

# **ASKING AND RECEIVING AND THE WILL OF GOD**

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**February 19, 2023**

Today we are going to be preaching from John chapter 15 and I am going to talk a little bit about abiding in Jesus Christ and asking the Lord. You know, so many times we ask the Lord for things and you can imagine in the testament that I've given when I was in Zambia, asking things, saying, "Lord, can you take this guy out?" ...you know, something like that... Or like Paul said in Galatians, talking about the people that were so knife happy with the circumcision, he said, "You know, I wish that they cut themselves off." Now, if you study that out some people say, "You know, it's like they go all the way with a circumcision and mutilate themselves." But in other commentaries say that the Hebrew concept to be cut off means to die.

It could be that Paul basically said, "You know, man, it doesn't matter which way, it is not good. It's like, "I wish these people die because what they are doing is they are enemies to the work of God." And that is a problem because, imagine this, wherever Paul would preach the Gospel he didn't preach the gospel the way I go and preach the gospel when I go to America. You know, you fly there. You get there. People treat you well. You stay in a nice hotel or somebody's house that they've done the best for you. Or, if you go to Europe and you preach in Paris, I mean that's not what Paul went through. No. What Paul went through, when he went through all of these things, was he was at the brink of death all the time. And then, at the brink of death all the time, he then got, by the power of the Holy Spirit, some people believed and as they believed their lives changed.

And just as their lives changed there was some of these Judaizers that came in and then started to preach a wrong gospel. There was an atheist on YouTube who said that Paul was never persecuted for the gospel he preached... never! He says that if you look at all the cases with Paul, he was never persecuted for the gospel. He was persecuted... it was not actually persecution. It was the government that was against him because he tried to overthrow the government. That's what they say. Now, if you go and read Acts, to a certain degree this is correct because the accusations that were against him were he is preaching that there's another king. He is saying, "Caesar is not Lord. Jesus is Lord." And then you would find that they were Judaizers from Ephesus. And what they did was they hated Paul. They were just filled with Satan and they were even called the messengers of Satan.

Wherever Paul would preach they would bring two messages. The one would be that they preached the law. They were Judaizers and then they would have lies spread about Paul. They would say that he was a troublemaker, that he causes havoc, that he brings disunity and that he speaks against Jewish religion. They would take things of the government law and they would say that he's breaking these laws spreading lies about Paul. That

would immediately get the government involved. The government would then lock Paul up in jail. Then there would be court cases and all those kinds of things to get out of jail. Paul started churches that way. That's how he planted churches. It's not easy, Man. We're having it nice... I promise you that. After he planted a church like that, imagine now there is a church going and his heart is for this church and all of a sudden, these people come and they influence this church with the wrong doctrine. Some of these people start to deny the Lord Jesus and go into Judaism. His heart would break. He would feel, "Is it worth it? What am I doing? Am I not wasting my time?" That is what he would be thinking in his mind and I think many of us in our life, our Christian life, sometimes, if we look at our own lives we would think, "Are we not wasting our time? What are we believing? Thank God for the good news but I'm not seeing a change here in my life or I'm not seeing a change there in my life, or things are not working out the way I think they should work out." And we start to ask God and we say, "Lord, I want this thing to change or that thing to change." One of the things that Paul was asking God for was to remove the thorn in his flesh.

The thorn in the flesh, in my opinion, is to remove these Judaizers, these preachers and these people that are following him. If you study Acts... I did a verse by verse of the whole of the Book of Acts. If you have time and you want to know some theology, go and listen to that. I don't know how many hours of teachings... a lot! If you do that you will see how it worked. Wherever Paul went, they had a group designated to follow him and mess up whatever he does. Don't you think it would be a noble prayer to say, "God, just remove these people and then Your work can continue successfully." See, what happens is we start to measure success of the work in what we do and what we accomplish. Where God said to Paul, "Listen. My grace is sufficient for you. The fact that I died, that I was buried, that I was raised from the dead and that you have eternal life and can share in My life, that's enough for you. You don't have to have anything else so that you can feel successful." It's like imagine me going to Zambia now. I'm saying that I have certain things that must happen there before I'll feel I'm successful and now I am asking God to answer the successes, the standards, to answer those standards so that I can then come to the conclusion that I'm blessed. The Lord doesn't answer prayer that way and I'm going to show it to you in the Scripture. He doesn't answer prayer that way.

It's almost like, I remember years ago, and if you look at the success of the world, this is how it works if you are a young man: Let's say that you are unsaved and you're young. This is what you want: I want a beautiful wife. I want a good business. I want money. I want a wife, a pretty wife, that is faithful, that loves you. You want a good business. You want money and you want a nice car. And then you want health. That's what you want.

When you are unsaved you work very hard to get that. And then one day you get saved and then you think, "Ahhh, now that I am saved, I am a child of God, now I'll have the wife and the car and the money and the health because now I am saved. Now I'm going to have that because now I am a Christian." Then, sometimes, you find it's like, "I'm sure this girl will be God's answer to my prayer." Then she is disobedient. She doesn't want to listen. Now you are in trouble. Then you think, "What is wrong with me?" Then you realize, "Ah, it's because you weren't baptized!" You need to be baptized. Then you get baptized.

Then you think, "God, because I've obeyed AND I'm baptized, now I'm going to have the wife and the car and the whatever. I'm going to have what the world tells me what a successful life looks like and what the world offers, I am now going to now have that by the power of God." Then you realize, "It still doesn't work that well. You know at least I have the good girlfriend but now business is a problem." Then you realize you were baptized the wrong way. They dumped you three times and it should have been a full year for healing one time. Then things don't work out and you start to realize because you don't pray in tongues. Now you go for the praying in tongues. People lay hands on you. You start to pray in tongues. Then, after a while, when things don't really work out, you still have this measure of the world in front of you. Then you say, "Well, I'm praying in tongues now but I wonder if I'm not just making up the words in my mind. Am I really now baptized in the Holy Spirit or not? I don't know." And your life just starts to go backwards you know, and you are actually still living in the world because the standard of the world is the stuff you have.

So many times we come in a prayer and we ask for the things of the world. I'm not saying that we cannot have things of the world. If I look at whatever we have, I believe it was the Lord that provided for us. It's the Lord who cares for us. There is nothing wrong in having, like that motorbike that my wife bought me that's standing there. There's nothing wrong in having that motorbike if you inherited money and she wanted to buy me that bike, she can do it. But, there's something very wrong in saying that that motorbike defines the success of God's work in my life. That is a problem. It is only one thing that can define the success of God in this world and that's the empty grave of Jesus Christ. Was God successful? Yes! He raised Christ from the dead and we are now under His rule and His rule has started to bring forth fruit in us and we, as the Church, have got a hope and the hope is the hope of the resurrection. And those who hope... why do they hope? They hope for certain things because they are not seeing the fullness now. That is why they are hoping. It's like the man that sits here. How can he, how should he feel, about his own life when he had a stroke. After many hours of prayer and whatever, he's still not walking perfectly. He's struggling in his body. What makes him get up in the morning? It's the hope that God has given us in Christ that even if we die, we shall be raised from the dead. What gives us that hope? It is an empty grave! That God has the power to conquer the grave in Jesus Christ and that He is faithful and that He has promised us that and we find the Holy Spirit just supernaturally, as we hear that message, bring forth a hope inside us and it strengthens us today.

There's one thing I want to tell you: If our gospel cannot work for the poor in the African Bush or for the person in the squatter camp, it's not good enough for anybody. It must be something that works also for the poorest of the poor. If it does not work for the poorest of the poor, if it does not work for the outcast, if it cannot work for the paralyzed, for the quadriplegic, if it cannot work for somebody who has lost all hope, if it cannot work for somebody who has lost his arms and his legs and that we know, unless Jesus returns, he will not find that he will have arms and legs, if the gospel that we have cannot make that person happy in his condition, it is not even good enough for us. And that is what I find the Apostle Paul was preaching. He was preaching a gospel where there is a hope and that hope is the hope like the man sitting there who had problems with his heart. You

know, to be honest with you, when I heard what was wrong with you and you survived it, I said, "It's a miracle!" He couldn't breathe. He had a blood clot. Now there he is. So, he's drinking medicine. It's being released... whatever. So, we look at that and we say, "Lord, thank You that we can see that You are doing a miracle for this man that he is alive but, also, like you're saying, you're still having at least there's still a hope that is to come but it's not losing joy today because he knows there is still something that is to come.

In our prosperity and wealth gospel we've preached the message... and I'm not advocating for poverty. I'm not saying that you must be poor. I'm not saying that. To be rich is not piety. Neither is poverty. What I am saying is in the traditional doctrine of the health and wealth prosperity gospel, we have said that Jesus did everything and if we don't have everything today, it's because of a lack of our faith or because there is something wrong with us, or anything like that. But, the bible says in Romans 8, he says that if you hope for something, why do you hope for what you already have? No, we hope for something because we don't have it. We don't have the full manifestation of the return of Jesus Christ today. So if we see shortcomings in our life, it can never be amiss that there is something wrong with you, that God doesn't bless you, that He doesn't love you, that He doesn't approve of your life.

If I have somebody in my life that looks at me and he looks at the piece of property that we have and he says, "Well, let me see how I can harm this person and he tries to do that and he wants to get a piece of property in a way that he should not, how can the difficulty that we go through because of another person, be any sign of God's approval of our life? It cannot! We live on Earth where people can make decisions. We live in a place where normal things happen and we are waiting for the return of our Lord Jesus Christ. But, as we are waiting for that, and this is where **John 15** comes in and where this is important. It has encouraged me a lot.

**1 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener.**

**2 He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.**

Many of us struggle with that verse in the King James where it says in the first part where it says, "**Cut off**".

**John 15:**

**1 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.**

**2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away:**

The NIV translated as, **He cuts it off every branch in me that bears no fruit.** Now, I studied the Greek there. It can basically mean both. But I think in the context, it can mean what many Grace preachers say that where it says, "If it does not bear fruit, he takes it away." In the Greek, the word there is to lift up.

**2 He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful** (that it may bear more fruit).

I remember the years of teaching the pruning message: God prunes you. He is going to prune you by taking away all the things you like. That's how He prunes you. We've seen the pruning as God pruning man by removing the things you love. I remember years ago when we heard the message of pruning in Bible School, Helena got this antique dressing table that her father restored. Then I remember we were still in Bible school and then she said, "God, you can prune anything out of my life but don't prune that thing out of my life. That is mine!" I mean, it was like a fear in her because we were under the law. When is God going to prune this thing out of our life and that pruning would be to clean us up. Now the reason why we think like that is because we think that stuff can make us holy and stuff can make us unholy. But, if we realize that stuff doesn't make us holy or unholy, we will come to the conclusion and we can say, "Pruning must be something else." We find here, if we read on:

**3 Now you are clean** (pruned) **through the word which I have spoken to you.**

So, it says that He prunes those that bear fruit so that they can bear more fruit. Then He says to His disciples, "And now you are clean, or you are pruned, by the Word that I have spoken to you." So, what makes you not to bear much fruit? It is believing the wrong Word... not stuff... believing the wrong Word! You can live in the African Bush, I have seen it there, and you can be in the greatest poverty and bear no fruit because you believe in a wrong word. Or, you can be a multi-millionaire living in some palace and you can have all the fruit. Why? Because of the Word that is in your heart... the Gospel that you believe.

So, he says here:

**John 15:**

**1 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.**

**2 Every branch in me that bears not fruit he takes away:**

In other words, if it would bear no fruit, He would lift it up. Some people say that it would be lifted up or put a stick under it so that it can start to bear fruit and if it bears a little fruit it will be purged or pruned that it might bring forth more fruit and now are you purged (or pruned) through the Word which I have spoken to you.

Now He says, **4 Abide in me** (or abide in My message, abide in My word)

**As the branch cannot bear fruit of its own** (itself), **except it abides in the vine; no more can you except you abide in me.**

**5 I am the vine, you are the branches: He that abides in me** (in My word), **and I in him** (I believe here that Jesus was referring to Him abiding in us, not abandoning His mission on the Earth, continuing with His mission on Earth), **the same brings forth much fruit: for without me you can do nothing.**

So, we can see here that fruit bearing is leaning heavily, the responsibility to bear fruit, leans heavily on the shoulders of God and not on us because he says here, "Of yourself you can do nothing." Now I want to tell you if you are in a situation where things are getting too much for you and you think of dealing with those situations, this is a wonderful

verse to know: "You can do nothing!" And the context is fruit bearing... love, joy, peace. longsuffering. kindness, meekness, temperance, faithfulness... All those kinds of things. You cannot bear those things. Let's read it again. It says the reason why you're not bearing fruit, He says to his disciples, or not much fruit, is because you are not believing the true message and I have now pruned you through the message, and the message in John 13:13-14 was that He gives His life that people can have life by Him. That's what He is saying. So, if you hear the message that you can only have life by Jesus giving it to you freely, the fruit of the Spirit as a gift to you, only by that message and that truth believed, and as you abide in the fact that He has promised you and He'll bring it forth, that is the only place where you will be able to bear fruit.

***4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can you, except you abide in me.***

***5 I am the vine, you are the branches: He that abides in me, and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit: for without me you can do nothing.***

***6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.***

It doesn't say here that you will be burnt by God. It doesn't say that. It doesn't talk about going to hell here. It talks about more being a light to the world but I will preach about that in another time.

***7 If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, you shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you.***

***8 Herein is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be my disciples.***

The concept here is fruit bearing. The context of asking here is fruit bearing. That's the context. He says that if you abide in Me and I in you, you'll bear much fruit. Now, I always and until recently just thought that it was just automatic. And I think, to a great degree it is automatic and I've experienced it automatically. As I believe in the Good News of Jesus that it brings peace to me. It brings love into my heart. But what we see here it also talks about an asking, saying, "If you abide in Me and I abide in you, whatever you ask the Father He will give to you. It's the Father's will that you bear much fruit. It didn't say anything about a BMW. It doesn't talk about anything but the fruit and the fruit described here is that people can know that you are My disciples in how you love one another. That's the fruit.

When we were in Zambia, going through a difficult time, when the police came to me and said, "Listen, if this guy bothers you, anything, just call us and we'll arrest him." I could not do that. I could not do that. Why? Only for one reason. That man, by the world, is seen as a preacher. He is part of the Church in the eyes of the world and how do you, as the Church, take a Church person and put him in jail? No! The world will see the love that

we have one for one other and they will know that these people are disciples by Jesus, So, the questions that we ask God or the requests we put in is, "Lord, we want to bear much fruit. We are abiding in Christ." In other words, we are not living by the law. We are not living by our own works. We are living by the grace and the gift of God and in the grace and the gift of God, whatsoever we ask the Father as pertaining to bearing fruit so that when the world sees us, they will say, "These are the disciples of Jesus Christ." That's what you ask. So, what do you ask if you are in a place where you go through, what Helena and I have been going through, you are saying, "Lord, I am asking You that the way wherein we handle the situation, that You empower us that the people outside can see that we are disciples by You." That's what we are asking. That's what we are asking... "Give us wisdom. Give us understanding in how to do that." And we find how that happens in our everyday life.

Like, for instance, to give an example of one of the things that happened in Zambia. Certain apostles came, from this church organization where I had my work permit, to correct me about my doctrine because they were told that I am preaching in churches that believe in the tithing message that they should stop giving money to the Church... which is a lie. I've never said that! So now these people come now and they are going to correct me so they drive there to see me. When I see them, they realize that they are wrong. They didn't apologize or anything and as they tried to rebuke and correct me, I obviously did not feel comfortable with that there. (Bertie speaks in Afrikaans) You know, you get those thoughts. And we were sitting in a meeting and as they left the meeting, I felt offended by the way they treated me. But, as they did that, my prayer request in that whole time there was, "Lord, I thank You that I can bear the fruit of Christ in my life." That's what I asked the Father in the name of Jesus. That means that Jesus was raised from the dead. That means that I have power over death. I'm not controlled by the death of this world or the death in someone else's heart. I'm controlled by the life of the resurrected Christ!

Those people stood up. They walked out. As they were out there, I said to Helena, "I just feel to go and give them money." They were highly irritated with me. When they saw me, because of the information they had which was not true information, they worked themselves up. They lived from that perspective towards me. Then they were embarrassed. Then they left with anger. And as they were busy at their car, putting fuel in their car, I just felt to give them 400 rand. I went to them and gave them the money. When I gave them the money it was not about... I mean 40 rand is not the end of the world, but when I gave them that money and I realized that this is answered prayer. This is they cannot drive away there without having what the Apostle Paul had when he saw Stephen being stoned. And after the stoning he went away and you find in Acts, chapter 9, Jesus appeared to him and He said to him, "It's difficult for you to kick against the pricking that's in your heart." Because, if you read Acts, chapter 9 you will find a pricking in the heart of Saul of Tarsus started at the stoning of Stephen, where Stephen while being murdered, prayed for those and he prayed the words of Jesus and he said, "Don't keep the sin against them", which was the very report about Jesus when He was crucified, while they nailed His feet.

(Bertie talked about walking near the thorn tree and getting a thorn in his foot and experiencing pain from such a small thorn) So, imagine Jesus, if you find a little thorn burning like that what would feel like if they take and nail it through your feet and then Jesus prays for them. Do you know why Jesus could pray for them? Because the word of the Father abides in Him and He wasn't bearing the fruit by Himself. It was the Father showing the ability of the Father in a normal man. And what is in Jesus is also in us! What we do is, when we need to bear fruit, or as we abide in the word of Jesus, what is His word? His word is, "I've laid down my life for you therefore My life I give to you as a free gift. Whatever you ask..." It's like going to the restaurant. You go to the restaurant and you look at the menu. If someone goes with you and he says, "Listen, I'm paying for whatever you order, whatever you ask from the menu." What is on the menu? The menu is the very life of God, the very fruit of God. So, we could find Stephen bearing the fruit of Jesus where they could say, "This is truly a disciple of Jesus because Jesus prayed that prayer when He was murdered. He's praying the same prayer." Was it because Stephen was such a devout Christian? Was it because of Stephen's own commitment to the scriptures and stick-to-itiveness? No! It was the grace of God bearing fruit in Stephen. What Stephen had to ask and request is the life of Jesus and Jesus' life was showing in him and the life that was in him was not Stephen living but Christ living in him.

So, in the very same way, when, in a very small manner, when those people... now, I want to tell you this: After what this guy had done, my wife and I felt, "Let's pay for his son's school that his son can go to school because why should he suffer because of the father?" No. We are still going to pay for the son's school because why should the death in one person's heart stop the life that God has given us? And if we feel generous, what's going to stop our generosity, because what we've asked God is that we share in the very generosity that Jesus shared in, which was He was rich and He became poor so that with His poverty we might be made rich. And now that grace is also in us where we can share in the very same life where God has given us resources, where we can say that we'll have less so that others can have more. Why would we do that? Because we are obeying a law? No! Because we've asked the Father. We are abiding in Christ and we simply say, "Father, I'm asking that the fruit of God, Your life, show in me." And whatever you ask as to pertaining to bearing fruit, He'll bring forth in you.

And you know how wonderful is that? Let me read to you what the fruit of the Spirit is. The thing is if we say we don't want to suffer because if we suffer we will not be happy so I don't want to pray this prayer. You are not understanding the prayer. The Bible says that the fruit of the Spirit is love and peace and joy. So, why do you ask God, "God, I want joy!" Now we think, but what if I suffer? Listen, if you have joy even when you suffer, it's better to have joy and suffer than to be sad and have something. The guy who has joy is happier. I've seen it in Zambia. People grab a hold of this good news and then you find a joy in them--- the joy as in the Lord. You can say, "This is the joy that comes from God." So, what do we ask God? We ask God, we say, "Lord, I abide in You." In other words, it's not by my works. It's by Your promise only and as I know that it is not by my works and I am a new creation in Christ and You abide in me as long as what Jesus Christ remains a human being seated at the right hand of God, I can ask whatever I want according to God's will which is that I bear much fruit. And the fruit of God is love, peace, joy, long



suffering, kindness... Now, joy: Just say, "Father". When Helena and I were in a difficult time there, then we say. "Thank You, Lord, that according to Your will, we request joy by the work of God, by the doing of God." And God has put a joy in us that we will go back and continue to preach the gospel.

I have seen some people say, "If I never get Covid then I know God." And then they get Covid and they don't know what to do now... "God, did I commit the sin... did I do this and that?" And then I just wait until I am better. Believe the Lord. Say, "Thank You, Lord." If I get healed, glory to God! If I don't, I'll be raised from the dead anyway in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. That's if we just say it bluntly. But people have looked at many things, the things of this world. "Lord, if you change our government The government needs to change and then we know we are blessed." No, it is not true. We are blessed in Christ and the blessing of the Christian is to bear the fruit of the Spirit in our lives which the Bible says we can ask of Him.

I want to read the fruit of the Spirit. Galatians chapter 5 and then I want to go to 1 John:14.

This is one thing we need to realize: Wherever you go, there you are. If I am here at home, I find sometimes I am upset about things. I feel, "Man, I wish these things would change, then things would be better... if Malema can just be saved, Hallelujah, Lord." Or if you can just be quiet, oh Lord. Even if he speaks, it's not a problem... but, the news... just not put it on. Why did I give him so much air time? It's like, "Give me some! I'll speak at the news day, you know, but no, they are going to have him... all the fears, whatever! If that can just change then I can live in peace here."

Then they want to develop this piece of land across here. Now they want to put something like a police station across the road from us. If that can just change then I can live in peace! 14 years, 15 years, we have lived in peace here. Now, they want to change our peace. So, now I'm going to pray. You're going to organize this town Council and whatever we need to do we'll get together. We'll organize something, but we are going to have peace here! Can you see how your prayers can be ineffective prayers? We look at the things of the world and wherever you go, there you are. When I get to Zambia, when I'm there then I say, "Lord, You know, I can feel much better and I can have much more joy if I can get out of this guest house. This thing is dangerous. The people that come here at night clock in at 11 or 12 or 1, drunk. And they have no carpets in that place. The doors have gaps. "Lord, help us! If we can get out of this guest house that will be wonderful!!" Then you get out of the guest house and you get into your house in Zambia and then you say, "Lord, if you can just get this one guy, just to do this, then we'll be happy. Then we will be..."

This blessed me so much when I read this verse. I think it's just changed my life! "**Whatever you ask the Father...**" And I can tell you this: If I look at fruit in my life, when I ask the Lord for fruit on this basis of abiding in Christ with the identities Christ... not the situation but Christ, I cannot think of one time that prayer was not answered. It's answered all the time. And I tell you now, you can go and look at your own life, if you say, "Lord, I abide in You. My identity is in You. That's where I abide. I don't abide in BMW or Mercedes

or Toyota. I abide in the resurrected Christ! That's my identity. That's who I am. And I ask You, from this union, "Can You give me peace that supersedes the peace of this world? Can You help me there, Lord?", your prayer will be answered... every time. Every time!

***1 John 5:13 I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.***

***14 This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.***

If you ask anything according to His will, He hears us. Then it says there, "This is the will of God that you bear much fruit." So, what he is saying is, "It's God's will to bring forth fruit in you by His doing and not your own doing." So, we don't look at the law wherein we look at the Ten Commandments and then we are saying, "We are bringing fruit to God's table." No! We are not bringing fruit to the table. God brings forth fruit in us!

I'll end off this way: If I demand 200 rand from you now and I say to you, "Listen! Before you go out the door there is a box there. (There is not a box there! So, relax!) I demand 200 rand from each one of you." How does it feel if I tell you that I am demanding 200 rand from you? Some would say, "What's it for?" Then I have to justify myself. Then they will think, "Oh, well! I don't know." But if I tell you that I'm not demanding 200 rand from you. When you go out the door, I'll give everyone 200 rand." It feels a bit different. It's like, Alleluia!! So, one demands and the other one provides. God is not demanding holiness from us. He's providing us with holiness! He gave Jesus. The reason He gave Jesus is so that we can share in the life of God by God providing holiness for us. So, our race is called the race of faith. We keep the faith. What is the faith? It is the persuasion that Jesus was raised from the dead where we see ourselves in Him all the time! When we don't see ourselves defined by the world. We don't see ourselves defined by the things of this world.

I found a preacher the other day... it is upsetting to me but he said this: He preaches grace every day. He preaches who we are in Christ. He preaches that Jesus died, that He rose, that we are the people of God. And then the next day he's in the political rally where he tells the people how underprivileged they are and how these people that oppress them must heal them by compensating them. That is not the gospel! It's not the good news because those people are now going to start to pray and request the government to give them money so that they can feel joy. Then they are going to pray and pray and pray and they are not praying according to the will of God. Praying according to the will of God would be something like this: Yes, we've been oppressed by (and I'm talking about politics here) "Yes, we've been oppressed by white people years ago but if a white person oppressed me, a white person is not my healer. So, my identity is in Jesus Christ and I don't care what political people say and how they want to use and abuse the difficult situation that I am in but I'm going to find my joy in being one in Christ. And I'm going to have joy even while my children didn't have the opportunity to study. It doesn't matter because those whose children cannot study have the same right to joy as those who can because Jesus died for all and He's come to give joy to all people. There are people living in the African Bush that will never have electricity as long as they live! And

there are millions of them... millions! There are people, that where we've worked now, are 60 and 70 years old and they never sat on a toilet in their life. So, how can our joy be defined by those things! No! The joy that comes is supernatural. It comes from God. There's no reason for it. It is the eternal existence of God that He puts in you. It's the joy that comes from knowing that you are eternal. You have no beginning, no end. Nothing can take your life from you. You are secure forever more for you are sharing in the very life of God! If you abide in the fact that Jesus was raised from the dead, that you are one with Him, whatever you request from there as pertaining to bearing much fruit, you will have. You will have it!

I want to know what it feels like to love people. I remember, years ago, I said to the Lord, "I'm very glad that You are not angry with me when I do something wrong because you are not a sin conscious God. But it is a bit frustrating that you love people and You see the best in them but I don't share in that life." I don't feel what the Lord feels. I'm not sharing in His life. I'm just standing on the other side. It's like the one guy and I were talking about things. He was talking about whiskey and he said to me, "That is a very good whiskey!" I think it was a Johnny Walker Blue, or whatever it was, and he said to me, "That's a very good whiskey but you have to drink it yourself otherwise it is not as good."

The love that God has towards us is beautiful and it empowers us to share in the very same life... and THAT we can ask of God and He will bring it forth in us. Glory to God! Wherever you go, there You are. If I'm not happy here I will not be happy wherever I think I must go. Joy can reach you right here, today! See who you are in Jesus. Keep your mind on who you are in Christ. Don't be defined by the politics. Don't be defined by the news. Find your identity in the one who knows you, Jesus! From there, you ask Him to bring forth fruit in you and whatever you ask, you will have.

This is one of the things I ask: That even if I die, that my physical body will be raised from the dead and I will live forever with God, on this Earth, with Jesus Christ. That's what I ask. That is a request from me. Imagine you can ask whatever... whatever! And Jesus was given. He died... listen to this... Jesus dies and He's raised from the dead and now, in His name, you can ask whatever you want! Why don't you ask the very same as what you have seen? That's the question. That is what God is trying to show you. It's like if somebody comes and he takes a suitcase and opens it up and there's a million dollars in there and he says, "Ask whatever you want. So, if God shows you an empty grave, a resurrected man, and He says, "Ask whatever you want!", you don't ask for a car because you can work and get a car by your own power. You ask for what God says what you cannot afford, what you cannot attain to, and that is peace in a broken world, joy in the midst of oppression... He can give you that and that is by the Holy Spirit.

Father, I want to thank You! Thank You that I can come and just preach here today. I want to thank You that You've blessed me with Your gospel and also with the presence of these people. It's so beautiful to see their faces here. Thank You for this congregation. I love them so much... each one of them! Thank You for the many years that I could serve them and wash their feet with the Good News.

Thank you for every revelation that You shared with me that I could share with them. The people watching on line that I could share with them and serve them with the life that You have given me.

Father, I want to pray for everyone that is here that as they go home that they can go and explore this truth and say, "Lord, I'm asking for what can be given to me because of Your resurrection. Thank You, Lord!

I declare every person here, blessed. You are well spoken of by the most high God. You have a wonderful future in the resurrected Jesus Christ, one that is flooded with the fruit of the Spirit... joy and peace.

And thank You, Lord, that we can encourage one another as Hebrews says, "Let us come together where we encourage one another in this good news!" Father, let us not measure our success on how good parents we are, by how our children act, or by how much money we can provide, or any of those things. Let us not measure ourselves by the things of this world but I ask You for an open mind, for all of us, so that we can see how high, how wide, how deep and how long the love of Christ is so that we might be filled with the fulness of God. Amen and amen