

ASK, SEEK and KNOCK (Part 2)

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.

There are three appeals given in these verses—ask, seek and knock. We spoke to you last time about the first appeal—ask. We now come to the second appeal—seek. However, we’re still faced with our original dilemma, which is we’re not really given any information about what we are to seek. Therefore, we’re forced to look at the context. Meaning, we have to consider those verses that appear before and after these verses.

Matthew 6:31–33

31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? 32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. 33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Notice how we are commanded to “seek the kingdom...and His righteousness.” In fact, we’re told to seek this above all else. But, you might be thinking, “Is this really necessary? Do we really need to seek after the kingdom and after God’s righteousness, particularly since we’re *already* citizens of God’s kingdom and we’re *already* recipients of His righteousness?”

While both of these things are true, it is also true that we only have these things *by faith*. Moreover, the fact that we have them *by faith* means that we DO NOT have them *by manifestation*. If we want to have something by manifestation, then we oftentimes must “follow after” it!

1 Timothy 6:10–12

10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. 11 But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. 12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

First of all, notice that in order to “lay hold” on things like righteousness, we must “follow after” them. Secondly, Paul makes a distinction between the things we should be fleeing from and things we should be following (seeking) after. Basically, he tells us not to seek after (or flee) material things. Not that these things are evil, but that we are not to seek (covet) after them. Instead, we are to seek after spiritual things (righteousness, godliness, faith, etc).

Now, this totally goes against our instincts. Our instincts tell us that if we want something, then we must “go after” or seek it. However, the Bible is telling us to do the opposite. If we want something, don’t seek it. Sure, you might ask God for it, but you’re not going to get it by seeking it. Instead, seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness and let God add it to you!

This isn’t an easy thing to do. In fact, to do this...

YOU MUST HAVE FAITH

Luke 12:29, 31

29 And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. 30 For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. 31 But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.

You cannot seek the kingdom of God with a “doubtful mind.” You must believe. You must believe that when you seek God, He will add “these things” unto you!

Hebrews 11:6

6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Also, if you want to seek the kingdom of God...

YOU MUST HAVE HELP

Luke 12:32

32 Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

Notice, as Jesus invites His followers to seek the kingdom (verse 31), He tells them that it's the Father's good pleasure to "give" them the kingdom. Thus, we need God's assistance (or help) to seek the things of God and the kingdom!

Psalm 27:8

8 When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek.

Apparently, when we seek God we're merely responding to God's command or grace. God is drawing or compelling men to seek Him. However, we're not always aware when He's doing it (or even like it)!

Psalm 78:34

34 When he slew them, then they sought him: And they returned and inquired early after God.

As you read this chapter you will see how God had to repeatedly use affliction to cause His people to seek Him. This is because Israel's repentance and obedience was often short-lived.

Seeking the Lord is...

YOU MUST SELL OUT

Luke 12:33

33 Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.

While inviting the disciples to 'seek the kingdom,' Jesus insisted that they *sell out!*

Luke 18:22, 23

22 Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me. 23 And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich.

The reason Jesus commands us to "sell all" is because it's a way of ensuring that our trust is in God, and not our riches. God will sometimes require you to give up something of importance to see where your allegiance lies. "Will you follow (obey) Me regardless of the sacrifice? Are you seeking Me as your source, or are you trusting in something else?" We will need to settle this issue before we're truly ready to seek the Lord!

This brings us to the final point. To seek the kingdom...

YOU MUST HAVE DESIRE

Luke 12:34

34 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

The word “treasure” in this verse represents what you desire the most or the thing you’re the most devoted to. Moreover, what you treasure or desire will determine what you will ultimately pursue. The thing you’re the most devoted to will be the thing you pursue the most.

Matthew 6:24

24 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Some people wonder, “Why am I not seeking the Lord like I should?” It’s probably because you lack the **desire** (devotion) it takes to truly seek the Lord.

You may ask, “How can I obtain this desire?” Ask God for **help**.

Philippians 2:13

13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

It’s also possible that the reason you’re not seeking the Lord the way you would like is because you’re of a “doubtful mind.” You “doubt” whether you can afford to seek God right now. You feel you just have too many responsibilities. Therefore, what you need is **faith**. You must *believe* that as you seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness, God will add these other things unto you!

Finally, if you truly want to seek the Lord, then you must be willing to **sell out**. Be willing to give up anything to follow after God (even that thing that God may have already given to you). Remember God required Abraham to sacrifice his son to prove his service. Not matter the price and no matter the cost, don’t let anything keep you from seeking the kingdom of God and His righteousness!