

Ask, Seek, Knock
(Matthew 7:7-11)

- I. The exhortations in this passage should be understood in the context of Christ's other instructions in this sermon on the mountain.
- A. Christ had been presenting the righteousness of God which exceeds the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees. **MAT 5:20.**
 - B. He had just taught that the kingdom of God and His righteousness should be that which we seek **FIRST. MAT 6:33.**
 - C. Hence, our asking, seeking and knocking should be foremost for God's kingdom and His righteousness: spiritual things over carnal things. **ROM 14:17.**
 - D. A study of Paul's prayers will reveal that he observed **MAT 6:33** in his petitions.
 - E. Seeking carnal things more than spiritual things is a major hindrance to effectual prayer. **JAM 4:3.**
- II. Having taught His disciples the way of righteousness, Christ now encourages them to seek the blessings necessary to walk in that way.
- A. The flesh militates against our doing God's righteousness. **ROM 7:21-25; GAL 5:17.**
 - B. The believer needs understanding of God's righteousness that he might do it. **PSA 119:33-34; 143:8, 10.**
 - C. The believer needs strength to do God's righteousness. **EPH 3:16; PSA 119:88.**
 - 1. quicken: To give or restore life to; to make alive; to vivify or revive; to animate (as the soul the body). 2. To give, add, or restore vigour to (a person or thing); to stimulate, stir up, rouse, excite, inspire.
 - 2. Strength builds by the word. **1JO 2:14.**
 - D. The believer needs protection and deliverance to do God's righteousness. **PSA 119:146, 133; 19:13; MAT 6:13; JOH 17:15.**
- III. "Ask, and it shall be given..." (v. 7).
- A. This promise is not indiscriminate; it does not pertain to the dogs and swine of v. 6.
 - B. This promise is qualified by other passages.
 - 1. It pertains only to those who are righteous. **1PE 3:12.**
 - 2. It pertains to those who receive God's word. **JOH 15:7; PRO 28:9.**
 - 3. It pertains to those who ask in faith. **MAR 11:24.**
 - 4. It pertains to those who ask according to God's will. **1JO 5:14-15.**
 - 5. In summation, God gives to the righteous who ask according to what He has promised in His word. This is the prayer of faith, not the prayer of flesh which is unanswered (**JAM 4:3**) or answered as a judgment. **PSA 106:15.**
- IV. "Seek, and ye shall find;..." (v. 7).
- A. seek: To go in search or quest of; to try to find, look for.
 - B. We are to not only ask God for understanding and strength; we must seek them in the means that He has ordained. **PRO 2:1-5; PSA 119:104, 93; 1JO 2:14.**
 - C. God must be sought with the whole heart; He will not be found of those who seek Him lazily. **JER 29:13; HEB 11:6.**
 - 1. Prayer is described as *striving*. **ROM 15:30.**
 - 2. Prayer is described as *labouring fervently*. **COL 4:12.**
 - 3. Prayer is an *act of war*. **EPH 6:12, 18.**
 - 4. Prayer is connected with *watching* (a state of wakefulness). **MAT 26:41; 1PE 4:7.**

- V. “Knock, and it shall be opened unto you” (v. 7).
- A. Knocking suggests a closed door, an obstacle to be passed.
 - B. We must not only ask and seek, but we must persevere against all odds in our quest for God's righteousness.
 - C. **EPH 6:18** exhorts us to perseverance in prayer which is continuing steadfastly in prayer, especially in the face of difficulty or obstacles. Do not abandon prayer. **1TH 5:17**.
 - D. In **LUK 11:5-13** these same instructions are connected with a parable teaching importunity (persistent or pressing in solicitation).
 1. We supplicate a heavenly Father instead of just a friend.
 2. God does not reluctantly give us our true needs. **JAM 1:5**.
 3. We never find God asleep. **PSA 121:4**.
 4. If this annoyed friend gave his friend what was needed, how much more will God give us our needs?
 5. This parable also teaches us to importunately seek that we may minister to others.
 - E. **MAR 2:1-5** and **MAT 15:21-28** are good examples of perseverance that were honored of the Lord.
- VI. God does not mock acceptable prayer; He rather answers it. **vs. 8-11**.
- A. **v. 11** presents Christ's estimate of fallen man: he is evil!
 - B. Christ called His own disciples evil.
 1. They were saved sinners, but sinners nonetheless.
 2. The knowledge of our own evil should not stop us from prayer.
 - C. Our heavenly Father has compassion far above that of evil men who give good things to their children. Christ reasons from the lesser to the greater.
 - D. We are here encouraged to believe that God will give us anything we ask for THAT IS GOOD, i.e., “good” by His measure, not ours.
 1. Compare **v. 11** with **LUK 11:13**.
 2. The good things that God gives us are equated with the Holy Spirit by Whom we are connected to God, and from Whom we receive comfort/strength.
 3. This confirms that Christ is teaching us in this passage to seek spiritual things. **COL 3:1-2**.
 4. See examples of this in **EPH 1:17; 3:16-19**.