

(T) Welcome to **Discipleship training On The Air**. In this meditation and memorisation series you may learn to become a disciple of Jesus Christ. Two teachers will meditate on the meaning of a Bible verse about one characteristic of a disciple of Jesus Christ and then memorise it together. As you listen to this programme, make notes in a notebook or record the programme. In the first series God promises that all Christians may have 5 assurances. The topic of today's meditation and memorisation is: A DISCIPLE IS SURE THAT GOD ANSWERS PRAYER.

POINT 1. MEDITATION OF THE NEW BIBLE VERSE

The new Bible verse that we will meditate and memorise is John 16:24. We will ask one another questions to help us to meditate on the truths written in the Bible. Please read John 16:24.

(S) John 16:24. "Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete."

(Question). The Bible begins with the words "Until now you have not asked for anything in my name." How did the disciples pray before?

(T) All the disciples were Jews. The Jews addressed themselves directly to God. They did not make any mention of another name. For example, in Psalm, king David starts his prayer with "Give ear to my words, O LORD, consider my sighing. Listen to my cry for help, my King and my God, for to you I pray." The Jews called God directly by his name "LORD" or "God". They also did not close their prayers in the name of God.

(Question). Jesus says that the disciples did not ask for anything in his name. What is the importance of a name in the Bible?

(S) People in the Bible gave their children names that had meaning. They regarded the name of a person as a special distinguishing mark of that person. The name sometimes expressed the person's calling in life. For example, God gave to Abraham his name, which means, "father of a multitude", because God was going to bless a multitude of nations through Abraham.

Sometimes the name expressed what people expected that person to become. People often dreamed about the future destination of their children and incorrectly gave them names that expressed their dreams. For example, Adam named his third son "Seth", which means, "substitute", because he wanted Seth to take the place of Abel, who was killed by Cain. Joshua means "saviour", because the people hoped that he would save them from their enemies.

(Question). Today, however, many people do not know the meaning of their names. But a person's name is still important today. If he signs his name on a cheque, then he is responsible to pay that amount of money. What is the importance of God's names in the Bible?

(T) God's names must also be an expression of God's essence and character. Only God is exactly what his names say. The fact that God has names means that God knows himself and also that God reveals himself to people. God wants people to know who he is. Therefore, he reveals his names to them. The two most common names for God in the Bible are "God" and "LORD".

In the original, the word for "God" (Elohim) means "the mighty one who commands respect and fear". For example, the Bible asks, "To whom, then, will you compare God? What image will you compare him to?" (Isaiah 40:18). "I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me..... I will do all that I please..... What I have said, that will I bring about; what I have planned, that will I do." (Isaiah 46:9-11).

In the original, the word for "LORD" (Jahwe/Jehovah) means "I am who I am" or "I will always be what I am". This is God's covenant name, in which God says that he will be faithful to the covenant he made with his people. For example, in the Bible we read, "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished." (Exodus 34:6-7). Of this name God says, "This is my name forever, the name by which I am to be remembered from generation to generation." (Exodus 3:14-15).

(Question). If Jesus teaches us to pray in his name, what is the meaning of his name?

(S) Jesus is God. Jesus is the visible revelation of the invisible God. Jesus too has names. In the Old Testament, the prophets describe the coming Jesus with names like "the Messiah", which means God's "anointed one". Isaiah prophesies about Jesus: "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." (Isaiah 9:6).

In the New Testament, especially three names of Jesus are important. They are "Jesus", "Christ" and "Lord".

The name "Jesus" means "Saviour". He has this name, because he will save his people from their sins.

The name "Christ" means, "anointed one", which is the same as the word "Messiah" in the Old Testament. He has this name, because he has been anointed with the Holy Spirit to be our prophet, priest and king. As prophet, Christ reveals God and God's words to us and he reveals what will happen in the future. As priest, Christ pays the penalty for our sins by sacrificing himself and he prays for us and blesses us. As king, Christ sovereignly rules over our lives and also protects us, saves us and conquers every form of evil and danger in our lives.

The name “Lord” means “owner and master”. He has this name, because he reveals the LORD (“Jehovah”) of the Old Testament. The name “Lord” also means that he is the Owner and Master of everyone and everything, especially of his people, the Christians and the Christian churches.

(Question). What does it mean to pray in the name of Jesus Christ?

(T) Now that you know the meaning of the names “Jesus” and “Christ”, you also understand why you should pray in the name of Jesus Christ. We should pray in the name of Jesus Christ, because Jesus Christ is the “Mediator” between the living God and us. As Prophet, Jesus Christ reveals God to us, so that we can know the character of the living God to whom we pray. As Priest, Jesus Christ died for our sin, was resurrected and now is in heaven in God’s presence, where he speaks to God on our behalf. Now we have access directly into the presence of the Living God to whom we pray. As King, Jesus Christ directs our life in the ways of God. Therefore we know what we may pray for.

(Question). Why is knowing what God is like important when you pray?

(S) Some people believe in idols. I know what idols are like. Idols are man-made and dead. They cannot hear prayer and they cannot do anything to help me. Other people believe in gods who are fickle and unpredictable. To such gods nobody knows how to pray. Other people pray to a god that never relates personally to them, because they believe that God is too exalted above people.

But the living God has revealed to us what he is like. For example, because he is holy, we know we cannot ask for unholy things. Because he is merciful, we know we can ask for forgiveness. Because he is faithful, we know we can ask for his help. Therefore, the better we know what God is like, the better we know how to pray!

(Question). Why is the death and resurrection of Christ important for prayer?

(T) If Jesus did not die for our sins, then our sins would still stand between God and us. And God would not listen to our prayers at all. But Jesus Christ died for our sins and was resurrected. Therefore the Bible says “we Christians have access to the Father in heaven”. “We may approach God with freedom and confidence” (Ephesians 2:18, 3:12).

(Question). What does it mean to pray in the name of Jesus Christ?

(S) To pray in the name of Jesus Christ has two important meanings. First to pray in the name of Jesus Christ is *to pray on the basis of his merits*. Everything he merited by his death and resurrection he is able to give to us! Second, to pray in the name of Jesus Christ, is *to pray in harmony with Christ’s revealed will* (1 John 5:14). If Jesus Christ is our Lord and Master, then we will not pray for anything that is against his will. We know it would displease him. Anyway, we already know that he will not give to us anything that is against his will. Therefore, to pray in the name of Jesus Christ is to pray in accordance with his will. And when we pray in accordance with his will, then we will have confidence that he hears our prayers!

(Question). Why does Jesus command his disciples to pray?

(T) I think that if they did not pray, they would also not receive. The Bible says, “You do not have, because you do not ask God.” (James 4:2). And Jesus also says, “Ask and it will be given to you.... For everyone who asks receives.” (Matthew 7:7-8). Therefore, only the Christians who pray are the Christians who receive!

(Question). Jesus says, that if we ask, then our joy will be complete. Why can our prayers become a source of joy?

(S) Prayer becomes a real source of joy, because God answers prayers! Receiving God’s blessings makes us joyful! Receiving answers to our prayers makes our faith in God grow stronger. This also makes us joyful! The fact that God really hears our prayers and the fact that God gives us many answers to our prayers are the source of our joy! But we must remember that Christian joy is not the same as worldly happiness. Happiness *depends on circumstances*. If our circumstances are good, lucky or prosperous, then we feel happy. In contrast to happiness, Christian joy *depends on the relationship with God*. When we have a relationship of peace with God, then we have joy even if our circumstances are very difficult!

Let me summarise. Praying in the name of Jesus Christ is the basis of confident prayer and the source of much joy. It means, “to pray on the merit of Jesus Christ” and “to pray in harmony with the revealed will of Jesus Christ”.

(T) **POINT 2. MEMORISATION OF THE NEW BIBLE VERSE**

The method of memorising a new Bible verse has four steps:

Step 1. Meditate and understand the Bible verse before you memorise it.

Step 2. Write the Bible verse on a card or in a notebook. Write topic at the top. The topic today is “Assurance of answered prayer”. Beneath that, write the Bible reference of the verse. The Bible reference today is John 16:24. And beneath that, write the whole verse.

Step 3. Memorise the verse in the right way. Always start with the name of the topic, the Bible reference and the first line of the verse. It is a good practice to learn the Bible reference twice, first at the beginning of the verse and then at the end of the verse.

Step 4. Review the new Bible verses every day for five weeks. And review the old Bible verses at least once every three weeks.

(S) Let us memorise the Bible verse together. Then let us take turns to say that part of the verse alone without looking at the Bible or notebook.

(T+S) Assurance of answered prayer. John 16:24. Until now you have not asked for anything in my name.

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(S) Assurance of answered prayer. John 16:24. Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete. John 16:24.

(T) Why is it important to memorise Bible verses without one mistake?

(S) Because it is very hard to unlearn mistakes that you have memorised. Moreover, it is much easier to memorise and review, to recall and use Bible verses when you have memorised them without one mistake.

(T) **POINT 3. REVIEW OF THE LAST BIBLE VERSE YOU HAVE MEMORISED**

Please review the first Bible verse that you have memorised, but without looking at your notebook.

(S) Assurance of salvation. 1 John 5:11-13. "And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. 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. 1 John 5:11-13."

(T) **POINT 4. ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK**

First. Daily review the last two memorised Bible verses once every day for 5 weeks.

Second. See the workbooks "Go and make disciples" and Internet on www etc.

Third. Listen on short wave radio every SATURDAY to WEDNESDAY to "Discipleship training on the air".