

# Lessons From I John

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## Praying To God

(I Jn 5:14-17)

### INTRODUCTION

1. Good Morning
  - a. Greeting...
2. Series of "Lessons From I John."
  - a. With the end of the letter coming soon John mentions a few words about praying.
    - i. This isn't the first time to do so.
      1. He wrote concerning the value of confessing our sins to the Father.
        - a. **I Jn 1:9**
      2. He wrote concerning our Advocate in prayer, Jesus Christ the righteous.
        - a. **I Jn 2:1**
      3. He wrote concerning why we receive what we ask for in prayer.
        - a. **I Jn 3:22**
    - i. As one can see John has written quite a bit concerning the topic of prayer.
    - b. In his final words about prayer in this letter John discusses two things.
      - i. He expands upon what he already introduced praying with confidence.
      - ii. He also brings another idea to the table so to speak, praying with compassion.
  3. With this in mind let us examine these verses concerning "Praying to God."

### I. Praying With Confidence (14-15)

- A. Requires asking according to God's Will
  1. This of course is the theme of these two verses.
  2. Remember confidence in our prayers to God is not based upon some assumption that we can pray for simply anything we want and get it.
    - i. Some get this impression from what Jesus said.
      - a. **Jn 14:13-14** "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."<sup>1</sup>
    - ii. Jesus' prayer shows this is not the case.
      - a. **Mt 26:39** "And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will.""
    - iii. Paul's prayer shows this as well.
      - a. **II Co 12:7-9** "So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. 8 Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. 9 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness..."

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<sup>1</sup> All Scriptures are taken from the ESV unless otherwise noted. If other translations are used this is not necessarily an endorsement of the translation.

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3. This is why we must study God's Word.
  - i. The more we know God's Will the more we will pray according to His Will.
  - ii. The more we know God's Will the greater our confidence will be that we will have our prayers answered in the affirmative because it will be based on His Will.
- B. Requires keeping God's commandments
  1. This was pointed out in earlier of course.
    - i. **I Jn 3:22** "and whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him."
  2. If we ask something within the Will of God but aren't keep His commandments you can see the problem.
    - i. Should we really expect God to answer us as we wish if we are not willing to do what He wants us to do?
      - a. **I Pt 3:12** "For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayer. But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."
- C. Requires abiding in Jesus, & His Words abiding in us
  1. This was taught by the Great Physician Himself.
    - i. **Jn 15:7** "If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you."
  2. This statement should also help with what Jesus said earlier.
    - i. **Jn 14:13-14** "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."
  3. These words of Jesus summarize what John has been teaching here.
    - i. Confidence in prayer depends upon keeping the commandments which is the key to abiding in Jesus.
      - a. **I Jn 3:24a** "Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him..."
- D. Thus the three things that will give us confidence in our prayers are...
  1. Asking according to God's Will.
  2. Keeping God's commandments.
  3. Abiding in Jesus and He in us.

### II. Praying With Compassion (16-17)

- A. For brethren
  1. John has emphasized brother love throughout this letter.
    - i. He has told us we ought to lay down our lives for our brethren.
      - a. **I Jn 3:16** "By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers."
    - ii. He has told us to take care of our brethren.
      - a. **I Jn 3:17** "But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?"

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2. If brotherly love is based on taking care of and even giving our life for our brethren I would think praying for them would be a no brainer.
  - i. It is with this in mind that we find the "type" of brethren we are to have compassion in praying...
- B. For the one sinning a sin not unto death
  1. This is a challenging passage of scripture.
  2. As one brother put it...
    - i. Does the present tense of the verb "sinning" necessarily imply that the brother is still engaged in the sin when we are to pray for him?
    - ii. What is the "sin not unto death" verse the "sin unto death?"
    - iii. What is meant that "He will give him life?"
      - a. Thus we can see many questions have been ask.
      - b. I remind each on that I have already preach an entire sermon on this subject when we were studying the theme "Difficult Texts In The Bible." So you can get a full break down of it on our sight or ask me and I will get you the sermon.
  3. What my studies have concluded, and I'm open to other possibilities if they can be found logical and true to Scripture, is this...
    - i. That John is talking about one that commits sin that leads to his/her literal death (**II Co 11:29-30**).
      - a. First we see committing or sinning is a present participle and that looks back to both the "brother" and "a sin."
        1. Put those together and it would indicate as brother Guy N. Woods wrote, "it is a sinning brother who stands, as it were, before our very eyes." (A Commentary On The New Testament Epistles Vol. VII by Woods, Guy pg. 321)
      - c. Second notice that "he shall ask" is in the future tense.
        1. Thus after one sees this person sinning they are to pray for him/her.
          - i. I never have seen or come across a point where I should stop praying for someone to come back to Christ, unless they are physically dead.
          - ii. You can do that every time except when they physically die.
        2. We know we can pray for those that are in need of repentance.
          - i. **Ga 6:1** "Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted."
          - ii. **Ja 5:19-20** "My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, 20 let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins."
          - iii. **Lk 23:34** "And Jesus said, "Father, forgive

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them, for they know not what they do.” And they cast lots to divide his garments.”

3. The question is only when do you stop doing so?
  - i. I can only see this happening after physical death.

### CONCLUSION

1. Brethren what John has given us is important to spiritual wellbeing.
  - a. If we want to have a relationship with God we must...
    - i. Pray with confidence.
    - ii. Pray with compassion.
2. Question: Do you pray with confidence and compassion?
  - a. If so continue therein and grow thereby.
  - b. If not why not. Start now putting forth the effort, which is what it takes, to achieve this reality.
3. Invitation
  - a. For those that are Christians but are not living for Christ repent by confessing your sins to God that He may forgive you and dedicate your life/time back to Him.
    - i. **I Jn 1:7, 9** "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin...9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
  - b. For those that are not Christians or for those that think they are Christians and want to know for sure notice what is required to become a child of God or Christian according to God and God only.
    - i. Hear/Study **Rom 10:17; II Tim 2:15**
    - ii. Believe Jesus Is The Christ **Jn 3:16; 8:24**
    - iii. Repent/Turn To God **Ac 17:30; Lk 24:47**
    - iv. Confess Jesus As Lord **Mt 10:32; Rom 10:9**
    - v. Immersed For The Forgiveness of Sins **Ac 2:38; 22:16; I Pt 3:21**
    - vi. Live A Faithful Life **I Jn 1:7; Eph 5:8**