

Fourth Saturday of Easter ~ 5/5

"I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it." (John 14:13-14)

What are we asking for these days? "Could I get a pay raise?" "Could you fix it so that the new guy at the office will ask me out?" "Since everything is possible, could I win big at the casino?" "Please don't let it rain on our picnic today." And the list goes on and on, doesn't it?

What are we asking for these days? Perhaps we need to take a look at the kind of things that we ask for and the motives beneath our request. It seems that an awful lot of prayer revolves around, "give me, give me, give me". Poor God is expected to do the impossible. Not that He can't, mind you, but have you ever figured out how God is supposed to answer the prayers of two opposing sides when they are praying for victory in a football game? And what is God supposed to do when we pray, "In the name of the Lord Jesus may I pick the winning lottery numbers this week?"

When we look at our prayers of petition surely we realize that many of them do not reflect the Spirit of this passage from John. Jesus wants us to ask for what we need and He wants us to petition for the needs of others. But sometimes our needs and our wants get all mixed up. Praying for what I want may be praying for that which will be a deterrent to my growth. Praying for the things that someone I love wants may not be praying in their best interest.

Jesus gives us many examples of how to pray and for what to pray in scripture and clearly what He wants from His Father reflects the needs of others. We also see that Jesus never demands anything from His Father but rather He asks. He always leaves the outcome in His Father's hands. Even during the agony in the garden when He prayed not to go through the pain and suffering that awaited Him He finished the prayer but saying, "but Thy will be done." In answer God did not give Jesus what He wanted but He gave Him what He needed, peace and courage.

In order to receive from the Father we need to pray in Jesus' name. So it is important that our prayers have the same motivation as our Lord's. And if we don't know what His motivation was then perhaps our very first prayer of request needs to be concerned with knowing the mind of Jesus. And for that we can pray, "give me, give me, give me."

Questions for Reflections

- 1. Do I pray more for what I need or more for what I want?*
- 2. What were some of the things that Jesus prayed for? Why did God answer Him?*

Prayer: In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ may my prayers reflect my deepest desires for union with my God.