

GUARANTEED

Scripture Reading: Read 1 John 5

Money back guarantees are not uncommon in our society. You purchase a product that turns out to be faulty in some way and you usually get a replacement or your money back. Sometimes the company requires an original receipt, original packaging, or some other stipulation to get the guarantee honored. However, if you meet the requirements, you do usually get your refund.

How would you feel if I could sell you a “formula” that would result in all your prayers being answered and, on top of that, I backed it up with a money back guarantee? Would you buy it? Most people would...in a heartbeat. Now, of course, I don’t have such a formula to sell but the apostle John has one to give away free to any believer who wants it. Interested? I thought so. Check it out in verses 14-15 of today’s chapter reading: *“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.”* According to the apostle John, if you want all your prayers answered, simply pray according to God’s will for any and every situation. That’s it? That’s the formula? Yup! If you always pray according to God’s will, he will always answer your prayers and you will receive what you asked of him. It’s guaranteed.

Are you surprised by this stipulation? You shouldn’t be! Every time we pray the Lord’s Prayer, we declare, *“Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”* God’s will is always done in heaven. He desires his will to be done on earth, too, in the lives of those who have submitted to him. When we pray God-prayers, therefore, those prayers that are in line with his will and prompted by his Holy Spirit, he hears them and will answer them. What a contrast to the kinds of prayers that are left unanswered according to James 4:3! The prayers there are more “my will be done” than “thy will be done.” No wonder they fall by the wayside and are ignored by God.

There are other stipulations mentioned in John’s epistle as well. *“Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God and receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him”* (1 John 4:21-22). From this we gather that not only is praying for God’s will important but so is praying with a right heart and a God-honoring life.

Pulling it all together we could put it this way: When we walk in faith with a clear conscience from sins forgiven, living in obedience to his commands, and doing what pleases him, we’ll know, desire and pray according to God’s will. When we do, then we’ll receive all that we asked for from the Father. It’s guaranteed!

Action Step & Prayer Focus: Read Psalm 66:18. How does this tie in to today’s devotional? Evaluate your prayer life. How often do you pray what makes sense to you for a situation instead of waiting on God to determine what his will is? As you pray this week, consciously determine to pray according to God’s will.

Take-a-way: *Receiving answers to prayer is guaranteed still, just walk with Jesus and pray for God’s will.*

Week of December 9-15