

This Is Our Confidence

It is easy to become discouraged in prayer if we do not see the answers to our prayers immediately. The question is—What do we place our confidence on in prayer? What keeps us believing and persevering? Merriam-Webster's Dictionary defines confidence as "the quality or state of being certain." Certainty in prayer comes from only one place—our trust in our heavenly Father. It is easy to build our prayer lives on our opinions and feelings—especially when we feel like our prayers aren't working. But this will leave us feeling shipwrecked and disappointed. Instead, we must build our prayer lives on the word of God and His promises to us. This is where our confidence comes from.

Jesus told a parable comparing those who hear His word and obey it to a wise man who built his house on a rock. "And the rain descended, the floods came, and winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock" (Matt. 7:25, NKJV). By contrast, those who do not listen to Jesus' word are compared to a foolish man who built his house on the sand, and when the storm came, his house was destroyed (see Matt. 7:26–27). This parable is all about where we place our confidence. If we put our confidence in anything other than God's promises to us, we build on shifting sand. Our foundations is weak, and we will experience great disappointment. Unshakable confidence comes only from building upon the rock of God's word.

In 1 John 5:14, it says, "Now this is our confidence that we have in Him..." (NKJV). That confidence is that if we pray according to His will, we know He hears us and will give us what we ask. This confidence is two part—first, we know He hears us. Do you believe that? He hears you when you pray. He hears your tears and groanings. He listens to every word you say. When Jesus was standing before the tomb of Lazarus, preparing to raise him from the dead, He said, "Father, I

thank You that You have heard Me. And I know that You always hear Me..." (John 11:41–42 NKJV). God always heard Jesus' prayers, and He always hears us when we pray, too.

And second, not only does God hear us, but He promises to give us what we ask. Our emotions may have a hard time believing that, but we can place our faith, our confidence, in God's promises to us, no matter how we feel. We do our part in praying according to His will—and then we trust in Him, the God who is able to do exceedingly and abundantly above all we can ask or imagine (see Eph. 3:20). Our confidence cannot be in ourselves, in our performance or holiness. It is always and only in Him, and He will not disappoint us. He is always faithful.

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