

# IMPACT

**I** **M**ust **P**ersonally **A**cknowledge **C**hrist **T**oday  
Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own under-  
standing; *in all your ways acknowledge Him* and He shall direct your path.  
Proverbs 3:5-6

**Passage:** I John 3:18-23 “My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him. For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment. Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him.”

**Quote:** “It matters little what form of prayer we adopt or how many words we use. What matters is the faith which lays hold on God, knowing that He knows our needs before we even ask Him. That is what gives Christian prayer its *boundless confidence and its joyous certainty.*” Dietrich Bonhoeffer

**B**elief in Christ for Who He is and *obedience* to the commandment to *love* others are two conditions for answered prayer that fosters the joyful assurance of salvation. Is there a Christian whose heart does not at times condemn him or her for failing to obey God’s commandment to love Him and others as we ought?<sup>1</sup> Praise God that true assurance does not rest in “feeling righteous” before Him! Praise God for the ministry of the Holy Spirit that causes us, like the Apostle Paul, to see ourselves as wretched, unworthy and the chief of sinners. Praise God that, through prayer, we can maintain joyful fellowship with Him, and we can have a conscience void of offense as we can approach the throne of grace with reverent confidence. David wrote, “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear. But certainly God has heard me; He has attended to the voice of my prayer. Blessed be God, Who has not turned away my prayer, Nor His mercy from me!”<sup>2</sup> I would invite you to read Psalm 32 where David wrote of the joy of answered prayer that came with the assurance of sins forgiven.

Praying for God’s will is another condition for the joy of answered prayer. “He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God. Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that *if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.* And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.”<sup>3</sup> “Prayer is not a convenient device for imposing our will upon God, or for bending His will to ours, but the prescribed way of subordinating our will to His. It is by prayer that we seek God’s will, embrace it and align ourselves with it. Every true prayer is a variation of the theme ‘your will be done.’”<sup>4</sup> Christ is the ultimate example of this.

The Apostle Paul’s attitude towards a severe mercy that God brought into his life is challenging to all who desire God’s will. “And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.’

## Joy in praying for God’s will!

*Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.* Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”<sup>5</sup> Do you seek through your prayers to embrace with confidence and contentment God’s providence for your life? The benefit for all who pray, “Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven” is a heart-felt assurance that Almighty God has answered our prayers exactly as they should be answered for His glory and our good. Whether they lead through pleasant pastures or the valley of the shadow of death, we can rest in the truth that He is directing each step that we take!

1 Matt.22:37-39 2 Ps.66:18-20; 3 I John 5:12-15 4 John Stott 5 II Cor.12:7-10