

June 22

Scriptures: Read John 15 & 16

Key Verse: “If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.” (John 15:7)

Overview

I’m afraid a lot of us see God as a celestial errand-boy. He’s there to do our will, meet our needs. And some of us have adopted various “get-what-you-want” systems. We think we know how to manipulate Him: all you need is to master the right praise system or prayer system and the magic button reveals itself - push and enjoy. And to add fuel to our fire, we quote half truths, or whole truths out of context. For instance, “... ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.” But we ignore the great qualifier.

“If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you...”—this is the great qualifier. God is not giving us a carte blanche. Our will must conform to God’s will or there is no deal. Our desire must spring out of His desire, and His desire is that we “bear much fruit”, thereby glorifying the “Father” (v.8). Fruitfulness is the litmus test. God’s glory is the chief end.

There are other qualifiers in this chapter. For instance, “You are My friends if you do what I command” (v.14). Or, “If you obey My commands, you will remain in My love...” (v.10). And what is Jesus’ command? “My command is this: love each other as I have loved you” (v.12). The Lord isn’t looking for religious people, or holy voters—He’s looking for disciples—people who make Him glorious before the world.

I suppose the reminder that always bear repeating is this: we serve God, He doesn’t serve us. He loves us with an everlasting love, and sent His Son to die for our sins, but He will never let us reduce Him to a means of achieving our own ends. In fact, when our faith becomes a way of getting our way, we’ve become heretics.

Jesus is Lord. He calls the shots.

Prayer

O Lord, You said in Your Word that it is only by the Holy Spirit that we can say (and mean it) that “Jesus is Lord”. We invite Your Spirit to work mightily in us through the word.