

Lord, What wilt Thou have me to do? (Quality: Average)

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- [0 : 00] Acts of the Apostles, Chapter 9, and a question in the 6th verse, Acts Chapter 9, Verse 6.
- Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? The whole verse reads, And he saw love to us, trembling and astonished, saying, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?
- And the Lord said unto him, Arise and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.
- Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? Was this the prayer of someone as they came here this evening?
- There are some prayers in these scriptures that are purely spiritual.
- [1 : 32] Such prayers as, God be merciful to me, the sinner. But there are many prayers that the Lord's people have to pray in providential things and in spiritual.
- Such prayers as that poor woman of Cainian who, despite so much discouragement, came nearer to the Lord and said, Lord, help me.
- We only really pray, you know, when we feel our need of that for which we ask, providentially or spiritually.
- And when we come to which we ask, Lord, help me.
- I could mention, I think, scores of incidences in providential matters when we've schemed and planned and endeavoured to do this or that.
- [2 : 53] And then at last, we pray, Lord, help me. And in some cases, we've seen almost miraculous answers, often almost immediately.
- I've often said, that is the best spanner in my toolkit. Lord, help me. Then there is that prayer that Peter played when sinking in the water, after he had taken his eyes off the Lord Jesus and was looking at the waves that were tempestuous.
- As it were, taking his eyes from the Lord and looking upon his troubles and sinking, he cried, Lord, save me.
- And this prayer too. So needful, providentially and spiritually.
- Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? I sometimes say to our children and young people at Harkington, nothing is too small to pray about.
- [4 : 21] And nothing is too great. From the smallest providential matter to the greatest spiritual matter, bring it to the Lord in prayer.
- And firstly, as the Lord enables, I would say a few things concerning the setting of this prayer of Saul of Tarsus.
- The chapter is, of course, the chapter is, of course, well known. Then secondly, to notice to whom he addresses his question.
- And then thirdly, concerning his desire.

And fourthly, concerning doing. As we read in an earlier chapter, when Stephen was stoned, what did Stephen pray before he lost consciousness?

[6 : 01] What did Stephen pray before he lost consciousness?

Lord, lay not this sin to their charge? Was he not praying for Saul of Tarsus? And one cannot but feel these disciples, who he had already sent to prison, and others that he was going to bring bound, were well acquainted with the Lord's command.

Pray for your enemies. Pray for your enemies. Don't feel sure some at least were doing that.

And how miraculously such prayers were answered. With God, all things are possible.

And Abraham had to learn that lesson, is anything too hard, too difficult, or any heart too hard for the Lord?

[7 : 30] No. And so in your trials and mine, let us pray. And how are we to pray?

The Lord tells us, when ye pray, believe that ye shall receive, and ye shall have. I often ask in my prayers for forgiveness, for being surprised when my prayers are answered.

Do you plead guilty or not guilty? Perhaps praying for something, and then when the prayers are answered, you have to say, well, I didn't expect it.

What a sad commentary upon our faith. If we have faith as a grain of mustard seed, and we brought some such seeds home from Israel, about the size of a pinhead, they grow in a pod about an inch long, on the mustard tree, which is a tree about the size of an apple or plum tree.

If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, you can say unto this mountain, be thou removed and cast into the sea, and it shall be done.

[9 : 09] Do we not have to pray, Lord, increase our faith? And so, having obtained this authority as he journeyed, suddenly, a light shone round about him from heaven, and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecute is thou me?

The Lord was in heaven. He had already ascended to heaven, but he did not say, why persecute is thou my disciples?

Why persecute is thou me? When one member suffers, the head suffers as well.

We might say, break a leg, but it is our head, in our mind, in our brain, that we feel the pain. Our brain will tell us that it is the leg that is suffering, but if we were unconscious, or asleep, if we could be in pain, then, we would not feel that pain, because our mind would not be alert.

And so, he, Christ, the head of his messical church, his body, suffers with each member's pain.

[10 : 57] As the poet said, our afflictions, his. He, no, never suffers for sin again. When he cried, it is finished, his sufferings for sin were finished, but, he does feel with each member.

and then, he said, who art thou, Lord? We come perhaps to that in a moment, when we consider to whom his prayer is addressed.

I'm Jesus, whom thou persecuted. It is hard for thee to kick against the prince. Seems to indicate that already he had some bricks of conscience that he was not doing that which was right.

And so, he was told to go into the city. The man which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man.

Paul recounts this, of course, again in the 22nd and 26th chapters of the Acts of the Apostles.

[12 : 22] And in the 26th chapter, he states how that the men that were with him saw the light, but heard not a voice.

So, they did not hear the voice of the Lord Jesus. The voice they must have heard was that of Saul of Tarsus and his prayer, but they did not hear the Lord's voice.

voice. And so, when his eyes were opened, they continued on their journey and brought him into Damascus.

One might Google in his 320th hymn, like God moves in a mysterious way. His wonders do perform.

Plants his footsteps in the sea and rise upon the storm. And then the Lord appeared unto Ananias in a vision. Go into the street which is called Strait, and cry the house of Judas for one Saul of Tarsus.

[13 : 55] For behold, look and consider it, he prieth, he prieth. had Ananias been told that Peter or John were praying, he wouldn't have been surprised, probably would have said, I hope they won't forget me in their prayers.

But he, Saul of Tarsus, is praying. Without doubt, as a Pharisee, he had said many long prayers.

prayers, but now for the first time he prayed, how about you and me? I suppose all of us from our childhood were taught to, as the expression is, say our prayers.

But as the children's hymn goes, I often say my prayers, but do I ever pray and do the wishes of my heart go with the words I say.

We only really pray, I say, when we feel our need of that for which we ask. And so Ananias raises natural objections.

[15 : 22] Well, the Lord said, go thy wife. Clearly Ananias' wife was the Lord's wife, or better, the Lord's wife was Ananias' wife.

Go thy wife. Chosen vessel unto me and so on. But notice, Paul had seen in a vision that a man named Ananias would come to him before Ananias was told to go.

God often begins, as it were, what human reasoning would say, the wrong end of the chain. Was it not so with Cornelius?

Cornelius was told to send to the house of Peter before Peter saw the vision and was told to go.

Well, coming now to this prayer or question as it is of Saul of Tarsus.

[16 : 43] Lord, he had previously taken the Lord's name upon his lips, who are thou now?

He did not as yet know the Lord, but he did desire to know. He did desire to know.

And the Lord answered, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. And so with this prayer, he commenced it with Lord.

The name Lord means in our land with a title person, especially of course years ago when titles were hereditary.

A Lord was a person of wealth and power. Many servants, perhaps thousands of acres of land, a castle, or stately home.

[18 : 27] how much more he who is Lord of Lords and King of Kings.

And Saul of Tarsus addressed this prayer to the Lord. He did not say as it were, when I find Peter or John or one of the other apostles, I will ask them what I should do.

I do not know whether that may be a word in season to one here. The Lord does use means, whether his own word, the parables of nature, or menaces of the gospel.

But our prayer has to be directed to the Lord himself. God said, the late Mr.

Spurling Tyler, the pastor of the decker, used to tell his congregation if they had their trials and burdens and their perplexities, not to come and tell him, but to tell them the Lord, to the Lord and pray that the Lord would use his ministry in answer to those prayers.

[20 : 20] And though I did not hear him preach very many times, but on the occasions when I did, I've never known a minister enter into my path so closely when I knew he knew nothing whatever about.

I may just mention one instance as it comes to one's thoughts. Soon after I was in the ministry, I was engaged to go to Asheville for the first time.

My wife had put the car away on the Saturday evening, working the same as usual. I got it out on the Sunday morning and it just would not stop. I cleaned the pints, so I looked in the car bladder, petrol was there, there seemed to be a spark and so on.

And I took another car and immediately the devil came in and said, you're only a Balaam. His ass was stopped. And though he was afterwards allowed to go, he did not know anything savingly of the truths that he prophesied, you're only a Balaam.

And that rang in my ears for weeks, only a Balaam, only a Balaam. I went to Asheville special service, I was working at Bedford then on my way home, and Mr.

[21 : 53] Tyler preached from he can with the temptation make a way of escape that he may be able to bear it. I hadn't even mentioned it to my wife, never mind to anyone else.

And it broke the snare. And so, I encourage you to bring your concerns, your desires, your perplexities, especially in the context of this question, what will thou have me to do?

Bring it to the Lord in prayer. First and foremost, first and foremost, Lord.

And then he continues, what will thou have me to do? how often when we are in perplexities, do we not, as it were, decide in our own mind what we want to do?

I remember my son Charles saying at a prayer meeting a long time ago now, but I haven't forgotten it, and in his prayer he said, keep us from deciding what we're going to do, and then asking thy blessing upon what we've decided to do.

[23 : 38] And are you and I not guilty of it? At least I am. Deciding what we're going to do, and almost as an afterthought, asking the Lord to bless what we've already decided, but that is not what Saul of Tarsus did, and that is not what you or I should do.

What will thou have me to do? Not what will please my own old nature, not what will be the easiest way, not what will please someone else, but what will please the Lord.

And I always say in our prayers we should look closely to the motives, the motive of what we are asking for.

I remind you of Moses' prayer in the 33rd of Exodus, in very discouraging circumstances, Aaron had made that golden car, many of the children of Israel were slain, and what did Moses pray?

show me now thy why, that, that, I may know thee.

[25 : 21] He wanted to know the Lord's why, and his motive was an increasing knowledge of the Lord, and to know him, of course, as the Lord said himself, his everlasting life, and how Paul, writing to the Philippians, writes, of his longing desire that I may know him, the power of his resurrection, the fellowship of his sufferings, and be made conformable to his death.

What will thou have me to do? In the epistle to the Hebrews, we read in the twelfth chapter how that we are to run the race that is set before us, laying aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beside us.

So, we have to lay aside things that may not be sinful in themselves, but are they hindrances to us in our race?

In children at school, we did not run our races in wellington boots and overcoats. Nothing sinful or wrong with wearing wellington boots and overcoats, but they would hinder us in the race.

And so, there are many things we have to lay aside if they take up too much time and thought. In my youthful days, I used to play chess for Cambridge Hill and progressed rapidly and could have achieved, I suppose, some considerable things in that line, but he was taking up too much time and thought.

[27 : 53] Did not bring us into evil conversation, there was no conversation, but it was a white, and it had to be laid aside.

What will thou have me to do? And so, the chief motive of all our doing should be firstly, God's glory, secondly, his people's good, especially their eternal God, their eternal God.

What will thou have me to do? And we know the Lord's will is not that we should be sinful, that we should bring a reproach upon our profession, that we should do good to all men, especially the household of faith.

Often there may seem in your path perhaps a closed door. door. Well, it is rightly said we can try the handle and see if it opens, but don't break it down if it's locked against you.

Try the handle, but don't break the door down if it doesn't open. what will thou have me to do?

[29 : 45] I fear sometimes in our dear denomination that as we know that salvation is all of grace and not of works lest any man should boast, we almost fall over backwards and neglect works, and neglect works.

And so I read from that epistle of James to make the point clear for any that do not understand it, there is no contradiction in the word of God, when James writes, was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar, and Paul writes to the Romans that Abraham was not justified by works, but by faith only, there is no contradiction.

Paul in writing to the Romans is writing of the justification of the soul from its sins, which is not of works, but of faith in Jesus Christ alone.

What then is James writing of? He's writing of the justification of a person's profession, which is justified by their works.

And he gives the example of Abraham, who professed to believe in God, was told by God, you can read of it of course in the 22nd chapter of Genesis, take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and offer him up upon one of the mountains that I will tell thee of.

[32 : 04] If Abraham had stayed where he was and disobeyed the Lord, his profession of believing in God would not have been justified by his works.

But we read he rose up early in the morning. Might well have had a sleepless night, but he certainly was not slothful in obeying God's command.

He was an obedient servant of God. He was a hearer and a doer, and a doer.

I hope the meaning of James and Romans then are quite clear. Then in the first chapter of James, we read, if any is a hearer of the word and not a doer, like a man beholding his natural face in a glass, he goeth his way.

Not the Lord's way, his way. And straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But who so looketh into, not just at, but looketh into, the perfect Lord of liberty.

[33 : 41] the old covenant, as we read, was not perfect, that is, it was not sinful, because the old testament, the old covenant was given by God, but it was not complete.

It was not complete. And as he writes in Hebrews, then it had to be done away with by the new covenant. and there is no liberty under the Lord, but as we read in Romans, where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, the perfect Lord of liberty, and continue with them.

He being not a forgetful healer, but a jewel of the work. This man shall be blessed for his deed.

No, no, no, no, no. We never merit God's blessing, but in keeping of his commandments there is great denial.

As obedient children, we are told in the epistle, he shall be blessed in his day.

[35 : 17] What wilt thou have me to do? I'll remind you in the sixth chapter of Luke, and we've heard much recently concerning floods, we read there, whoso cometh to me and heareth my sayings and doeth them, I will show you to whom he is like.

He is like a man which built a house and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock, and when the flood arose, the stream beat me hamletly upon that house and could not shake it, for it was founded upon a rock.

But he that heareth and doeth not is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth, against which the stream did beat me hamletly and immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was grey.

The digging deep was needful to find the rock. We have to dig through many things in order to find the rock Jesus Christ, but his house did not stand because he dug deep, but because having dug deep, he found the rock and built his house upon the rock.

What is the house, as it were, of your profession and mine built upon? The doing is needful, but it will only stand if it is built upon the rock.

[37 : 40] The rock Jesus Christ. Again, we read in that parable of the man that had two sons, sons, and he said to the first, son, go labour in my vineyard.

I go, sir. But he went not. And he said to the second, go labour in my vineyard. I will not, he said.

But afterward he repented and went. which of them was obedient to his Lord, to his father.

We do not excuse the one for rudely saying, I will not, but he was the one that obeyed his father.

He was the one that was a hearer and a doer. have we not an instance in this chapter with Anna Noah's?

[38 : 55] All the natural objections and probably afraid that when he did go to Saul of Tarsus he would be bound by the others, the servants of Saul and taken off for punishment.

But we read Anna Noah's went his way. He was a healer and a doer.

He was obedient to the Lord. And I do like this way he said, brother Saul, brother Saul.

A brother naturally speaking is one having the same father. And could he not now believe that Saul of Tarsus had God for his father as he believed he had?

the Lord even Jesus that appeared unto thee in the ways thou camest hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight and be filled with the Holy Ghost.

[40 : 14] thirst. A close in one's mind in passing, it must be well over thirty years ago, I spoke from this question at Lake and Heath one morning.

In the congregation was Mrs. Hadley, the widow of the pastor there, no relation, of course, to her friend from Stockford. I'd had conversations with her and realised what a gracious woman she was and was most surprised when I took an ordinance to find she was an amendment.

But that was not in my thoughts when I spoke from this question, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? But in the end of all, something else was on my mind to speak from.

But just as I came towards the chapel, the account of Paul in the 22nd chapter dropped into my mind.

Unknown to me, in the interval, that had been Mrs. Hadley's prayer. And she said she turned over every page in the Acts of the Apostles and could not find it.

[41 : 44] But just as I arrived at the chapel, what I was going to speak from was taken from me and I had to read as a text from the 22nd chapter of Ananias' words, more recorded there than in the 9th chapter.

For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard, and now why tarryest thou?

Arise and be baptised and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord. Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?

And now, why tarryest thou? As the eunuch said, what doth hinder me? Now, why should I?

In the family circle, the parent may say, there's all that is required from the kitchen, so and so, would you go and fetch it? And if they rudely reply, why should I?

[42 : 54] Why not my brother or sister? That speaks of disobedience and rebellion. But if they say something is needed and one of them jumps up and say, may I go and do it?

May I go and fetch it? That speaks of love, a desire to please, of obedience. What wilt thou have me to do?

Now, why tarryest thou? Arise and be baptised and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.

And I had to speak from that in the evening and Mrs. Hadley told me later she could hardly wait for the morning light to go and see the deacon, Mr. Carr, to ask if she could come before the church.

And she was baptised. Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?

[43 : 57] And the Lord did not give him an immediate answer other than to say, as we might say, an interim reply, arise and go into the city and it shall be told thee what thou must do.

well, I commend this prayer to you in providential things and in spiritual.

And may our prayer always be thy way, not mine, O Lord. indeed, as we pray and should pray after that manner, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

And what a great sin is disobedience. Samuel's words to King Saul were very solemn.

To obey is better than sacrifice and to hearken than the fat of lambs for rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft and stubbornness is as idolatry.

[45 : 24] Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? Amen. Let us conclude with hymn 812.

Whene'er I make some sudden stop, for many such I may, and cannot see the cloud cleared up, nor know which path to take.

Hymn 812. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Ray mgdjp. I couldn't stop the many such I made And cannot see the cloud cleared up Not the witch of death's lake I, too, my Saviour, spade my way To tell my dubious state And listen, what the Lord will say

And how to follow that?

[48 : 09] If Jesus seemed to hide his face What anxious does I know But if he needs to mess with me I'll be all blessed now Funceksin . . .

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[51 : 03] If Jesus be but alone He is my helper and my guide I trust in him alone Ne'er other helps
have I beside My birth shall go on Amen

Lord, do forgive anything of mercy Now speaking or in now healing May we be obedient
children Constrained by love Not driven by fear of chastening And may thy will take us to
our destinations In peace and safety And praise for thy glory in our souls Now by the
grace of the Lord Jesus Christ The love of the Father The communion of the Spirit