

'FORGED' Series - DON'T GIVE UP

Pastor Rafael Aristy - August 14, 2022

Matthew 7:7-11 NIV

7 "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. 9 "Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? 10 Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? 11 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!

This portion of scripture is found in what is known as "The Sermon on the Mount"

- It begins in Matthew chapter 5 and ends in Chapter 7
- In this sermon we find the Beatitudes "Blessed are the poor in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted..."
- We also find what we call the Lord's prayer, "Are Father, who are in heaven, hallowed be..."

In this sermon Jesus touches on:

- being salt and light, murder, adultery, divorce, fulfillment of the law, eye for an eye, love your enemy, prayer, fasting, treasures, worry, judging others, narrow gate, true and false prophets, true and false disciples, wise and foolish...

Jesus tells those listening to His sermon to ASK, SEEK, and KNOCK. In the original language there 3 verbs have the connotation of continuation:

- Ask and *keep on asking*, Seek and *keep on seeking*, knock and *keep on knocking*...

ASK

7 "Ask and it will be given to you."

Familiarity shapes our ASK. The more we know someone, the more it shapes what we ask of them. Just like a married couple who have been in relationship for 20, 30 years, they know what to ask for and what NOT to ask for because they know the person so well.

Asking puts us in a position of *humility*, *dependency*, and *trust*.

Asking puts us in a position of humility, dependency, and trust.

Humility - because you must admit you HAVE A NEED.

- Humility requires putting your pride aside and admitting, Lord, I NEED YOUR HELP
- Humility doesn't say, "I got this!" Humility says, "I don't got it."

Dependency - because you recognize you are at the mercy of another.

- Being dependent requires awareness that WHAT I need, I don't have, and there's someone else who can provide what I need...Therefore I have to depend on that person.

- This is difficult for us because we want and need to be INDEPENDENT.
- Independence is highly valued in our culture, from the moment we were a toddler, we love to be independent..."no, I do it!"
- Because we belong to The WAY, we must relinquish independence and become totally dependent on Jesus.

Trust - because without it there's no ASK

- When you ask, you do so because you trust that the one whom you are asking has the ability to provide what is needed
- Trust is necessary in order for any relationship to flourish.
- When my kids ask me for something, they believe I have the ability and desire to provide for their need...even if most times their "needs" are really *wants*. :)

When Jesus says, "Ask and it will be given to you," it's an invitation to humbly go before Him, with total dependance and trust in His character and ability to deliver on our request. Ask and keep on asking.

Relationship is the key...*Remaining* in Jesus and having His *words* remain in us.

When Jesus makes this statement, it doesn't mean you get whatever you want.

- PJ preached last week on "I AM the vine" ...remaining/abiding in HIM
- This is part of the key to this verse

In John 15 we hear a small caveat from Jesus when it comes to ASKING:

John 15:7 NIV If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

Relationship is the key...Remaining in Jesus and having His words remain in us.

- Remaining in Jesus is a choice
- Allowing for his words (and not words from another source) to remain in us is a choice

The Bible says something else about asking:

James 4:3 "You ask and do not receive, because you ask with the wrong motives, so that you may spend what you request on your pleasures."

- God knows our motives, our true motives, our deepest, most hidden motives.

Hard truth: we can remain in Jesus, His words in us, have pure motives, and we still don't receive EXACTLY what we have been asking for.

9 "Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? 10 Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? 11 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!"

God is our FATHER - Jesus shows us here that if we, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to our children, **how much more** your heavenly Father...

- This reminds us that it is not a **wish** that is being brought to the father. Fish and bread were staples in a Jewish home. They were *needs*.

In another part of the Sermon On The Mount (Matthew 6:32) Jesus says that the Father knows what we need.

- If He knows what we **need**, he also knows what we **don't need**.

These good gifts from the Father that Jesus talks about are not limited to material things. Luke 11:13 makes this clear:

13 "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 the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

You can ask your heavenly Father for the Holy Spirit, for peace, joy, wisdom, a spiritual gift such as prophecy, healing, discernment of spirits...

When we ask something from God, we usually have an idea of what our **preferred outcome** is.

- We must trust that our Father will answer with what He knows is best for His children

Some of you who have been asking God for answered prayer and it doesn't seem to be happening. Maybe you're sick and tired of asking the Lord. Maybe you think He has gone deaf. Even Jesus, in the Garden of Gethsemane, asked God that He would not have to go through the crucifixion, but even He did not get what he asked for. He said, "**But not my will, but Your will.**"

- I don't pretend to know why we don't always get the answer when we want it, but I do know that He has forged you for this relationship with Him.

Our insistence is not to get Him sick and tired of us. It is because we *know* His character. We know his *goodness*, his *kindness*, his *love*, and His *care* for us.

DON'T GIVE UP! He hears you. Ask and keep on asking.

God engages us. Our insistence is not to get Him sick and tired of us. It is because we KNOW His character. We know his goodness, his kindness, his love, and His care for us.

SEEK

"**Seek and you will find**"

Seek speaks of intentionality. Seeking is a continuation of our asking.

Example: You ask God to help you find a new good job

- How many of you stop at asking? No, you begin to seek.
- You don't sit on your butt and wait for God to do your job. You start seeking for that new job, while you trust that your Father has heard you.

Many people are willing to ask, but not seek.

- Seeking takes effort/hard work

- Seeking takes time
- Seeking takes intentionality on our part.

Think about what it takes when you're seeking something you've lost

- Your keys, your cell, your wallet...
- You pay attention to every detail. Have I looked here before? What was the last place I remember having it? You are intentional in your search.
- You even ask others! "Have you seen _____?"

What are you currently seeking? Are you seeking the Lord, or merely seeking what the Lord provides? Are you being INTENTIONAL in your seeking?

Look at what King David said concerning SEEKING the Lord:

Psalm 34:4 "I sought the Lord, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears."

Combine your asking with SEEKING.

- It's God's desire for us to seek Him
- And unlike your keys, He wants to be found!

Jeremiah 29:13 "You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."

I believe that this PROMISE the Father made to the Israelites still applies to YOU today.

Don't stop at asking - Seek Him with ALL your heart and keep on seeking Him.

Do you realize that Jesus also was seeking you before you were ever seeking Him?

Luke 19:10 "For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

He has not stopped seeking you.

KNOCK

"Knock and the door will be opened to you."

Knocking speaks of access. A door is to grant access, or to prevent access.

Jesus says, "you knock, I'll open the door"

Again, I see SEEKING as a continuation of ASKING, and I see KNOCKING as a continuation of SEEKING.

- Once you've ASKED, and you have gotten to work SEEKING, then you KNOCK

Many times, an open door to us means access to an opportunity.

- You have to knock on a door in order for someone to know you're there and grant you access.

Knocking, and the door being opened to you, also implies RELATIONSHIP.

- You do not open a door to a stranger. You open the door to a friend, or to a family member (in good standing:)
- In the same way, you knock on someone's door because you know them.

Healthy relationships involve time investment. Relationships grow as you spend time together. Healthy relationships involve intimacy. It's not only spending time together, but the right kind of time.

- Intimacy involves vulnerability, transparency, commitment, and trust.

Jesus promises to open the door, but first we must knock.

To me this is fantastic picture of God's desire for relationship with us.

- I get to knock, and Jesus opens the door
- I desire to be in His PRESENCE, and this is a promise that I can be where He is.

Something else about the door and access, Jesus Himself is it. He is the door!

Remember Jesus' I AM statements in John?

John 10:7 "So Jesus said to them again, "Truly, truly I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.

Hebrews 10:19-23

19 "Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, 21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. 23 Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful."

Finally, in the book of Revelation, Jesus speaks to the lukewarm church of Laodicea and after calling them to repentance He says,

Revelation 3:20 "Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me."

Don't walk away when he knocks, OPEN the door. Don't let shame win. He wants to "come in and eat" with you...He desires relationship and intimacy.

In the same way that Jesus came to "SEEK and save that which was lost," He also "stands at the door and KNOCKS."

What's the common denominator in ASK, SEEK, and KNOCK? You are.

- YOU ask, and keep on asking
- YOU seek, and keep on seeking
- YOU knock, and keep on knocking

You were FORGED to ask, seek, and knock. You were FORGED for relationship with God.

Questions:

- What area of your heart is Jesus knocking on today, that you need to give Him access?
- Are you seeking after Jesus Himself, or simply the things He can do?
- What door is God asking you to knock on?