

We Have Not Because We Ask Not

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Matthew 7:7-11 Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? 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?

John 14:14 If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.

James 4:2 Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.

James 4:3 Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.

John 16:24 Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.

- I. We have not because we ask not.
 - A. This is a simple statement of fact from the Word of God.
 - B. Jesus told us plainly that if we ask, we receive; and if we ask anything in his name He will do it.
 - C. Jesus and James both say the same thing and therefore the fact is established.
 - D. So we can rest in the fact that whatever holy desire we have that is not fulfilled, it is first and foremost because we have not asked.

II. What does it mean to ask?

Websters 1828 Dictionary:

'ASK, v.t. *Gr. In former times, the English word was pronounced ax, as in the royal style of assenting to bills in Parliament. "Be it as it is axed."*

1. To request; to seek to obtain by words; to petition; with of before the person to whom the request is made.

Ask counsel of God. Judges 18.

2. To require, expect or claim.

To whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more. Luke 12.

3. To interrogate, or inquire; to put a question, with a view to an answer.

He is of age, ask him. John 9.

4. To require, or make claim.

Ask me never so much dowry. Gen. 34. Dan. 2.

5. To claim, require or demand, as the price or value of a commodity; to set a price; as, What price do you ask?

6. To invite; as, to ask guests to a wedding or entertainment;

Ask my friend to step into the house.

Ask is not equivalent to demand, claim, and require, at least, in modern usage; much less, is it equivalent to beg and beseech. The first three words, demand, claim, require, imply a right or supposed right in the person asking, to the thing requested; and beseech implies more urgency, than ask. Ask and request imply no right, but suppose the thing desired to be a favor.

- A. So we understand that to ask in the sense that Jesus is referring to here is to request as a favor.
- B. To ask is not to demand, or require, or claim, as if it is mine already.
 - 1. We have all heard praying in faith described as “claiming,” or asking, as if it is already done.
- C. But that changes the whole attitude on both sides to something completely different than what Jesus is talking about here.
- D. To ask is to request a thing, or permission, or some other favor, and is expressed with words like, “May I,” and “Please,” in humility and respect, while claiming no right to the thing requested, but only a pure desire.
- E. To demand, or command is something completely different than what the Bible instructs us to do here.

III. Little children have no problem asking, do they?

- A. It is a natural thing for them, because that is the only means they have to obtain what they desire.
- B. As they grow up they figure out other ways to get what they want, like stealing, or trading something, like good behavior or favors, and eventually by earning their own money and then they do not have to ask anymore because they can get what they want without asking.
- C. But when they are small we could learn some lessons from them about asking.

Matthew 18:3 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

- D. They do not wait and hope someone gives them what they want or need, they ask.
- E. They do not take anything for granted, they ask for it.
- F. If they want to know something they ask.
- G. If they want someone else to do something, they ask.
- H. They do not beat around the bush, but they come straight to the point, and ask plainly for what they want.

IV. We do not ask God for things, and that is why we do not have them.

- A. We take for granted that He is going to give us what we want...eventually, whether we ask or not.
- B. We spend our days wishing He would do something for us, or give us something we desire, or help us to understand some thing that perplexes us, but we do not come boldly unto the throne of grace to get help.
- C. It makes a great difference when we come right out and ask someone for something, whether we get it or not.
- D. We are much more likely to get it if we ask for it.
- E. If we want to borrow some money at the bank, we must go and ask for it.
 - 1. The bank will not just automatically loan us money just because they know we need it, we must ask.
- F. If we want to see a doctor we must ask.

- G. We would like for more people to come to our church, but they are much more likely to come if we ask them.
 - H. The people who prosper in life and accomplish things are the people who know how to ask other people for things
 - I. The people in God's kingdom who prosper and make a difference are those who know how to ask God instead of just hoping, and wishing, and manipulating people and things to make happen what they want to happen.
 - J. The people who see God do great things are the people who learn how to ask God for things, and do it.
- V. Why do we not ask?
- A. There are reasons why we refuse to ask other people for things.
 - B. Pride; it is a little humiliating to ask for help or for some favor from someone.
 - 1. Our pride will not let us give up on getting what we need by ourselves.
 - C. Shame; this is the other side of pride, we do not want to admit our need, and we are afraid they will tell others that we asked.
 - D. Courtesy; we do not want to be a burden or a nuisance to them.
 - E. Lack of faith; we do not believe that they could help us, or that they would help us, even if they could.
 - F. We can see this truth in many examples in the Bible:
 - 1. Hannah; she suffered "year by year" until the year she went up to the house of God and "asked" for a man child, and she got one, that year.
 - 2. Elijah:

James 5:17-18 Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

- 3. John:

John 13:25-26 He then lying on Jesus' breast saith unto him, Lord, who is it? Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon.

- 4. One of the multitude in Mark 9 who had a devil-possessed son:

Mark 9:21-25 And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child. And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us. Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief. When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him.

- G. When are we going to believe Jesus?

Matthew 7:7 Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

Matthew 7:8 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

- H. When are we going to stop being too proud, too ashamed, too faithless, and too self-confident, to start asking God for the things we cannot obtain, or do for ourselves?