

This Scripture may be one of the most encouraging and then become the most discouraging and disturbing misunderstood verses in the entire Bible. It surely must have caused all of us at one time or another to be challenged or deflated as we view it in various ways. We may pray and wait doubting and thinking how could it be, or we may refuse to pray it, thinking it's not for real as we wonder why Jesus would make such a claim. There may be times when we try praying boldly as we muster all the faith within us and then wait for an answer that may not manifest in a way we had hoped. We then speculate, “I thought so,” as we struggle with the continuing question: Why would Jesus make such a claim; do we not have enough faith or is Christianity invalid?

It is my belief that to understand this bold declaration from Jesus, we must view it in the context of other Scriptures that will help us know how He responded to the Father. Understanding this will help us respond in a like manner. If we go back just three verses to verse 11 we are reminded that Jesus proclaims “*I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me*” NAS. Many other Scriptures declare the same message. John 8:28 for example quotes Jesus saying: “*I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as My Father taught Me*” NAS.

These scriptures imply Jesus would never ask anything not confirmed by the Father's will. I interpret this to be a directive to not petition for anything for which I have not experienced confirmation. This would be through expressing my faith, praying in the Name of Jesus as a spiritual signature of authority, to receive direction, solid wisdom and good counsel.

Following this concept, I conclude that I should never make a request not confirmed both through the witness of the Holy Spirit and Scripture. I firmly believe this will validate an absolute belief and understanding of the claim declared in John 14:14.

I have had personal experiences to confirm this interpretation. There have been many times, for example, when I have prayed for and witnessed answered prayer for physical healing, however during the most desperate time in my life as I was standing close to my precious wife, Sally, as she was breathing her last before passing, I wanted to pray so very much. I can't describe to you how much I wanted to pray for her, but I couldn't. Somehow, I knew I could not pray for the very one I loved the most. Somehow, I knew it was not to be and that I was not to pray. God reminded me later: We are spiritual beings having a human season, not just humans searching for a spiritual experience. He also confirmed that His grace was at work and it was time to let her severely damaged very frail body go.

This Scripture interpretation sometimes becomes my struggle when people ask me to pray and I experience no inspiration to respond. If the request is not contrary to Scripture I may become a people pleaser and say the words but with minimum or no confirmation in my heart. I don't like this experience and I believe that being a people pleaser is the most common manifestation of our sin nature.

***“Ask anything in My Name,”* I believe means, “in the Father's will.” Your thoughts?**