

# Mark 11:24

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- [ 0 : 0 0 ]     So in Mark chapter 11, we read that verse 24. Therefore I say unto you, what things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.
- Believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. So we find then that the teaching of our Lord then is that we should trust in what he desires to give.
- Jesus isn't just meaning, oh well, if you want it enough, then it's going to happen. Remember what he has said before this. Whosoever shall say to this mountain, be thou removed, be thou cast into the sea, and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he said shall come to pass, he shall have whatsoever he said.
- And he says, have faith in God, verse 22. Now he's not just saying, as I said, want it enough, and then it'll happen. If we are asking in his name, if we are asking for his cause, for his reason, for his purpose, then all these things will come to pass.
- And this is what we are taught. But we cannot simply ask for it selfishly. Lord, I want this, I want that, I want the next thing. I might even want you to smite my enemy.
- [ 1 : 2 1 ]     Because we read in the very next verse, when ye stand praying, forgive. If ye are ought against any, that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.
- But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses. And this incident then, this teaching on prayer, this follows in Mark's account of the gospel, the cleansing of the temple.
- And what has been happening in the cleansing of the temple? Christ is driving out those who seek to make the temple, the things of God, into a means of merchandise.
- My house shall be called of all nations, not just the Jewish people, but all nations, the house of prayer. But ye have made it a den of thieves.
- It is intended to be a place of prayer, but instead they are making of it merchandise. They are seeking to bring the world into that which should be holy. And again, when Jesus says to the scribes and the chief priests, he says, okay, the baptism of a drum.
- [ 2 : 2 3 ]     Is that from heaven or from men? And then you find what the answer was. But they didn't want to give that answer because they were quite content for people to keep on having enough faith to keep on coming to the temple.
- So that they could keep on making their money, they could keep on maintaining the institution. But they didn't really want to bother about having this living relationship with God.
- And this means of prayer that Jesus is talking about is the most foundational aspect of our relationship to the Lord. Why do I say that?
- Well, surely there's church, there's Bible, there's sacraments, there's all these things. These are surely part and parcel of our relationship to the Lord. Yes, but they are not as foundational as prayer.
- Why do we say that? Well, let's say in the fullness of time, let's say that the situation in our country would have become that if you were known to be a Christian, you were arrested, thrown into solitary confinement or banished or whatever.

[ 3 : 23 ] Or let's say we were washed up in a desert island. You've got no church there. You've got no communion stuff there. You've got no means of baptism or sacraments or anything. You don't even have a Bible.

But what do you have? You have the means of prayer. You have God who is everywhere present. And you have a means of communicating with him in your cell, in your solitary confinement, washed up in your desert island without any of the paraphernalia, if you like, of outward religion.

Yet still you can maintain that relationship with the Lord by keeping the channel open between heaven and earth. This is the most foundational aspect to our relationship with the Lord.

When these channels are wide and open and kept clear of obstruction and the grace of God is able to flow freely through those channels.

When there is, like we've been looking at Jacob, you know, and Jacob's ladder at Bethel. When there is that traffic between heaven and earth. The angels, the messengers of God ascending and descending there upon the Son of Man.

[ 4 : 32 ] Remember, it's what we ask in his name that we receive. Then we are strong in the Lord. And then we have a power to do things that we could not otherwise do.

This is what Jesus means when he says, you can sit in this mountain, be picked up and cast into the sea. And it will obey you. Now, I can remember as a wee boy, I think, hmm, that sounds fun. And then focusing on a hill and saying, right, okay, let's pray for it that he jumped into the sea.

And, of course, it didn't happen. Why didn't it happen? Because I was just sort of trying out a wee sort of expect. Let's see if I can do this sort of thing. And it's not me that can do it. It's not me that's intended to do it.

But what Jesus means is there is no limit to the power of God. There are umpteen limits to the power of man and to anything that I can do or you can do.

But there is no limit to the power of God. You see, the disciples are fascinated by the fact that the fig tree that Jesus curses withers away from the roots.

[ 5 : 34 ] And, you know, this incident perplexes a lot of us, understandably, because it seems so totally unfair. Jesus goes to the fig tree and looks to see if he can find any figs in it.

But he found nothing but leaves. For the time of figs was not yet. And Jesus answered and said, I've met no man eat fruit of thee hereafter forever. And his disciples heard it. And then the next day they're coming back and then they see the fig tree is all dried up from its roots.

Not just from the leaves downward, but from the root up. Its very source of nutrients has been cut off from the ground up. From the roots up it is withered.

And Peter calling him to remembrance and saying, Master, behold the fig tree. So of course it is withered away. And Jesus says, have faith in God. Now, from what we know of Jesus, we might think in terms of he's about to say, now watch as I restore it to life again.

Or look how I can cure it again. But no, the fig tree here is intended as an illustration. It is intended as what we might say a living parable.

[ 6 : 37 ] One of the things that we don't have so clearly spelled out for us in Scripture is that fig tree was often taken as a sort of symbol or an emblem of the people of Israel.

And the people of Israel, the Old Testament churches that were, they had had so many times of fruitfulness. So many times when they were to bear fruit, when they were to have figs.

And Jesus comes looking for fruit upon the fig tree. We'll look at this a wee bit more on the Lord's Day with the fig tree and the fruitfulness that the Lord seeks for.

But he comes looking for it and he doesn't find any. And so he curses it and says, no man bear fruit of thee hereafter forever. And his disciples heard it. And then it will go away.

Now, on the one hand, we think, well, it seems a bit harsh. It's not the right time for figs. Part of the message that Jesus is trying to convey is, you never know when the Son of Man is going to come.

[ 7 : 35 ] You never know when he is going to appear and look for the fruitfulness for which there has been ample opportunity. You never know when your time will be or when we will be summoned to stand before him or when he will come through the clouds of glory.

When we will be required to give an account. You just never know. And the fig tree might have, if it could speak, but it said, oh, come on, hang on. It's not time yet.

You know, the time of figs is not yet. It's not the right season. It's not fair to ask me just now. And many of us know that if the Lord came back, we'd say, oh, hang on, Lord.

It's not fair. It's not time. It's not ready yet. Just let me get this sorted. Let me get that sorted. Let me get my other priorities out of the way. And then I'll give you whatever time you want.

But let me get my things sorted out first. And then, Lord, I'll give you whatever's left over. Remember in the Old Testament. Remember the case of Elijah and the widow of Zarephath.

[ 8 : 38 ] And it always struck me as a wee bit kind of, a wee bit unfair that Elijah went up there and says, you know, can you make me a couple of wee cakes of bread? And she said, well, look, I've got nothing left except this wee handful of flour and this wee part of oil.

And I'm just gathering a few sticks to make a wee fire. And to cook this, this couple of cakes of bread for myself and the son, that's all we've got. And after that, we're going to die because we've got nothing left to eat. And he would say, look, trust me, it will last.

But go and make me the cakes of bread first and afterwards make your son. That's a bit rough, isn't it? You know, surely he should have said, well, you know, yeah, of course, make for yourselves first.

If there's anything left over, then you can give me the leftovers. But no, he says, no, make for me first. Now, maybe they were so poor, maybe they were so hungry, but what's the difference, you know, whether we've got a whole cake of bread to ourselves or whether we have to divide the one between us and he gets the one?

It doesn't make any difference, but we're nearly dead anyway. And we're nearly run out of everything. So they do as he says, they trust him. And because they trust him, the battle of meal wasted not. And the little crews of oil didn't, didn't fade away.

[ 9 : 40 ] And they kept on having enough food. They kept on being supplied because they put their trust in what the man of God said. In one sense, you could say they've got nothing to lose.

Maybe they've got nothing to gain either, but they have nothing to lose by trusting in God. And he's represented it there. When Jesus is talking about the food tree, and he's talking about the Old Testament church, the people of Israel, he looked for a fruitfulness there, and he didn't find it.

Now, in Matthew's account of the gospel, when this incident is relayed, Jesus says to him, when the disciples saw it, he said, how soon is the fig tree withered away? Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I said unto you, if ye have faith and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say to this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, it shall be done.

And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing ye shall receive. Now, this would suggest to us, it cannot simply be about a little fig tree.

It cannot simply be about Jesus' cross, because he looked for fruit, and it was only these. So, curse the fig tree. Hey guys, this is brilliant. You'll have the power of God. You get a red cord, I'm cursing fig trees.

[ 10 : 53 ] Look at them withering away all over the place. Hey, look at the power we've got. No! Of course, Jesus is not talking about, but do what's done to the fig tree. He means you will be able to identify where there is fruitfulness and where there is nothing, and to pronounce accordingly.

You will have the power of God, the perspicacity, the ability to see right through and say, there is no fruitfulness here, and to pronounce it, shaking the dust off your feet and walk on to where the gospel will be received.

You will have the power to call it, and to say, this is a fruitful place. This is where the dust will be received. These are the people of the Lord, and to say, there's no fruit coming out of here, and not is there ever going to be.

Now, why does the fig tree wither and die right there, right then? Because Jesus has said, there's never going to be any more fruit from you hereafter, forever. And the only reason the fig tree is there is to produce fruit.

And therefore, if it's never going to do it again, its work is done. It is finished. It might as well be dead. You might think, wow, that's harsh, surely, isn't it?

[ 12 : 03 ] I mean, sure, what are we saying? If somebody isn't going to be in Christ, then they're already dead. Well, in many ways, that is the case. A lot of people go through this world simply as the living dead.

They go through this world never having known Christ, never having trusted in him, or having had the opportunity, and never closing in with Christ. Or having closed it away, but then let it slip through their fingers.

They never fulfill the potential for which they were intended. They never fulfill the fruitfulness for which they were designed. And the time comes when they are littered up from the very roots which should have sustained them, which were meant to sustain them.

They are effectively living corpses. In fact, they're not really living, they're just existing. They're just waiting to die. Waiting for the number of the days to click by and be fulfilled, and then that's it.

And Jesus simply, if you like, calls it on this fig tree. He says, you've reached the number of your days. You've reached the amount of time that you were meant to be soaking up the soil and the nutrients there.

[ 13 : 10 ] Nobody's ever going to eat fruit of you any time afterwards. And his disciples heard him say, when that fig tree's life and purpose is effectively finished, it withers from the ground. Jesus is talking here about the fruitfulness that was looked for from the church of the old dispensation.

The Old Testament church, the people of God and the Jews. Some were fruitful. Let's never forget that. That the purpose of the Old Testament church to be prepared for the Messiah to be, if you like, the means by which, or the vessel in which the Messiah was to be brought forth.

And that was their purpose. And they fulfilled that purpose. And once that purpose was fulfilled, all were invited to trust in him and to enter into that relationship.

And someday, all the first Christians were Jews. Let's never say, oh, the Jews weren't Christians, but us, you Gentiles, we are not. All the first Christians were Jews. We wouldn't have the gospel if it wasn't for Jewish believers.

But the majority of the Jewish people did not. The majority of the Gentiles do not either. We are not better than that. But this is what the Lord is pronouncing.

[ 14 : 24 ] There comes a point when the fruitlessness of the victory, of a people, of a place, of a church, is pronounced final by the Lord.

And that is a fearful thing. But it is one which can only be exercised with great power, huge power, huge discernment. And this is what Jesus is saying.

That if you believe and trust, that huge power is available to you. You, Peter, don't have that power. You, Matthew, James, John, you don't have that power.

We don't have that power. But God is that power. And what we do in prayer and in relationship with him is not, Hey, we become strong so we can do this and we can do that.

No. We access that power. We access that power, which is a huge power, which we are not qualified to exercise simply for.

[ 15 : 21 ] I want this. I want that. I want the next thing. Get it for me, God. But rather, what we are called upon to do is act as his hands and feet.

So that when the Lord reaches out to touch somebody's eyes as though he's doing with a physical hand, which hand we are. Or to lift somebody out of the downhill, he uses us to do it.

And he gives us the power necessary in the same way as the brain or the body gives power to the fingers and the hands and the limbs and so on to do the work.

But it's got to be his work. This is why he says, look, if you don't forgive your enemies, I'm not interested in giving you my power. You can't even do the little thing I ask you.

You've got to be like me. My hands, my fingers, my limbs, they've got to do what I tell them. They've got to be part of me. And the Lord is saying, if you're going to exercise my power, you're going to be part of me.

[ 16 : 18 ] That means I forgive people. You've got to forgive people. I forgive those who have wronged me. Sinners like us. You've got to forgive people who have wronged you.

Yes, they've sinned against you. Nobody's saying, oh, it doesn't matter. Ah, it's only you. Just let it go. No, it is a big deal what's been done to you. It is a big deal the wrongs you have sustained, but you forgive.

And when you forgive, you take and absorb the hurt yourself so that they won't be charged for us. At the last day, just as Christ does for us.

And thus we demonstrate that we are his children. We are his representatives. We can be trusted with his power.

But if you forgive, not, not. You do not forgive, neither will your father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses. How is he going to trust with that huge power? Some of you clearly does not know how to use it.

[ 17 : 17 ] You may love your little toddler or grandchild or child or whatever it was, but you are not going to, whether it's a brand new Jaguar or a Porsche or even a lesser car than that, you're not going to stick an infant child behind the wheel and give them the keys and say, off you go, daddy loves you.

You know, do what you like, but it, oh, yeah, no problem. It doesn't know how to handle it. That is going to be the death of your child or grandchild if you just leave them behind the wheel of this supercharged, powerful automobile.

And they don't know what to do. They don't know how to work. Give them time. Give them years and give them lessons. Give them training. Give them the ability to pass whatever tests may be there.

And maybe then they might be ready with a bit of experience, with a bit of maturity, what have you. A little more experience of the road. But you don't just throw them straight behind them and say, hey, go on, this is how much I love you.

The Lord loves his children so much that he will not put them in situations where there is too much power for them to handle.

[ 18 : 22 ] But part of the thing this does, of course, is that like little children, we then tend to think, oh, well, God doesn't really love us because then he would answer all our prayers and say, I want this.

And God would say, yep, no problem. I want that. Yes, no problem. And I don't bother God until I want it. And that's me doing my work. But that means I expect to say when I push the bottom, God drops down whenever I want into my hand.

Prayer doesn't work like that because it's not a slot machine. It's a relationship with one whom we are called upon to love. And there is huge, massive power at God's disposal.

So, whosoever shall say to this mountain, be thou removed and be thou cast into the sea, and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he said shall come to pass, he shall have whatsoever he said.

It's not just going to be for show. Jesus never did anything just for show. The fantasies in the scribes would say, you know, do a minute and say, okay, okay, see this one, boys. Zap. You know, he didn't do anything like that.

[ 19 : 25 ] When he was doing miracles, when he was healing people, he usually took them out of the way, away from the crowd, into the house, shut the door. Even Jairus' daughter, he only kept in her mom and dad and his inner core of disciples.

He shooed everybody else away. He doesn't want a big, spectacular firework display, but he will use the power of God in mercy. Under what circumstances might a mountain be cast into the sea?

Well, let's just say, for example, you think of the parting of the Red Sea. Let's say the Lord's people were trying to escape from their persecutors. Maybe there might be a situation where they had to get from this piece of land to that piece of land, where there was sea in between and they couldn't, and somebody prayed, and a mountain virtually collapsed, so they didn't want to see.

There was land for them to walk across, and then it sank so that their enemies couldn't cross over. That would be an instance when it might be something that the Lord would actually choose to do.

It doesn't mean, of course, that every time we ask, we always get. God knows what is for his greatest glory. But if we are asking in his name, then we trust and know that he will do what glorifies his name.

[ 20 : 37 ] John 14, we often make reference to this, of course. Jesus says in verse 13, You see, God delights to answer the petitions, answer the prayers of his children, of his people.

He just wants them to ask the right things and for the right reasons. Remember what James says, you know, in chapter four, he says, For whence come wars and fightings among you?

Come they not, even of your lusts that war in your members? You lust and have not. Ye kill and desire to have, and cannot obtain. Ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.

Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask in this, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God.

And if people are simply asking, oh, give me this, because I want it. Give me that, so that I can be richer than that person, or get ahead of my rival here, or I can win over against my enemy.

[ 21 : 51 ] Let me do this. Let me do that. Why are you asking? Are you asking for the glory of God? Are you asking for the furtherance of his kingdom? Are you asking it in the name of Jesus? Can you truthfully call down that holy name upon your petition?

Is it a worthy petition? Is it one which is for the furtherance of God's glory? Is it something which is worthy of the hands and feet of God to reach out and enact?

Is it as part of God and his kingdom we are asking these things, or is it simply to indulge our fleshly covetous desires?

Do you think that the scripture saith in vain the spirit that dwelleth in his lusteth to envy? James says, but he giveth more grace. Wherefore he said, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

So what should we do? Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil who wants you to get this, get this, get the next thing, get the next thing. Then you'll be happy, then you'll be satisfied.

[ 22 : 54 ] No you won't. Because this world, so much of it is an illusion. And it is passing away. Resist the devil and all his bright glittering baubles, and he will flee from you.

Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. It doesn't matter whether you're in a solitary confinement cell, or washed up in a desert island, or whether you're worn out on the factory floor, or the office desk, or at home, or feeling a loneliness, a despair, or whatever it may be.

Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. You don't need church buildings for that. You don't need sacraments, or Bibles as such, although I would stress and recommend to anybody, and everybody, that the more you know your Bible, and have it inside, in your heart, in your memory, then the more comfort and strength it will be to you.

That's one reason why we should use the opportunity we have to read it, and read it, and read it, so that it goes in, and so that it stays in. And that's one reason also why I would suggest to people, they should get one version and stick to it.

It's one reason also why I personally feel, the authorised version is the easiest to memorise, and to keep the actual words in your mind, in your memory, in your heart.

[ 24 : 18 ] Because so many other versions, it's just, well, this is roughly what this verse says, and this is roughly what it says, but you can't get it word for word, verse by verse, in that poetic musicality, and majesty of style, which the old Bible has.

Whatever version you choose, read it, and read it, and read it, and get it into your mind, get it into your heart, so that when the time comes, if the time comes, when you find yourself, as you see it, alone, with none of the paraphernalia of religion to turn to, that channel is still open to the Lord, that foundational building block, of your relationship to the Lord is still there, prayer is still there, and the word, if it is in your heart, because it has been read, and devoured, and taken in, will be there to come, still out again, not only in your prayers, but also as that by which you are guided, and led in your life, when it is there, with nothing else to support you.

Luke 18, we read, we speak a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to think, always to pray, and not to think, saying, there was a widow in that city, and she came unto him, saying, avenge me of my adversary, and he would not for a while, and that's what she's doing, she's not deciding, oh well, the judge isn't listening, so I'll go and smash in my adversary's window, and I'll give him a hard time, and I'll do the equivalent of letting down the tires in his car, and I'll steal from him, and it serves him right, she's not taking the law into her own hands, she's going to the judge, she's going where she should go, she's going that the law should take its course, avenge me of my adversary, he would not for a while, but after what he said unto himself, oh I fear not God, nor regard man, yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me, and the Lord said, hear what the unjust judge said, and shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with none,

I tell you that he will avenge them speedily, nevertheless for the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith in the earth, notice these two elements there, there's the prayer of this will, and there's faith, Jesus said you've got to believe as you ask, therefore I say unto you, what things so ever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them, you see it's after that in Luke 18, that he tells the parable, the two men going out to pray in the temple, the publican and the Pharisee, and the Pharisee really prayed thus for themselves, oh I thank you Lord, I'm so good, I'm not like this guy, I'm not like other sinners, and the publican went on so much as with his eyes, to have them pray, God have mercy on me as sinner, one was actually praying, one was just reciting how good he was, if we are believing, and trusting in the Lord, in who he is, in his holiness, in his goodness, in his majesty, in his sheer undiluted power, we would never be able to stand and say, oh Lord,

I thank you that I'm so good, I thank you that I'm this, I thank you that I'm that, I thank you that I'm the next thing, we would be on our knees before him, and we would be dreading, his power, his sheer majesty, and holiness, we would be, in the reverent sense, having the fear of the Lord, there's nothing of the fear of the Lord, in that Pharisee, in the temple, but there's much of the fear, and love of the Lord, in that publican, God be merciful to me, a sinner, he is believing, therefore I say unto you, what things so ever you desire, when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you shall have them, faith, when the Son of Man comes, shall he find faith in the earth, will there be prayer, in faith, or are we just going through, the outward forms, of religion, we read in James 5, going back to James a minute, the prayer of faith, shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him, you know, that can apply physically, physical ill health, it can apply especially spiritually, confess your faults, one to another, notice again, forgiving one another, confessing your faults, one to another, pray one for another, that ye may be healed, the effectual fervent prayer, of a righteous man, availeth much, and they go, that moves me out, because I'm not righteous, and I'm not God,



[ 29 : 00 ] I'm a righteous, doesn't I, Elias, Elijah, was a man, subject to like passions, as we are, that's a nice old fashioned, poetic way of saying, he was just a sinner like us, he struggled with the same problems, and the same temptations, and the same difficulties, a man of like passions, remember that passion, means suffering, if you are passionate, it means you are a slave, to your feelings, and Elias, was a man, subject to like passions, as we are, he's a sinner, just like us, same faults, and failings, and difficulties, and he prayed earnestly, that it might not rip, and it rained not on the earth, by the space, of three years, and six months, they might think, well James, that's not very nice, a lot of people, would suffer, because of that, it'd be a drought, it'd be a famine, it'd be all these things, why did Elijah pray that, he prayed it, so that as God, withheld his blessings, and his mercies, which he had showered upon, on great Israel, for years, and years, and years, as they were withheld, people might say, we don't actually have the rain, this year, we didn't get it last year, and now nothing's going to grow, and James, we have to think about, who actually sends the rain, and do we ever thank him for it, and do we ever ask him for it, and do we ever realize, you know, that we are so dependent, on the Lord, every day, for what we get, that he causes, the very substance of life, nobody can live without water, to just literally, drop down out of the sky, and if that's not happening, maybe people might be reduced, in their pride, and turn at last, to the Lord, in their desperation, whatever his reasoning, he knew ultimately, it was for the glory of God, he was asking this, it was in God's name, and in faith, that he asked, and he prayed, and it rained not on the earth, by the space of three years, and it's a time, and he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth, her fruit, he was a man of like passions, as we are, same problems, same sins, same difficulties, and he prayed, and God answered, and Jesus says,

God desires, to answer, he delights, to answer, he will answer, speedily, his children, if they ask, in faith, prayer, prayer, is the foundational element, of our relationship, with the Lord, anyone, can do the outward stuff, anyone, can go to the outward, physical church, anyone, can say the words, that may persuade, some people, that maybe, they have the Lord, in their hearts, they can physically, take the elements, they can physically engage, in the sacraments, but if they are not, in that relationship, with the Lord, if the channel, of communication, of relationship, is not open, it will just be outward, and at the end of the day, they will have their reward, they will get all, the outward stuff, and at the end of the day, they will be laid, in their coffin, they will be wheeled, through the outward church, people will worship, outwardly, and they will be laid, to rest on the ground, and it will all, just be outward, and nothing, will have penetrated, the heart, nothing, will have opened, the channels, with heaven, there are no angels, ascending, and descending, on the son of man, they are, if it is not, the son of man, that is in their heart, it is part, and parcel, of our relationship, with the Lord, is prayer, and where that, is not happening, we are, doing the spiritual, equivalent, of beginning, to turn blue, from lack of oxygen, our spirit, our soul, needs the clean air, the oxygen, of heaven, and the only way, to keep that, flowing into us, is that the tubes, and the channels, stay wide, and clear, and we keep, that relationship, going, what things, do we desire, when you pray, believe, that you receive them, and you shall have them,

God desires, and he writes, to do that, which will delight, this journey, one last, illustration, I know that, of course, Christmas itself, is not a biblical, festival, and it's something, which of course, that strictly speaking, the church should not, be engaged in, but you know, we've had trees, and things in the past, in the house, and when the children, were small, it used to be something, which we used to love, to do, was when it got here, that time of year, was at night time, we would decorate, all the trees, put all the lights on, and everything, so the next morning, of course, that time of year, it's still dark, and warm, switch on the lights, and see them, coming down, in the dressing, and their eyes, would light up, and their little, faces would just be, filled with happiness, and the sort of, magic of it all, and it was just, so great, to see their little faces, light up, and usually, the youngest one, they'll have the biggest reaction, which has to go, oh, I've seen this before, I haven't said it here, you know, but when they're wee, there's just the, the joy, that lights up their faces, and you might think, oh yeah, but when you think of the animals, you put in decorating that, just for like two seconds, of such a, a little reaction, yeah, but it's worth it, and the Lord delights, to see the joy, and the thankfulness, in the faces, in the hearts, and the lives, of his children, he longs, to do that, which will please them, he longs, for them to ask, for that, which he desires, to give, but,

God's priorities, will be different, from ours, if we are earthbound, if we're just concerned, with the flesh, and the things of this world, God desires, to show us, real power, and real change, and real lives, turned around, by his power, you and I, we don't have that power, we cannot move them out, and make it, plop it in the sea, we cannot cause, the fig tree, to wither and die, well we especially, want to, but we don't have, that kind of power anyway, only God does, but we can access, that power, through prayer, we can access, that power, by trusting, and believing, and everything, that we ask for, whether it's, forgiveness of our sin, whether it's, the ability, to forgive others, whether it's just, that he will receive, our praise, all the things, that we see, yes God answered that, yes God answered that, yes he said yes then, yes he said, yes he said no, that that won't fit enough, but he said yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, to all these other ones, most of the time, we don't think like that, we don't give God the credit, we don't give him the thanks, and so we forget, and all we remember, is the no, we remember the one no, and forget the 57 million yeses, because our relationship, with the Lord, is not as it should be, but the more we are in prayer, the more the channels are open, the more we see, the light of heaven, flooding into our lives, and the joy of the Lord, being increasingly our strength, which of course, we don't have any of that law, and therefore,

I say unto you, what things shall we desire, and if we are in the Lord, as we ought to be, we desire what glorifies him, we desire what brings people to know him, we desire that he should have, others should have the things, that we have found, and just think of one final illustration, if somebody was a teacher, or instructor, or you know, whether we're doing sports, or whether we're at a particular subject, at school, and they're enthusiastic, about their subject, nothing pleases them more, than to see a youngster, catch that enthusiasm, and begin to develop, their love for it, they'll be working at it, and then they won't be perfect, they'll say, look, I'm trying to do this, but I'm not getting it quite like, can you show me, can you help me, can you give me a bit of your advice, or your expertise here, so that I can unlock, this particular problem, and of course, the teacher will spend ages, with such a pupil, hours, to help them unlock, to help them grow, they delight, to pour their knowledge, their expertise, into one who desires, to have it, who has caught the bug, who has caught the desire, for the thing, that they delight, to pass on, to the next generation, and so it ought to be, with us, so it ought to be, to receive, of his grace, to desire, to pass it on, to others, and to have the Lord, pour his grace, through us, and out, and on to others, therefore,

[ 37 : 30 ] I say, oh dear, what things, so ever you desire, when you pray, believe it, you see that, and you shall, have that, the Lord.