

UNGUARDED

1 John 5:13-15

Calvary Church of Pacific Palisades
January 23, 2011 ♦ Sunday Morning Worship

Introduction ...

Ever given your heart fully and completely to someone, holding nothing back?

C.S. Lewis ... "To love at all is to be vulnerable. Love anything, and your heart will certainly be wrung and possibly broken. If you want to make sure of keeping it intact, you must give your heart to no one ... "

Giving your heart to someone is both exhilarating, dangerous. One woman writes ...

A year and a half or so ago I fell in love for the first time. Well let me change that. I fell completely in love with no hesitations, limitations or walls up. I have been in love before but it has always been a guarded love. I was always waiting for the other shoe to drop and it usually did.

Toward the end of that year, I fell for this guy. We connected on so many levels and some of the best times we had were when we just talked and enjoyed each other's company. I expressed my growing feelings toward him and was immediately met with resistance.

When GIVE your HEART completely, vulnerable, danger that you won't get the response you'd hoped for.

HEARTBREAK ... So you shut down, you back off, **stop communicating, take back your heart.**

Not just in relationships with humans ... Maybe that describes where you are with God.

You've CRIED OUT, prayed with all your might, and gotten no response.

You gave your heart, trusted Him, He let you down. He didn't come through when you needed Him most.

So ... Cut off communication ... stop PRAYING. Worst thing you could do. Chokes the life (the eternal life) right out of us.

God invites us into His presence, to come IN CONFIDENCE, knowing that He hears/answer our prayers.

Please open your Bibles. 1 John 5:13-15. Page 864.

John's readers were in the midst of a disheartening struggle. Times were tough.

Growing persecution peaked (5-10 years away) Emperor DOMITIAN. Just before John's exiled to Patmos.

"God is holding out on me, God is punishing me, God must have a problem with me."

STOP PRAYING? Not wise, tough times are designed to bring us to our knees.

13 I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life. 14 This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. 15 And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.

1. WHEN WE COME ... we can let down our guard. We know How God feels about us.

CONFIDENT ... that we are alive in Him. Inexhaustible life of God flowing through us. **5:11,12**

ASSURED ... that we belong to Him. Ill. Nothing can separate. Break heart; YES, sever relationship; NO.

Because we know how He feels about us, because we have the Son, we can APPROACH CONFIDENTLY ...

Express what we really feel. EXPOSURE ... Assured no condemnation.

Ill. David and the Psalms. *Psalm 13* ... CONFIDENCE that God is at work; can be trusted.

1. WHEN WE COME ... we can let down our guard.

2. WHEN WE ASK ... God hears and answers our prayers. On two conditions ... IF.

Stating the OBVIOUS -- God hears ... but we have to ask.

The reason we don't have is because we haven't asked.

James 4:2b-3 NIV *You do not have, because you do not ask God.*

Ill. YATES Pool ... prayer taps in, GUSHER. Wealth is ours but we live in poverty

God's heart is to give it. ... Jesus revealed the heart of the Father ...

Luke 11:9-14 *"So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. "Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"*

Parents want to do ... I'd rather give to my children than anyone. No different with God.

According to His will ... God answers ... but we have to relinquish control.

Prayer as an attempt to get God to do what we want Him to do ... Feeble attempt to control Him.

We just don't know how to pray ... neither did the disciples Luke, "teach us to pray." (PRAY),

Matthew 6:9-13 *Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.*

THY will be done ... Setting aside our own will. Relinquish control.

"what You will, as You will, when You will" Thomas a' Kempis

Still, God calls us to enter His presence unguarded, asking in Jesus name and according to His will. He promises to answers us, every time.

1. WHEN WE COME ... we can let down our guard.

2. WHEN WE ASK ... God hears and answers our prayers.

3. WHEN HE ANSWERS ... we receive His answer, trusting that it is the best possible answer.

Not always the answer we want to hear, but always to best possible answer.

a. YES ... Ill. Pray for healing. Pool of Bethesda **John 5:1-9** ... The joy you feel when God says YES.

b. NO ... Ill. Prayer for healing. **Multitudes.** God said NO to Paul (thorn). Jesus (cross). Why surprised?

c. WAIT ... ill. Prayer for relief, God's silence. **38 years in his sickness;** Prayer is all about trusting God.

Conclusion ...

Unguarded prayer flows out of confidence; confidence that He is STRONG and He LOVES US.

What are you asking God for? Or have you just stopped asking? Enter with confidence.