

John 16:23-33

“Lift Up Christ”

May 1, 2016

Last week I talked about peace. At the end of our text we find these words. **"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."** We will not find peace in this world. As Judgment Day approaches we will find more and more turmoil. Instead we will find peace is in our God through Christ.

Our text begins with Christ telling His Disciples and us that before we prayed only to the Father. Now we have permission to pray in Christ's name to the Father and He will hear us. Not only will Father hear us, but He will answer us because we love the Christ. Why do we love the Christ? He led the perfect life for us and then paid for our sins on the Cross at Calvary so that we could have a free pass to heaven. The Father sacrificed His Son so that we might share eternity with Him. Those of us who love the Son will gain eternity and those who don't love the Son will lose eternity.

At this point, I would like to talk more about prayer. Just as our peace is found in our God, so also the answer to our prayer is found in our God. The fourth chapter of James tells us; **“When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.”** The

focus of our prayer is to be on our God not upon ourselves and our needs, wants and desires. We can go to our God with our needs, wants and desires but the answer to our prayer needs always to give glory to our God. When we ask with selfish motives, we only glorify ourselves.

When we are hungry, homeless or without warm clothes, then we go to God in prayer because He invites us to come to Him in prayer. Our prayer could be; **“God take care of my needs now!”** We can’t command God. Our prayer could be; **“I need help and to prove that you are still my God, I want my needs met!”** We can’t believe in Him one moment and then doubt Him the next! In the Book of James that is called being a double minded man and we are told that we can expect no answer. Our prayer could be; **“These are my human needs, please bring glory to Your name by answering my needs according to Your will. Lord I know that though my patient endurance when my worldly needs are not met, Your name will be glorified. So Lord whatever Your answer, I will do my best to give glory to Your name!”** This prayer is a statement of trust in the midst of this troubled world.

In 1 John chapter five we are told that; **“This is the confidence we have in approaching God: 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 what we asked of him.”** Did you catch the phrase **“according to His will?”** God

has given us His Word which we call the Bible. He has not given it to us to set on a coffee table so that it can tell those who visit us that we are Christians. Nor has He given us the Bible to be a door stop or to prop up a table leg. He has given us His Word so that we will read, mark, study and inwardly digest God's Word. We study and memorize God's Word so that it will reveal God's will and give guidance to our footsteps. We study and even memorize God's Word so that we can learn how and what to pray so that we can give glory to our God.

In my study of our text I ran across this statement. **“His church is not built on people's strength, but on God's ability to use people even after they have failed.”** We are an imperfect people. Church is called a “hospital for sinners.” We live by God's undeserved grace and mercy. We are constantly failing our God and He still remains at our side. More in our faith, He lives in us. He wants what is best for us in a spiritual way so that we will share eternity with Him. Therefore in all things focus upon Christ that He may be glorified. Life is not about us. Life is about serving our God because in Him we find our peace, our hope and our eternity. Amen.