

Matthew 18:19-20 The Lord's Power and Presence With His Churches

Introduction: In verse 18 Jesus had promised that the authority of God would support the action of the church in settling a dispute between two brethren in the church. In out text He declares that the church not only had God's blessing, but His very presence and power.

I. A promise concerning His power.

A. Jesus said, "Again I say unto you,"

1. Ordinarily that expression would mean that something is about to be repeated.
(Not so in this instance.)

2. Here it means that He is about to expand on a thought already under discussion.

B. In verse 18 He had promised God's sanction on church action in the disciplinary matter; now He promises that God will hear and honor the prayers of the church.

C. He speaks not of prayer in general, but about church prayer.

1. He speaks of those gathered "in my name" meaning "by my authority".

2. It was Christ who had called out the disciples and organized them into a New Testament church.

3. It was He who had laid out the work to be done and the rules to be followed.

4. They would be doing His work under His instructions and by His authority.

D. They would often need the help of God.

1. They would need His help in doing the work assigned.

2. They would need His help in personal matters.

E. Jesus promised that God would hear their prayers.

1. When only a small group were met in church capacity and were in agreement in their prayers to God then God would hear from heaven.

2. The prayers would be from mere earthly men, but the power would be from almighty God in heaven.

II. A word of caution about prayer.

A. Do not demand anything of God.

1. Jesus here talks about asking God.

2. The Bible nowhere authorizes men to demand anything of God.

B. Do not ask for selfish reasons, James 4:3.

III. The very presence of God with His people, verse 20.

A. Again Jesus speaks about two or three gathered together in church capacity, ("in my name").

1. They have met to carry out His work.

2. They have met by His authority.

B. Jesus promises that He will be with them.

C. How can this be when He is in heaven? And how can He keep this promise to all of His churches meeting in so many different places?

1. He keeps this promise through the Holy Spirit.

2. Although He cannot be seen or heard, yet He is present.

3. He promised.

D. It is the presence of God with His church that makes it far superior to any other earthly group.

1. It has greater power and authority than any group.

2. That is why Satan has not been able to destroy the New Testament church system.

3. That is why it is dangerous to persecute one of the Lord's churches.

4. That is why we ought to be present at church in every service that we can.

5. And that is why we ought to support the church in every way we can.