

Receive, Find, Open

Study Pages

Matthew 7:7-8 [NKJV] Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

It seems, everywhere I turn these days, this Scripture just keeps popping up, not just in my own circles, NO, everywhere I turn, there it is. It must be the message of the hour, if not the hour, then maybe the season, or even the decade. Obviously, there must be more that we need to know about it this process, otherwise, the Holy Spirit would not be repeatedly bringing it up

The first time I ever heard about this passage, I was fairly young in the Lord and it was in the context of being filled with the Spirit. Luke's account of this same teaching goes on to explain

- **Luke 11:11-13** [NKJV] If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if *he asks* for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead...? Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"

In the course of time with this broadcast, we've actually referred to these verses many times. It's a simple concept, really. And, in truth, God really is that good. His gifts really are that precious and He is *that* faithful...more than willing to meet us where we are. He is the source of everything good.

I recently received a request to speak about this passage at a conference and I found myself asking these questions:

- For what are we asking?
- For what OR Whom do we seek? and
- Upon what door are we knocking?

But as I was preparing for this segment today I found myself asking these questions:

- How do we go about the business of receiving?
- How will we know we've found that for which we have sought?
- How do we proceed through the door upon which we are knocking?

I have a good friend in the ministry who recently told me about an encounter she had with the Lord. She's been diligently asking the Lord for a move of God for many years. She said, the Lord finally said to her, "Stop asking! It's done! Just lift your hands and receive it!"

Such a revelation brings to mind something that there may be missing in our pursuit of God and His kingdom

- There is more to this verse than just asking
- There is more to this admonition than simply seeking
- There is more than knocking
 - Receiving what we ask;
 - Finding what we seek; and
 - Opening or Walking through the door upon which we knock

These things are the other half of our part of this vital equation. God's part is

- To answer
- To be found
- To make certain we have all the keys we need; To unlock whatever needs to be unlocked
 - Jesus said in **Matthew 16:19** [NKJV] And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.
 - **Revelation 1:18** [NLT] I am the living one. I died, but look--I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and the grave.
- Apparently, it's not enough to ask. We must learn how to receive.
- It's not enough to seek; We must develop focus in order to find
 - It's not even enough to knock; We've got to be willing to follow through with the necessary steps in order to pass through to what is on the other side of that door

So, we're going to take some time today to break down what these terms mean; Taking a deeper dive into the Scriptures, hoping to gain a better understanding of what it is we need to DO

- AFTER we've ASKED
- AFTER we have SOUGHT
- AFTER we've KNOCKED

Understanding that the long-term benefit will be all the good that He has prepared for us

ASK

Now, in the context of both of these passages from the gospels, the word "ask" is the primary focus. It is mentioned more than any other word in this admonition. So, again, I'll ask this question: For what are we asking?

- **1 John 5:14-15** [NKJV] Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.

For what we ask has little bearing as long as we learn to ask according to His will.

How can we know His will? Rest assured His word is His will. If we can find a Scripture that promises whatever we need, we can be confident that He will hear and He will answer.

- **John 15:7** [NKJV] If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you will, and it shall be done for you.

- **John 14:13-14** [NKJV] And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do... If you ask anything in My name, I will do *it*.
- **Colossians 1:9** [NKJV] For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;
- **James 1:5** [NKJV] If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

How do we ask?

- **James 1:6** [NKJV] But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.
- **Matthew 21:22** [NKJV] And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.
- **Mark 11:24** [NKJV] Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive *them*, and you will have *them*.

How do we receive?

- **Mark 11:23** [NKJV] For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says.
- **Luke 18:35-43** [NKJV] Then it happened, as He was coming near Jericho, that a certain blind man sat by the road begging. And hearing a multitude passing by, he asked what it meant. So they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. And he cried out, saying, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" Then those who went before warned him that he should be quiet; but he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be brought to Him. And when he had come near, He asked him, saying, "What do you want Me to do for you?" He said, "Lord, that I may receive my sight." Then Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your faith has made you well." And immediately he received his sight, and followed Him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw *it*, gave praise to God.

THE RECEIVER.

The Telephone Receiver

- Most people these days have mobile phones. But when I was a kid, we had telephones with a hand-held device that was called the Receiver.
- So, in the asking, imagine making a phone call to God. We dial. Make our requests concerning needs OR even pour our hearts out in thankfulness or distress. But the conversation is not complete until we pick up the receiver to get the reply.
- AFTER we ask, there must be opportunity to receive, which might involve setting aside time to listen with our journals or spending additional time in His word - even paying close attention to doors that might open or close. The key is showing up ready to receive... Not only just making outgoing calls

The Football Receiver

- In the asking, imagine the quarterback throwing a perfect pass toward a receiver in the middle of a game.
- A great receiver doesn't just hope the ball comes his way. He practices catching. He studies the playbook and learns the quarterback's timing. Once the ball is in His hands, he holds on tightly and begins to run toward the goal
- Likewise, in receiving answers to prayer, it sometimes takes practice. The more we know of God and His Word, the more we know about His ways and His timing, the easier it is to receive.
- Once we can see the answer within our grasp very often there is a contending to keep it and very often, we then need to be prepared to run with it.

Receiving isn't passive; It's an active skill that involves readiness and focus, trust and follow-through. We pray, (ASK), then position ourselves to RECEIVE. Over time, as we practice, we'll get better at recognizing the signals and will become more successful with the follow-through

SEEK

Who or What do we seek?

- **Psalm 27:8** [NKJV] *When You said, "Seek My face," My heart said to You, "Your face, LORD, I will seek."*
- **Psalm 105:4** [NKJV] Seek the LORD and His strength; Seek His face evermore!
- **Psalm 27:4** [NKJV] One *thing* I have desired of the LORD, That will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, And to inquire in His temple.

So, we know we are to seek His face, and it's commendable to desire to dwell in His presence always

How do we seek?

- **Deuteronomy 4:29** [NKJV] ...you will seek the LORD your God, and you will find *Him* if you seek Him with all your heart and with all your soul.

The word SEEK carries with it an implied level of intimacy. To ASK is one thing; To SEEK is another thing entirely. It is a deliberate pursuit that will likely include an added expectation, knowing that genuine seeking will lead to discovery.

- It implies the involvement of our whole being: Mind, heart, will, emotions, even our actions. While attempting to align ourselves with God's priorities, it requires our undivided attention, with absolutely no distractions.
- It implies persistence - sticking with it until what is sought for is found.
- It requires obedience. Sometimes seeking involves unfolding. We only see in part until we obey and then we get more.
- It requires a clean heart. Repentance and forgiveness bringing stability. Very often a reordering of priorities will be part of outcome

Most Christians are at least familiar with **Jeremiah 29:11** [NKJV] For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.

The definition of hope is expectancy. Yet, it's good to be reminded that it goes on to say **Jeremiah 29:12-13** [NKJV] Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.

How do we go about finding? Looking upon His face implies willful intimacy and a healthy level of the Fear of the Lord - reverential and Godly respect. Dwelling in the house of the Lord implies a willful choice and a commitment to faithfulness which will most assuredly be required.

Think of going on a well-planned treasure hunt. There is a map and there are clues. Thus, without God's Word and The Holy Spirit's guidance, we might find ourselves wandering aimlessly. We won't get there until we have to intently studied the clues. Following the map involves active seeking, moving forward with persistence. Even if there are obstacles (Remember the football receiver? He keeps his eye on the ball and cannot be moved by distractions.)

Most treasure hunts involve exploration. We don't just glance at the map. Some treasure requires digging in the dirt: Praying more intently, surrendering more fully, digging deeper in study or even, obeying in the small steps... every step of the way. Very often persistence is required. If treasure was easy to find, it wouldn't be treasure, would it? The more intense the seeking, the more precious the treasure to be found. In the grand scheme of discovery, "the find" could be exactly what we've been hoping for: a clear answer or even something better (perhaps we'll develop some character along the way), maybe we'll find unexpected provision or some sort of previously unknown Revelation from God. A good seeker will celebrate the discovery and use it to move forward, just like the receiver tucks the ball and runs.

Seeking is the bridge between asking and receiving. We ask, then actively pursue the answer by seeking, which, in turn, positions us to lay hold of something. Many find that the process of seeking actually brings unexpected transformation, even before the answer to prayer is received

The KNOCK

Upon what door are we knocking? Jesus is the door

- **John 10:7, 9** [NKJV] Then Jesus said to them again, "Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. ... I am the door...

Additionally, the Bible says He stands at the door of our hearts - the hearts of those who believe

- **Revelation 3:20** [NKJV] "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.

That He may come in and "sup" with us... I'm reminded of the old chorus: "Come & dine the Master calleth, come & dine; You may feast at Jesus' table all the time; He Who fed the multitudes, turned the water into wine; To the Hungry calleth now, come and dine."

- **Psalm 23:5** [NKJV] You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over.

Now that's Jesus knocking on our door, but no matter which way the door swings, the implication of intimate fellowship should be noted.

How do we knock? With expectancy, after all, He is our blessed hope

- **Titus 2:11, 13** [NKJV] For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men,... looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,

The Doors He Opens - no man can shut; and vice versa

- **Isaiah 22:22** [NKJV] The key of the house of David I will lay on his shoulder; So he shall open, and no one shall shut; And he shall shut, and no one shall open.

For the New Testament believer:

- **Revelation 3:8** [NKJV] I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name.

What do we do with the open door? Along with expectation comes the need for initiative and perseverance, approaching God with confidence that the right door will open at the right time. Because... God is a good Father who wants only good things for His children.

Once we've knocked persistently and perceived the swinging wide of the door, we must have the courage to step through with gratitude and trust. Thanksgiving is an important expression - even before we know fully what's on the other side of that door. Gratitude anchors the heart and honors the One who opened it, knowing that it's important to walk forward in faith, not fear.

- **2 Corinthians 5:7** [KJV] For we walk by faith, not by sight

We must discern and confirm that it is indeed the right door to walk through some doors are tests or distractions, consistently checking the alignment with: His promises in Scripture, the assignment at hand, and the fruit that may or may not be produced.

Contradictions to His will or His word should give us pause

We must enter obediently and actively. Action is supposed to follow answered prayer

- **James 2:26** [NKJV] For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

If God opens a door, we have to be willing to walk through it. And again, steps must be taken in faith. How so? Make the call; Accept the opportunity; Invest the effort. Sometimes it takes a while to figure this out, but obedience releases more grace and very often opens more or other doors. But most assuredly: ***Sitting by passively on the threshold will***

cause us to miss the opportunity every time! We have to cross the threshold and then, once we're there, it's important to steward what's on the other side of that door, making every effort to manage the new season well for it will be a new season all for God's glory and the good of others. Stay expectant for more. Opened doors very often lead to more... asking, seeking, and knocking. This Christian experience is a journey of epic proportions and progressive revelation. An Open door prepares us for the next and then the next.

What to do with a door that remains closed? Keep knocking. Here's where we take the opportunity to examine our own hearts, staying attentive for the redirect. It could be God's mercy at work, protecting us from what we thought we wanted. Other better opportunities may very well be around the corner. We have to trust Him and use the waiting to draw closer

What do we do with the door? If it opens - step through. Like a receiver securing the catch and running toward the goal, engage with what's there: Explore, Build, Serve, Grow. If it stays closed, don't camp there forever. Thank God, turn and look for the next door or rest in the hallway, trusting His timing while continuing the cycle: ASKING, SEEKING, KNOCKING.

This is not passive waiting or forceful entry. We knock because we trust the One inside is good and responsive

In considering the Lord's admonition: to Ask, Seek & Knock... In realizing we all have a responsibility to Receive, Find & Open, it might be easy to categorize these things as "instruction." But I am challenged to look beyond "the directions." As we have studied these terms out, to me, they come across more like "an invitation." These words are not necessarily just a formula to follow. Perhaps what the Lord really intends is "a meeting," "An encounter" so-to-speak, that changes whatever needs to be changed, and changes it for the good.

I can hear it clearly like a beckoning to those He loves: "Go ahead, ask Me;" "I'm over here... seek My face;" "Come on, step right up to the door and knock." Because, if we do that, along with receiving what we ask, finding what we seek, and discovering that the door has been open all along, We may find ourselves in the midst of an encounter of Biblical proportions, connecting our earthly experience with heavenly realities, opportunities that span the breadth, length, height, and depths of eternity.

That all being said, let's take a moment to look at a couple of illustrations from Scripture - Men who practiced ASKING, SEEKING and KNOCKING

- **Exodus 33:12-13** [NKJV] Then Moses said to the LORD, "See, You say to me, 'Bring up this people.' But You have not let me know whom You will send with me. Yet You have said, 'I know you by name, and you have also found grace in My sight.' "Now therefore, I pray, if I have found grace in Your sight, show me now Your way, that I may know You and that I may find grace in Your sight. And consider that this nation *is* Your people." And He said, "My Presence will go *with you*, and I will give you rest." Then he said to Him, "If Your Presence does not go *with us*, do not bring us up from

here. For how then will it be known that Your people and I have found grace in Your sight, except You go with us? So we shall be separate, Your people and I, from all the people who *are* upon the face of the earth." So the LORD said to Moses, "I will also do this thing that you have spoken; for you have found grace in My sight, and I know you by name." And he said, "Please, show me Your glory." Then He said, "I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." But He said, "You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live." And the LORD said, "Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock. So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by. Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but My face shall not be seen."

- **1 Kings 19:8-12** [NKJV] So he arose, and ate and drank; and he went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights as far as Horeb, the mountain of God. And there he went into a cave, and spent the night in that place; and behold, the word of the LORD *came* to him, and He said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" So he said, "I have been very zealous for the LORD God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left; and they seek to take my life." Then He said, "Go out, and stand on the mountain before the LORD." And behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind tore into the mountains and broke the rocks in pieces before the LORD, *but* the LORD *was* not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, *but* the LORD *was* not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, *but* the LORD *was* not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice.

We'll start first of all, on the mountain of God. For the sake of record, Sinai and Horeb are the same mountain. In Exodus chapter 33, Moses went up Sinai; In 1 Kings chapter 19, Elijah went to Horeb. Moses asked to see God's glory – whereas Elijah sought the LORD for direction, because He felt like He had nowhere else to go. Both Moses and Elijah were asking, they were both seeking, they were both knocking. In their individual encounters, (figuratively speaking) they both stepped through a door, onto a ledge, and from there they stepped into a place we don't read about it in the Old Testament.

Instead, the picture is clearly painted in Matthew chapter 17

- **Matthew 17:1-5** [NKJV] Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him. Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, let us make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!"

You may have heard me talk about this passage before. About my own encounter with the Lord on a mountain in Tennessee several years ago. That's where He spoke to my heart about the transfiguration of Christ being a picture of His Body, the Glorious Church and what she will look like when He returns for her. If you haven't heard it, go back and listen to the very first podcast we ever did called "Salt and Light" from November of 2024.

Moses and Elijah somehow found themselves there - on a high mountain apart with Jesus - standing on the other side of time, beholding His face as it shown like the sun, beholding His glory at the precise moment of the transfiguration. Moses asked to see God's glory and got an opportunity, on the other side of time, to behold His face. Elijah sought counsel and direction, only to find There, on the other side of time, the destiny of all who would believe, transformed into something incredibly beautiful and bright, y His glorious presence.

Both men, were forever marked and changed in the encounter

So, when we consider asking; When we find a need to seek His face; When there is a door that needs to open - Let's not get caught up in the rat-race of formulas and "What worked for Brother So-And-So." Let's take each situation as an opportunity to encounter transformation, as a chance to change what needs to change, stepping into the unknown with a bold confidence that whatever comes from the Father is going to be for our good.

Even in the ASKING, even in the SEEKING; even in the KNOCKING, we must all learn to RECEIVE FIND and OPEN

As we close, I'd like to leave you with a challenge from the lyrics of one of my favorite choruses from Hillsong:

YOU SAID, "ASK & YOU WILL RECEIVE WHATEVER YOU NEED"
YOU SAID, "PRAY & I'LL HEAR FROM HEAVEN & I'LL HEAL YOUR LAND"
YOU SAID YOUR GLORY WILL FILL THE EARTH LIKE WATER THE SEA
YOU SAID, "LIFT UP YOUR EYES," THE HARVEST IS HERE, THE KINGDOM IS HERE
YOU SAID, "ASK & I'LL GIVE THE NATIONS TO YOU" –
 OH LORD, THAT'S THE CRY OF MY HEART
YOU SAID, "DISTANT SHORES & THE ISLANDS WILL SEE YOUR LIGHT AS IT RISES ON US"
YOU SAID

And I'll add right here: Because You said

- Let us be found Asking
- Let us be found Seeking
- Let us be found Knocking

And we know, because You are faithful

- We will receive
- We will find and
- It will be opened unto us