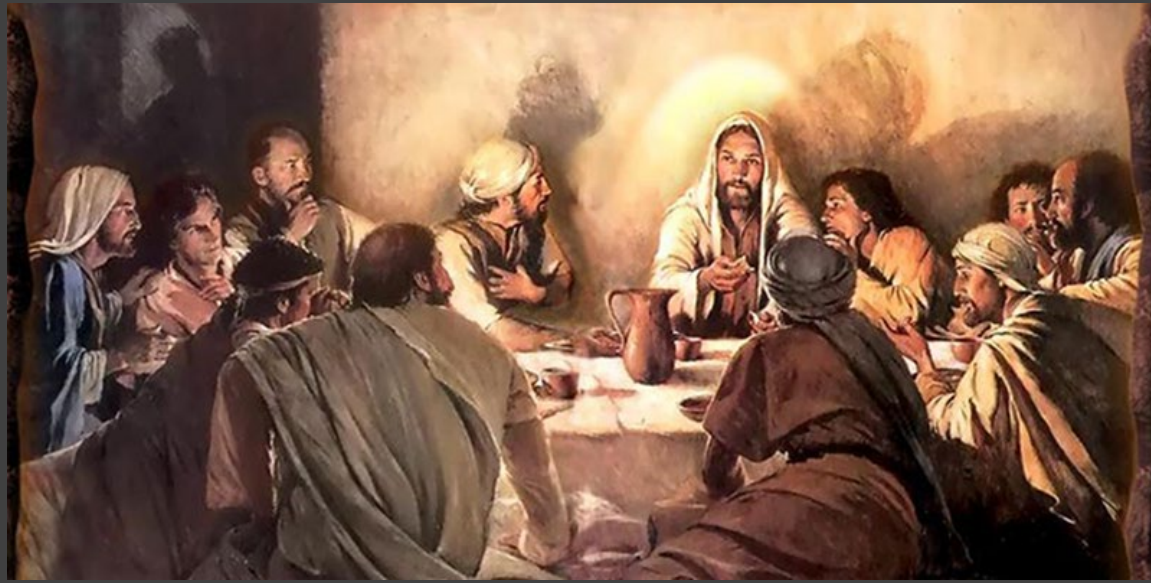
JOHN 14:8–14

⁸ Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.” ⁹ Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? ¹⁰ Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. ¹¹ Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.

JOHN 14:8–14

¹² “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. ¹³

Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.”



- Just before his crucifixion and resurrection, Jesus repeated the astounding promise to answer whatever we asked in his name.
- He said it **twice** in John 14:8-14.
- But he didn't just say it twice. He repeated it **three more times!**

John 15:16.

“You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that **whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.**”

John 16:23–24

²³ “In that day you will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, **whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you.** ²⁴ Until now you have asked nothing in my name. **Ask, and you will receive,** that your joy may be full.”



- Anything that Jesus **said five times** just before he died on the cross must be vitally important for his followers.
- This point about prayer in Jesus' name carries such weight, unlocks such vast power, and is so counterintuitive for us, that Jesus repeated it five times so that we would not miss it.



God answers prayers in Jesus' name.

1. Praying in Jesus' Name *doesn't* mean just signing his name to your agenda.

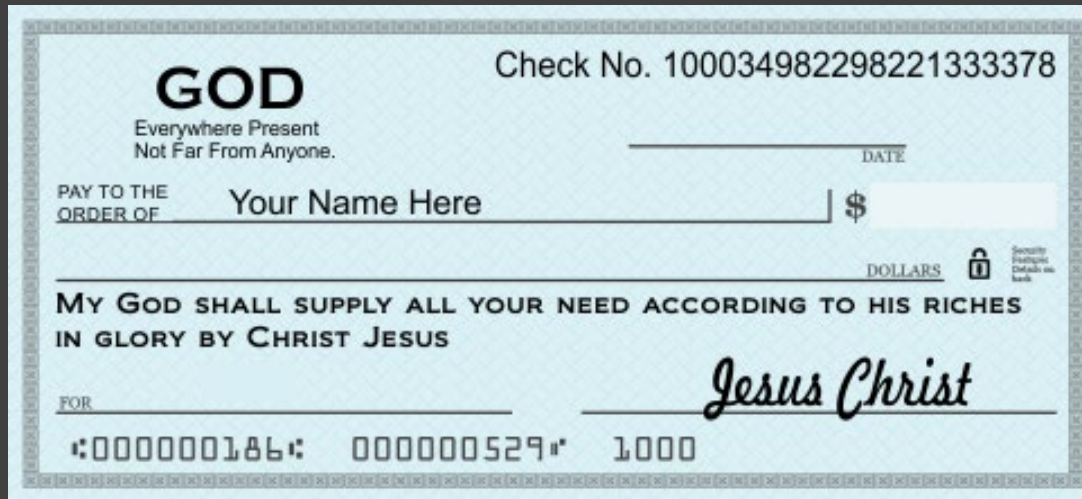
- Praying *in Jesus' name* is not a magical formula like “Abracadabra!” or “Open Sesame!”



"Try 'Open underscore sesame.'"



- Praying *in Jesus' name* doesn't mean asking for a red Ferrari and tacking on the **magic words *in Jesus' name***.



- God is *too wise* and *too loving* to give rebellious *sinners* a *blank check* to get whatever they want to spend on whatever *idols they lust after*.
- He's also too wise and too loving to give his own *misguided children* something they *ignorantly pray* for that would *not be for their good* and *his glory*.

2. Praying in Jesus' Name means praying for things that are in keeping with his character and his Kingdom.

- In the Bible, a person's name *represents the person himself* and therefore all of *his character*.

- To act in someone's name means to *act on his authority*, not on our own.
- When *Peter* commands the *lame man*, "*in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk*" (Acts 3:6), he is speaking on the authority of Jesus, not on his own authority.



- When the *Sanhedrin* asks the *disciples*, "*By what power or by what name did you do this?*" (Acts 4:7), they are asking, "*By whose authority* did you do this?"

- To pray in Jesus' name means *not only praying in his authority*, but also praying in a way that is *consistent with his character* and that *truly represents him*.
- It is to pray in a way that:
 - *reflects Jesus' manner of life*,
 - to pray for the *things he would pray for*
 - and that *further his agenda*.

- When Philip says to Jesus “Show us the Father,” Jesus says to him “**whoever has seen me has seen the Father.**”
- How?

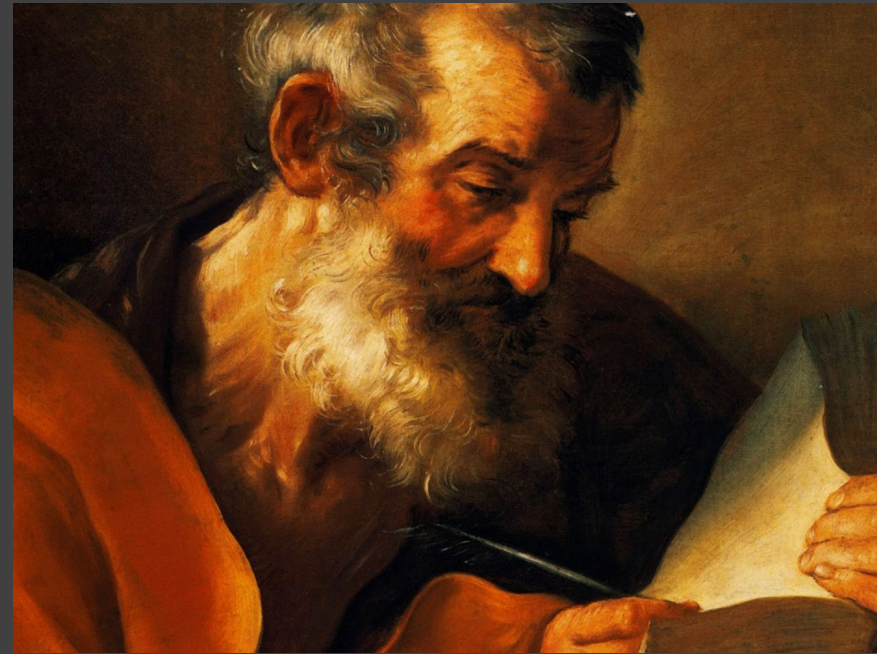


- In verse 10 Jesus said because “I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works.”
- Everything Jesus did in the flesh **reflected God’s character** and **advanced God’s agenda**.
- Everything he said and did he did on the Father’s authority.



- That is what it means to pray in Jesus' Name.
- Just as the Father was in him and he was completely subject to the will of the father, **so now he is in us and we are to be completely subject to his will.**
- To pray in Jesus' Name is another way of praying ***in accordance with his will.***

- Years later, the apostle John writes to those “who *believe in the name of the Son of God,*” repeating the promise of unlimited *whatever-we-ask* power he wrote about in his Gospel.
- This time he replaces the words “in Jesus’ name” with the words “*according to his will*” to mean the same thing.



1 John 5:13–15

¹³ I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life. ¹⁴ And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that **if we ask anything according to his will he hears us.** ¹⁵ And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, **we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.**

- *Why* in the world would God invite us to pray his will?
- What is the advantage of us telling him something in his will?
- It's not for his benefit, but ours.

- Jesus is interested in our *learning his nature*.
- Along with abiding in his word, prayer in Jesus' name—in accordance with his will as he has revealed it to us in the Bible—is *how we come to know God better*.

- Jesus also *invites us* to become *partners* with him *in his agenda*.
- We *join him* in doing the *business of the Kingdom*.
- In this same conversation in the Upper Room, Jesus also told his disciples that that *his followers learn his business*.

John 15:15

¹⁵ No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.



Prayer becomes a way for us to **know God** by **learning what he is doing** in the world and **doing it with him**.

- Whenever our prayers *lack power*—when we pray persistently in faith with no results—it may mean that we are off his target.
- But when we see God unleash his power in answer to our prayers, we discover what he is passionate about.

3. Prayers in Jesus' Name are always answered because they are the prayers of **his representatives** doing **his business**.



- Jesus promises to answer when we intercede on matters dear to the heart of God.
- Not only do believers receive the very things they ask for in the name of Jesus, but Jesus himself promises to *answer in person* the prayers of his disciple.

John 14:13-14

¹³ Whatever you ask in my name, this *I will do*, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ If you ask me anything in my name, *I will do it.*”



- The only people who have the *right* to pray in Jesus' Name are those who have *surrendered to his Sovereignty*.
- They alone *wear his name, belong to his kingdom*, and are *indwelt by his spirit*.



“It is safe to tell the pure
in heart that they shall see
God, for only the pure in
heart want to.”

—C.S. Lewis, *The Problem
of Pain*

Application

- Perhaps the Lord would say the same thing to you that he said to the disciples: “Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. **Ask** and you will receive....” (John 16:24)
- Jesus did not promise to answer any kind of prayer you pray.
- He promised to answer certain kinds of prayers: **prayers that match up to his plans for the world.**



- On the one hand, the bad news here is that you might not get that *Ferrari* after all.

- But praying the kind of prayers that connect us to what Jesus is doing unleashes incredible blessings into our lives and the lives of the people around us.
- So, try asking Jesus for marching orders every morning.
- Look around you and ask:
 - What did Jesus command me to do in his world?
 - What does Jesus seem to be doing in my little oart of his world?



Story of Greg Pruett praying for the village
across the Niger River