



CELL GUIDE

TOPIC He Helps

SPEAKER Elder Lok Vi Ming

THEME God Answers Prayer

DATE 16 & 17 Mar 2024

MESSAGE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

In his sermon, Elder Lok shares with us how we should acknowledge the goodness of God, and receive with joy what He has given to us. He reminds us that when we pray, God helps us to live the victorious life of a believer.

THE GOD WHO HELPS

Matthew 5 slowly leads up to perfection, and Elder Lok breaks down the chapter, showing us what is required to live up to God's perfect standard.

Verses 3-11 The Beatitudes	This is the true value of Christian living, where those who suffer persecution and pain for the sake of Jesus are blessed.
Verses 13-14 Salt and Light	Salt – We make a difference in this world. Light – We cannot be hidden. Our flaws are shown to the world and we are held accountable for whatever we say and do.
Verses 21-33 Jesus' standards	<i>Mens Rea</i> VS <i>Actus Rea</i> – The moment we have a sinful thought, it is a sin. To be sinless is an impossible standard that we can never meet.
Verse 39 Turn your other cheek	Are we willing to let others walk over us?
Verse 43 A new law – love your enemies	Are we willing to love those who walk over us?
Verse 48 God's perfection	Be perfect therefore, as our heavenly Father is perfect.

Three impossible commands were given:

1. Rejoice always

How can we be joyful amidst all the problems in the world? We do not need so many words to tell the Lord how we are feeling, simply falling on our knees is enough. Joy and sorrow are interlinked throughout the Bible, and several examples were given of people who found joy amidst their sorrows.

- Jesus was a man of sorrows. Yet, He was able to tell His disciples that He would give them joy (Isa 53; Jn 15:11).
- Paul wrote Philippians in jail but it was the most joyful letter among all his writings.
- Nehemiah shared God's Word with the people and when the Spirit of God stirred and convicted the people of how far they had fallen, they started to weep. Yet, Nehemiah told the people not to grieve, for the joy of the Lord was their strength (Neh 8:10).
- David, in the midst of his problems, remembered the goodness of God. He prayed for himself and also prayed to worship God, finding joy amidst his cries for help.

As for us, we should choose to come back to God to ask Him for help in the midst of our struggles. In life, choose to look for joy! It is possible to rejoice always.

2. Give thanks in all circumstances

We constantly work in partnership with God. God gives us salvation and we give Him praise, and together these keep the enemy out. Like an oyster, which secretes nacre to defend itself against an irritation or parasite, we should defend ourselves against disappointments we face in life by coming back to the Father in praise. The greatest difference between worship in heaven and on earth is that when we have hurts and disappointments on earth, and it seems like our prayers are not answered, we can mix these things with praise, bringing an extra fragrant offering of praise to God. This can never happen in heaven. Thankfulness is our gift of praise. Although we may not necessarily be thankful 'for' every situation, we can always be thankful while we are 'in' every situation.

3. Pray continually

The command given is not for us to pray continuously, rather, it is to pray continually. This means making it a discipline, and something that we enjoy doing. We must make it a point to be constant in our prayers! When we ask God to work in our hearts, God makes our hearts purer, that we may see Him clearly. Faith is important to prayer. The more we pray, the purer our hearts, allowing us to see God better and grow our faith even more, forming an upward cycle of faith.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we can trust that God will give us insights on what we can ask Him and what we can do when we submit to Him in prayer. It is not joy that makes us grateful, rather it is gratitude that makes us joyful. The root of joy is gratitude. Prayer is the link between joy and thanksgiving, teaching us to live not a changed life, but rather, an exchanged life in Christ.

QUESTIONS

1. Reflecting on your own spiritual journey, share with the cell how you have personally experienced the transformative power of joy, gratitude, and prayer in navigating life's challenges and deepening your relationship with God.

2. Why is it important to rejoice always and give thanks in all circumstances? As Christians, how can we cultivate joy in the midst of adversity and be a good testimony to non-believers around us?

3. How can we cultivate a genuine enjoyment for prayer? What are some practical strategies to maintain consistency in prayer amidst the busyness of life?