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Thanksgiving and Faith

What is the difference between asking God for something we need in our life and thanking Him? For most people this does not seem like an important question. However, for Christians it can be one of our most important questions, when it comes to walking in victory. Understanding the difference between the two will help you and I to stand in faith on the Word of God during difficult times.

In the natural world, when you are eating dinner you might ASK for someone to pass you the salt, and after it is in your hand you would say, 'THANK YOU'. Yet, in the realm of the spirit, and on the foundation of the Word of God, we trust that in the areas that we don't hold the full victory in our hand, and we still thank God because we know He has already given it to us. And even more than that, He has already paid for it in full by the blood of Jesus.

Many people struggle when they don't hold the full victory in their hand, and continue to approach God over and over again, asking for Him to answer their prayer. One minister was holding an old time revival and was praying for the sick when a lady approached him for prayer. He prayed the Word of God, that by Jesus' stripes she was healed, and then he commanded the sickness to leave her. It was a few services later she returned, asking for him to pray again for the exact same thing, and he refused.

He wasn't trying to be mean to her, but instead trying to help her see the difference between praying and thanking God for her healing. The minister said, "God is not withholding your miracle, we already prayed so we no longer need to ask God because He has already purchased your healing. It is now your responsibility to thank Him for what He has already done, and not let go of His promise until it completely manifests." He went on to teach her to thank Him every day for what has already been done. In other words, thank Him like it's already in your hand even if you can't see it yet.

It's in the times of struggle and hardships when most of us reach out to our Heavenly Father in a deeper way. For many of us we learn more of His love for us when we find ourselves weak and powerless to fix something. I have personally experienced that I end up closer to Him after I go through seasons of difficulty. We know that He never sends hard times towards us, but He is always there for us during those times.

As my young children get older they stop wanting my help in everything, except when they fall or hurt themselves. Then they come to their parents in their time of brokenness and I drink in every second of those vulnerable moments to express my love for them. God is the same with us, except He supplies victory on top of the comfort that He lavishes on us when we feel the most lost.

It is very important to remember that unanswered prayers are not a rejection from God. He is not withholding any of His love, power or blessings from us. We are born of Him, and are His children whom He desires more than anything to bless, and to see us walk in victory. 2 Corinthians 1:20 reads, "*For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.*" If we know God's will in healing, provision, and freedom then we never need to question if He would withhold from us what we ask of Him.

Some of us struggle with self-condemnation when our prayers are not instantly answered. We feel that we must lack in faith, and have failed in receiving, and therefore we accept that we must be failures. The proper definition of faith is not that you always are standing above every battle, but that you never give up on the Word of God, even if you are in a battle. Your faith is what carries you through the battles even if it's one step at a time.

The very moment we pray God's will and ask God for help, He answers. And even if we can't see it in our hand, faith says to thank Him as if you **can** see it, because He is not holding it back from you. It says in Philippians 4:6-7, "*Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*"

The reason it is so important for us to understand the difference between asking and thanking is that it shows the position of our faith. If we continue asking, it says that we believe that God has chosen not to give us something or that we feel unworthy of receiving it. However, by thanking Him everyday for what He has already done, it speaks from a position of faith that says Jesus has already paid the price in full, and our Father has already given it to me. It screams at the enemy that we refuse to stay stuck in a place of unbelief, even if we don't see it fully manifested. We still believe we have received it.

In my home I have taught my children to say both 'please' and 'thank you'. I believe it's the same for us in faith, because no matter what things look like, we stand on the scripture: "*For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.*"
Psalm 84:11

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