

[Matthew 7:7-11](#)

7 “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

Matthew 7:8 For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

9 Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone?

10 Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent?

11 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!

Many years ago in a kingdom, A group of musicians traveled the country playing their music to make a living.

Times were hard and making a living was difficult for them, as often times few people would come to hear them play.

That particular year, was especially difficult as there were fewer and fewer people in the audience it seemed, in every small town that they played.

On one particular evening, they were especially discouraged because on top of all the other trials of their life, this night, it was snowing.

“Last night there were only a handful of people, tonight there will be even fewer, why not just give them back their ticket fees and cancel the concert?”

“How can we perform our best for so few?” “I agree”, said another and another of the group.

Finally the leader of the musicians tuned to the last member sitting just behind him.

“What do you think?” The man stood to his feet and began to address the other members of the group...

“I know that you are discouraged, I am discouraged too, but we have a responsibility to those that might come, now matter how few they might be.”

We must go on and do the best job that we can. It is not the fault of the ones that do come, that more people did not come.”

“We should not punish the ones who do show up with less than our best effort”

Encouraged by his words they all went on that night and gave the best performance of their careers.

After the evening had drawn to a close and the people left for home, an old man who helped set up and tear down the stage, handed a note that he had been given by someone in the crowd to the leader of the musicians, the note read as follows:

“This is a night I will never forget, your performance was amazing and inspiring, thank you for a beautiful evening..., signed, “your King”.

Sometimes we lose hope because things in our life are not going very well.

- ☞ **Sometimes** people let us down.
- ☞ **Sometime they hurt us** and disappoint us.
- ☞ **We might fall upon hard times** when our health fails or we struggle in our marriage.
- ☞ **Our finances may suffer** and we may have to do without some of the things we think we need in our life.
- ☞ **There may be difficulties** with our Job or our children.

We may be tempted to stop trying, to give up or at least to put forth less than our best effort because it doesn't seem to us that it will make any difference.

We might be persuaded to just quit all together and not even try anymore.

- ☞ **But out there**, watching us, is someone who is never disappointed in us.
- ☞ **He never grows tired** of our failures.
- ☞ **He doesn't get discouraged** when we struggle and fall.
- ☞ **He knows how hard it is** sometimes just to continue on.
- ☞ **He is there, praying for us** that we will not quit, or stop doing the best that we can.

So we go on, thinking that our efforts must not make much of a difference...

- ☞ **Doing our best**, even when it seems to get us no where.
- ☞ **Even when** no one seems to notice.
- ☞ **Even when nothing** seems to change...

Out there watching in the audience, as you give the best that you can, is Your King...

- ☞ **And He doesn't** want you to quit.
- ☞ **He doesn't want** you to slow down.
- ☞ **He doesn't want for you to do less** than you are capable of doing, because you don't think it matters.
- ☞ **And He is a Mighty King**, A king of Love...

Film “That's My King”

That is your King, He is a mighty King and He has been running this Universe a very long time...

And He knows how to take care of your problems...So you just keep on...

Matthew 7

7 "asking, and it will be given to you; seeking, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

8 "for everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

Jesus is teaching at "The Sermon on the Mount".

- ☞ **He is before** thousands of people, who have come to hear Him teach.
- ☞ **Jesus teaches** about one of the most important things we must remember every day of our lives...

"Don't Quit, Your King is Watching".

The place where Jesus is teaching, was Once known as **Mt. Eremos**, it is really just a hill...

- ☞ **This hill** is located between Capernaum and Tagba.
- ☞ **This was an ideal location** to sit at the top of a hill and teach the crowd of people below.
- ☞ **It was a natural stadium**, build into the hillside, and because of the way that the hill slopes and the sea below, it acted as a natural voice enhancer, magnifying Jesus voice so that all could hear Him.



Plain of Gennesaret



Film: "Ask, Seek, Knock"

When Jesus Sermon on the Mount was translated into the Greek language, there was a very interesting thing that we notice that Jesus said.

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- ⊕ **In the Greek language**, when Jesus was saying “*Ask, Seek, and Knock*”, He used what are called “**Verbs in the present tense**”, meaning that “**Asking, Seeking, and Knocking**”, should be a “*Continuous action*”.

Jesus is saying that we should “**Keep on asking, keep on seeking, keep on knocking**”.

In our life we should be continuously Asking, Seeking, and Knocking, by being persistent in our prayer life.

- ⊕ **It is not** that we are trying to “*Wear God Down*”, you know, drive Him crazy with our persistent prayers till He can’t take it any more and He answers.
- ⊕ **No, the persistency** in our prayers **is for our benefit**.
- ⊕ **Think about it**; we all get discouraged so easily, don’t we?
- ⊕ **We often** just want to give up.
- ⊕ **But if we remember** that Jesus said that we have to “**Keep on asking**”, then if we do this, it will keep us from getting discouraged, because we will just be busy seeking and asking the Father for help.

The Second thing, persistent prayers teach us that the answers to our problem in our life do not always come quickly or in the way that we might think they will come..

- ⊕ **Very often** We cannot change our circumstances, so we have to depend on the Lord to help us change them.
- ⊕ **And when we pray persistently**, what usually happens is that **it begins to change us**, not our circumstances.
- ⊕ “**Ah!**”, **we realize**, “*It was not the other person that was the problem, it was how I was looking at them that was the problem.*”
- ⊕ “**Oh I see now**, *it was not my situation that was the problem, it was the attitude that I had about it that was the problem.*”

But what about this “**Keep on Asking...**” Part that Jesus speaks of? What does He mean?

Jesus gave a perfect example of this in Luke chapter 18. Let’s read the story together as it is spoken by Jesus, and let’s read it in the Living Bible Translation:

Luke 18:1-8

1 One day Jesus told his disciples a story to illustrate their need for constant prayer and to show them that they must keep praying until the answer comes.

2 "There was a city judge," he said, "a very godless man who had great contempt for everyone.

3 A widow of that city came to him frequently to appeal for justice against a man who had harmed her.

4 The judge ignored her for a while, but eventually she got on his nerves. "I fear neither God nor man," he said to himself, "but this woman bothers me. I'm going to see that she gets justice, for she is wearing me out with her constant coming!"

6 Then the Lord said, "if even an evil judge can be worn down like that,

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7 Don't you think that God will surely give justice to his people who plead with him day and night? Notice the lord's answer

8 Yes! He will answer them quickly! But the question is: when I, the Messiah, return, how many will I find who have faith (and are praying)?" (tlb)

This man did not even believe in God, nor care about any other person except himself.

- ☞ **But faced with a woman** who was persistent in her request, he answered her.
- ☞ **This is contrasted** with the fact that the Father is interested in us, He wants to help us.
- ☞ **If a self centered Judge** will leave his comfort and come and help a widow, then Jesus says how much more will your Father help you?
- ☞ **Jesus is telling us** that if we are persistent in our seeking, asking and knocking, we will receive answers.

Now those answers come in three forms:

- ☞ Yes.
- ☞ No
- ☞ Wait.

Most often it is wait, *"Your request is good, but your timing is a little soon...Just wait a while."*

Abraham continuously asked the Lord for a son, and the answer came, Yes Abraham, I will make of you a great nation...

Genesis 12:2

I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great;

- ☞ **Like us**, Abraham thought that the answer would come soon, because he was already becoming an old man.
- ☞ **But the answer** didn't come for 13 years.
- ☞ **In the mean time**, Abraham couldn't wait for the Lord, so he took the servant of his wife and had a son called Ishmael by her.
- ☞ **Ishmael is the father** of the Arab people, and because of Abrahams impatience in not waiting for the Lord, came the nation that has been fighting with Israel, and now the USA, for more that 2,500 years.

Luke 18

when I, the Messiah, return, how many will I find who have faith (and are praying)?" (tlb)

Why did Jesus ask that question; "When I return, how many will I find who have faith and are praying?"

- ☞ **By the way** that Jesus asked the question, you can tell that He already knows the answer to the question.

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- ☞ **When Jesus comes**, people on the earth will be suffering from a severe lack of faith.
- ☞ **One of the signs** of faith, according to this verse, **is that people are praying**.

You might feel like you are really struggling in your trust of the Lord, let me ask you “Are you still Praying?” Then you still have faith~!

In the last days just before Jesus comes to remove the church from the earth at the Rapture, the hearts of believers will have grown cold.

- ☞ **In Matthew chapter 24**, Jesus begins to tell the disciples what the events will be, that will lead up to His return to the earth.
- ☞ **He warns** us that in those last days, one of the signs of the last days is that the hearts of people will grow progressively colder and harder.

[Matthew 24:10,12](#)

10 And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another.
12 And because lawlessness will abound, **the love of many will grow cold.**

[2 Timothy 3:1-5](#)

1 But know this, that **in the last days perilous times will come:**
2 For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,
3 unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good,
4 traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,
5 having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!

Ask yourself if these things are true of people today:

- ☞ Lovers of Self
- ☞ Proud
- ☞ Unthankful
- ☞ Unforgiving.
- ☞ Without self control.
- ☞ Headstrong.

Paul warned that in the final days, Apostasy, a departure from the faith would break out.

- ☞ **“Apostasy” is defined** as a “*A total departure from the principles of faith*”.
- ☞ **Departure** doesn’t mean from a lack of knowledge, or a departure because they didn’t know any better, it is an **INTENTIONAL**, deliberate departure of faith in Jesus Christ.
- ☞ **In other words**, they will know they are departing from Jesus Christ.

Most people know of Billy Graham and the profound effect that he has had upon leading people to Jesus Christ.

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- ⊕ **But many people** do not know that a man that worked alongside Dr. Graham, and had just as great an influence in the 40's and 50's was Charles Templeton.

Pictures of Charles Templeton

- ⊕ **Charles Templeton**, was an evangelist, but he departed from his faith in Jesus Christ, knowingly, willingly, He wrote a book entitled:

“Farewell to God: My Reasons for Rejecting the Christian Faith”

In 1936, Templeton had a personal experience with Jesus Christ and became an evangelist.

- ⊕ **He was a close friend** of Billy Graham, the two co founded “*Youth For Christ International.*”
- ⊕ **He hosted** a weekly Christian television show on CBS *Look Up and Live* in the early 1950s.
- ⊕ **In 1941**, Templeton founded The Avenue Road Church of the Nazarene.
- ⊕ **In 1948**, he attended Princeton Theological Seminary.
- ⊕ **In 1957**, after a long struggle with doubt, Templeton declared himself an agnostic

Charles Templeton was not deceived into losing his faith, he didn't depart because of a lack of knowledge, It wasn't because he didn't know any better...

- ⊕ **Charles Templeton** departed from the faith knowingly, willingly, with full knowledge of Who Jesus is and what He has done.

Many times I have had conversations with people who believe in Jesus Christ and they are worried about whether or not they are really saved. Sometimes because of persistent struggles with their sin, they begin to doubt they are a Christian at all.

- ⊕ **These are perfectly normal** thoughts that all Christians experience at some time in their lives.
- ⊕ **But that** is not a departure from the faith.
- ⊕ **We go on believing** and serving Jesus, even though we struggle and have doubts.

This departure from the faith that Paul warned Timothy about, and all of us this morning, can be eliminated if we keep ourselves “**Asking, Seeking, and Knocking**”.

Jeremiah 29:13

13 and you will seek me and find me, when you search for me with all your heart.

- ⊕ **The Father** always answers our prayers when we seek him with all of our heart.

The point that Jesus is making here in verses 7 and 8 of Matthew 7 is that we should consistently and persistently pray to our father and ask him for everything that we need in our life.

- ☞ **And that the actions** of Asking, Seeking and Knocking keep us in our relationship with the Lord.

Then in the next 3 verses Jesus tells us why we can have confidence when we persistently ask, seek and knock:

Matthew 7

9 "Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? See who is asking—a son—a member of his own family.

10 "Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent?

11 "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!

Jesus is teaching from a principle called "**The lesser to the Greater**".

- ☞ **If a human father** (the lesser)—who is inherently evil, **would not** give his own child a rock instead of bread or a snake instead of a fish, will not our father (the greater) who is perfect in love, who did not withhold even his own son for us, give to us everything we need?
- ☞ **It is almost a ridiculous question isn't it?**—but most of us from time to time feel like our father is withholding blessings from us, because he doesn't answer as soon as we expect him to or he doesn't answer in the way we expect him to.

Romans 8:31-32

31 What can we ever say to such wonderful things as these? If God is on our side, who can ever be against us?

32 **Notice the qualifying statement:** since he did not spare even his own son for us but gave him up for us all, **won't he also surely give us everything else?** (tlb)

Okay, since it is the desire of the Father to give us those things that we Ask, Seek, and Knock, then why sometimes when we pray, is the answer NO?

- ☞ **In the book of Daniel, chapter 9,** we see a perfect example of an immediate yes answer to prayer—
- ☞ **Daniel was praying** for the right reason...

Daniel 9:20-23

20 Now while I was speaking, **praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people** Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God,

21 yes, **while I was speaking in prayer,** the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering.

22 And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand.

23 **At the beginning of your supplications the command went out,** and I have come to tell you, for you are greatly beloved; therefore consider the matter, and understand the vision:

Sometimes a quick answer to our prayers is determined by the reason why we are asking,

James 4:3

You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.

1. **Are we sincerely seeking** the desire of Our fathers heart in our situation, or are we just telling him how we want him to do it.
2. **Is what we are asking** the Lord to do in alignment with what Jesus Name stands for?

John 14:14

If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.

Jesus name stands for Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Longsuffering, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, Holiness, and Righteousness, amongst many more...

- ☞ **Is what we are asking** the Lord for in alignment with those things?
- ☞ **If not**, then we cannot expect Him to answer that prayer.

In Acts Chapter 8, is an example of asking for something for the wrong reasons:

Acts 8:14-21

14 Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they **sent Peter and John** to them,

15 who, when they had come down, **prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit.**

16 For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

17 Then **they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.**

18 And **when Simon saw** that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money,

19 saying, **“Give me this power also,** that anyone on whom I lay hands may receive the Holy Spirit.”

20 But Peter said to him, **“Your money perish with you,** because you thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money!

21 You have neither part nor portion in this matter, **for your heart is not right** in the sight of God.

When we ask, Seek, and Knock, it is important to ask the Lord to show us in prayer, if the reasons we are pursuing this answer, from a heart that is Right with the Lord.

There is a story of a man who was affectionately known as **“Herman”** at Wheaton College who was a piano teacher.

On one particular night, the regular concert pianist suddenly became ill while performing an extremely difficult piece.

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No sooner had the sick pianist left the stage that Herman walked on stage and began right where the pianist left off, finishing the concert with great mastery such as no one had ever heard before.

Later that evening Herman was asked how he was able to perform with such stunning brilliance, that difficult piece.

He told them that in 1939 he was a rising young pianist when he was arrested and placed in a Nazi concentration camp.

In order to keep his hope alive, everyday he practiced by fingering a piece from his repertoire on a bare piece of wood by his bedside.

He did this every night for 5 years until he was finally released...

It just so happens that the piece that I played tonight was the one that I practiced every night for 5 years in the death camp...

Who knows but the very struggles you are experiencing right now in your life are just like that bare wood board, that once you begin to run your fingers over it and bear the difficulty, keeping hope alive in your heart, that someday, the exact things you are going through now will play beautiful music in someone else's life!

Keep on Asking, Keep on Seeking, Keep on Knocking, the doors will be opened to you, and remember Jesus is in the audience watching!