



“ASK, SEEK, KNOCK”

Series: “LIVING FROM THE INSIDE OUT”, Part 17 of 19

Sunday, October 22, 2023, at 9:00 & 11:00 AM

Text: Matthew 7:7-12

Big Idea: Many blessings God desires to give go unclaimed simply because we fail to keep on asking, keep on seeking and keep on knocking.

Matthew 7:7-12, “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, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? 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 good gifts to those who ask him! So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.

If it were the case, that whatever we ask, God was pledged to give, then I for one would never pray again, because I would not have sufficient confidence in my own wisdom to ask God for anything; and I think if you consider it you will agree. It would impose an intolerable burden on frail human wisdom if by his prayer-promises God was pledged to give whatever we ask, when we ask it, and in exactly the terms we ask. How could we bear the burden?¹ - Alec Motyer

I. My attitude to self.

James 4:2b, “You do not have, because you do not ask God.”

James 4:3, “When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.”

1 Kings 18:36b, “O LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known today that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant and have done all these things at your command.”

¹ Alec Motyer, *Studies in the Epistle of James* (New Mildmay Press, 1968), p. 88.

1 Kings 18:37-38, "Answer me, O LORD, answer me, so these people will know that you, O LORD, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again." Then the fire of the LORD fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench."

II. My attitude to sin.

Psalms 66:18-19, "If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened; 19 but God has surely listened and heard my voice in prayer."

Ecclesiastes 7:20, "There is not a righteous man on earth who does what is right and never sins."

Jeremiah 7:16, "So do not pray for this people nor offer any plea or petition for them; do not plead with me, for I will not listen to you."

Jeremiah 11:14, "Do not pray for this people nor offer any plea or petition for them, because I will not listen when they call to me in the time of their distress."

Jeremiah 14:11, "Then the LORD said to me, "Do not pray for the well-being of this people."

Jeremiah 15:1b, "Even if Moses and Samuel were to stand before me, my heart would not go out to this people. Send them away from my presence!"

III. My attitude to submission.

1 John 3:21-22, "Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God and receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him."

1 Samuel 28:15, "Samuel said to Saul, "Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?" "I am in great distress," Saul said. "The Philistines are fighting against me, and God has turned away from me. He no longer answers me, either by prophets or by dreams. So I have called on you to tell me what to do."

IV. My attitude to my spouse.

1 Peter 3:7, "Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers."

"True prayer is the most exciting thing in the world; it is an awesome thing to dialogue with the living God."² - Leanne Payne

Matthew 7:12, "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets."

² Leanne Payne, *Listening Prayer: Learning to Hear God's Voice and Keep a Prayer Journal*. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books), 1994.