

Summer With Jesus Week 8

God Time – A Deeper Look at the Heart

Use a prayer journal. After you read the passages jot down what “jumped out” at you while reading. Then take a few minutes to write a prayer response to what you have read.

There are only five days of reading provided so if you miss a day you have time to catch up. Do not get legalistic! If you miss a day or even a week...God still loves you!

Monday: Psalm 34:4-6

Tuesday: Philippians 4:6 NLT

Wednesday: Matthew 6:31-33

Thursday: Colossians 4:2

Friday: Matthew 7:7-8

Diving Deeper

1. What do we learn about prayer?

Notice what happens if you take the three imperatives in this verse—ask, seek, and knock—and put them underneath each other:

A s k

S e e k

K n o c k

Even the three words themselves cry out to us to ask. Ask! Seek! Knock! What does Jesus want us to do when it comes time to pray? Just ask.

Don't you love it when you hear new believers pray? They haven't learned “Christianese” yet. Nobody has taught them all the Thees, Thous and Thys. They simply talk to God. “God, here I am. It's me. It's Jim. Yeah, I need this, Lord.”

That's the simplicity Jesus asks of us. We're to come to God as children, as dependents. And (may I say it again?) we're to ASK.

David Jeremiah, *Prayer: The Great Adventure* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah Publishers, 1997), 22-23.

2. We always want to read the Bible for application. What is the application of these verses?

Jesus tells us, "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and it will be opened unto you." So that we don't miss His point, our Lord uses the word "ask" five times in this passage. "Ask," says the Lord. He doesn't say beg. He merely says, ask.

The Bible says we don't have because we don't ask. So if we don't have it, and we need it, maybe we ought to try asking for it. Jesus didn't tell us five times to "ask" in this passage because He had nothing better to say. He wants us to ask. The question is, will we? – David Jeremiah, *Prayer: The Great Adventure* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah Publishers, 1997), 21-22.

3. But what is it that we are to ask for? Anything? Is God truly willing to give us whatever we ask for?

In order to understand what Jesus is saying, we need to examine the context of this chapter. When we look at verses 1-5, we see that Jesus is talking about how to live righteously. We are not to judge others. We can't promote righteous behavior by playing God and judging others and offering advice. Instead, Jesus says focus on yourself, take the log out of your own eye and concern yourself with your own behavior. He is challenging us to correct our own behavior. Judging others, holding ourselves up as the moral standard is of no advantage in the battle to become more Christ-like.

So, in verses 7-11, Jesus is saying we shouldn't be searching on earth for answers that can only come from Heaven. We all need godly counsel, and more importantly, we need the spiritual strength to put that counsel into action in fighting our sinful flesh. And that strength comes from above.

Ask for strength to overcome your sin, and you will have it.
Seek for righteousness and you will find it.

Knock on the door and the Lord will open and come to you and make His home with you.

The "it" here is that missing ingredient in obedience in living out your righteousness – it's the mind of Christ, the knowledge of what pleases Him and leads us into righteousness. In short, it's the power of the Spirit. We get confirmation of that interpretation when we look at this same passage as recorded by Luke. Read Luke 11:9-13.

4. If the Spirit is the "it" we are to ask for, the thing we are to seek, then how do we reconcile Romans 5:5 which says that we have already received the Holy Spirit at the moment of our faith?

When Jesus tells us to ask and we will receive the Holy Spirit, He doesn't mean we obtain the Spirit, for we already have Him. He means we will receive an outpouring of the Spirit's wisdom and power to deal with the sin struggles we face. The Lord will grant to us the specific understanding we need to avoid falling into temptation. Peter says in 2 Peter 2:9, that the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation. He knows how to get us out of those predicaments, and if you ask Him, He will share that knowledge with you. We need the Father to grant us the grace to win the battle. Jesus says ask the Father to help you fight your sin, and He will give it to you through the power and wisdom of His Spirit. Seek to live more righteously, and you will find the way by the guidance of the Spirit. Knock, and as Jesus said, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep my word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him." John 14:23.