

ASK, SEEK and KNOCK

Matthew 7:7–8

7 Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: 8 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

Notice, Jesus invites His disciples to do three things “ask, seek and knock.” The question is, is this simply 3 ways of describing the same action, OR is this a description of 3 separate actions? If this represent 3 separate actions (which I believe it does), what is meant by these 3 action?

Let’s begin with the *first* command—ASK. At first glance, it doesn’t appear that Jesus gives us a lot of information about what we should be asking for. That is, until we look at the “context.” By context we mean the verses that appear *before* and *after* these verses.

Matthew 7:1

1 Judge not, that ye be not judged.

Here Jesus warns His disciples not to *judge*. This word “judge” means to make a conclusion based on appearance.

John 7:24

24 Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.

When the Bible talks about using “righteous judgment” it’s talking about that judgment which comes from God. This is how “judging” relates to “asking” or prayer. If we want to judge with righteous judgment, then our judgement must be based on what we receive from God (in prayer), not by what we observe with our eyes!

John 5:30

30 I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

Jesus always judged with righteous judgment because His judgment was based on revelation from God. This is how we protect ourselves against false judgment—by insisting that we judge men according to what God reveals to us.

Matthew 6:34

³⁴ Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

The phrase “take thought” means to worry or to be concerned with. We can apply this SAME rule to our circumstances. If we want to avoid “worry” or having a false view of our circumstances, then we must trust God with our problems.

Philippians 4:6

⁶ Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

There are people here today who are worried about their circumstances and future. Others are worried about their family or their health. Whatever’s causing you anxiety or worry, God’s message to you is to PRAY. It seems we have an epidemic today of anxiety and depression. I would argue that it stems from a lack of prayer.

Now, some may object to this saying that there are some things you just can’t pray away. However, these same individuals will turn right around and tell you that you need to speak with a counselor. So, talking to God (in prayer) doesn't help with anxiety, but talking to a counselor will?

Am I saying that counselors can’t help with anxiety? Of course, not. I’m saying let’s not put more confidence in things we see (like counselors, doctors) than in things we don’t see (like faith, prayer, God, etc). Also, let’s not confuse therapy or treatment with a cure! Treatments or therapy may help to manage or control the problem, but only the cure will eliminate the problem.

Moreover, if you rely too heavily on treatments, they can often lead to an even greater problem!

Mark 5:25–26

²⁵ And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, ²⁶ And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse,

We should add that when we rely too heavily on our own judgment, it can also lead to unnecessary trouble.

Matthew 7:6

6 Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.

Apparently, it's dangerous to share everything with everybody. It can lead to some unnecessary trouble. Therefore, just because you know something or have something to say, doesn't mean you should say it. This is why there are so many preachers, churches and youtube channels today. Everyone thinks God has called them to speak to everyone we meet. Just remember, Peter thought he knew who was "clean" and who was not. However, God had to reveal to Peter who was called to speak to.

Now, we can also find "context" by examining the verses that *follow* our text.

Matthew 7:8–10

8 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. 9 Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? 10 Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?

Jesus uses an example of a son asking his father for bread and fish to explain what we should ask for in prayer. In other words, we are to "ask" (pray) for the things that we *need*.

Matthew 7:11

11 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

The Father is not just in the business of giving gifts. He's in the business of giving "good" gifts. What's a good gift?

Proverbs 30:7–9

7 Two things have I required of thee; Deny me them not before I die: 8 Remove far from me vanity and lies: Give me neither poverty nor riches; Feed me with food convenient for me: 9 Lest I be full, and deny thee, And say, Who is the Lord? Or lest I be poor, and steal, And take the name of my God in vain.

Notice, this man asked for what was “convenient” (needful). That meant, not too much (to cause him to “forget God” or feel independent), and not too little (to cause him to “take God’s name in vain,” or find fault with Him).

People accuse God all the time for not caring about their situation. But the truth is, the reason people feel uncared for is because they’re not praying. They’re allowing their mistakes to keep them from “asking” or talking to God.

Matthew 7:11

11 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

Is Jesus referring to His disciples as “evil”? Well, remember these are the same individuals He just described as being too anxious (Matthew 6:34), and too self-righteous/critical (Matthew 7:1) and too zealous (Matthew 7:6). Here He’s encouraging them to ASK. Thus, never allow your mistakes or failures to keep you from praying. God still knows how to give good gifts to ALL His children (good and evil)!

James 5:13–16

13 Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms. 14 Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: 15 And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. 16 Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.