

Asking, Seeking and Knocking

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

A. Persistent in our requests.

“Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:”
Matthew 7:7 - αιτειτε και δοθησεται υμιν ζητειτε και ευρησετε κρουετε και ανοιγησεται υμιν.

The first thing we note is the use of the word **ask**. There is a word for praying, but here we have the single concept of asking God for something. And how often have we seen this concept of asking God throughout the Bible? It seems to be some sort of universal principle that we don't fully comprehend. Even God told his Son to ask him for his inheritance! *“Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.”* Psalms 2:8

Next we see that to **ask** is the present active imperative of *aiteo*, which is the petition of an inferior party to a superior party. While *erotao* is the request of a party, who has equal standing with the other party. *Erotao* is only used with the Lord Jesus Christ asking the Father for things, while *aiteo* is always used of believers in Christ asking the Father for things.

The next thing we notice is that it is in the imperative mood of command, which tells us that the Lord is **commanding** believers to be asking the Father for whatever it is they need or want. It isn't a request or a suggestion, but a **command** to do it! All Christians have been brought under the authority of God's rule over them and this means we are supposed to be obeying him.

It is found in the second person plural, which means that this applies to all believers in Christ! Not just Pastors, or elderly people, but **all believers in Christ are commanded by Christ to be asking the Father** for whatever it is they need or want. There are no exceptions to this rule.

We see also that the active voice is used, which tells us that the subject must produce the action of the verb. This tells us that, even though other believers may be praying for us, **each one of us** are individually and volitionally responsible to be **asking the Father** for what we want or need.

And being found in the present tense with the imperative mood, it tells us that this is to be **an ongoing matter!** Asking the Father is not something we are to be doing now and then, or do it once or twice then quit, but something that we are **continually doing** in our lives! And because it is found in the mood of command, **we are commanded to be constantly and continually praying!**

What this tells us is that if there is **anything** in this life that we want, (not a lust), or need, or would like to have, or **like to do**, or should be doing, or like to see done, any changes that we'd like to see, any problem we want solved, any area of growth that we would like to advance in, anything at all, then we're commanded by the Lord to go to the Father in faith and ask him for it! And not just do it a couple of times, then give up, but to keep on going to him over and over in our prayer request, not just for the one thing, but **everything!** And when we keep on doing this over and over, we develop a pattern that leads to a **practice** in our lives. And in so doing we develop **persistence!** Just like moving forward in faith is **perseverance**, continually asking God for things is persistence!

And we're to be doing this, even if we're down, or discouraged, even if we don't feel like it, even though we may feel that our faith is faltering or non-existent, we are commanded to keep asking God for everything! And, of course, **faith is the motivator** behind this. We believe what Christ says, so we do it! But it's not a passive faith, but **active**. So we have active, aggressive and persistent faith motivating us to active, aggressive and persistent prayer to God.

So let's say that the believer does this, but the results are not immediately forthcoming? He did not receive an immediate answer to his faith request. So what does he do now? Give up? Quit praying? Stop trying? Lose faith? Or does he go back to what the Lord told him to do, believe it, and keep on asking the Father for whatever it is that he wants? *"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: **that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.**"* John 15:16

The grammar of the passage using the present tense with the active voice and the imperative mood of command tells us that what we have is an active, aggressive, persistent action of going to God with our requests and that's exactly what the Lord wants us to do! **Regardless** if we have been knocked down by the trials of life; regardless of whether Satan has been putting obstacles in our path; regardless of what our mental or emotional state is, we are to keep asking God for everything!

We need to see what **our** responsibility is. We're to be asking, seeking and knocking. That's what we're to do! What the **Father** does is to give, to provide discovery, and to open doors! There are ten points we need to remind ourselves of. One, we don't have it. Two, we need it or want it. Three, we can't do it for ourselves. Four, God is the only one who can do it. Five, therefore, we must ask God for it. Six, this applies to all believers in Christ. Seven, we're responsible to do so. Eight, we're commanded to do so. Nine, we're to be doing it continually. Ten, we're to develop it as a daily practice.

Too often we spend our lives wanting this, or that, or complaining about our situation, but fail to do the one thing Christ commands us to do and that is to go to the Father and ask him for what we want! As the Apostle James wrote, *"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**. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your **lusts.**"* James 4:2,3

Abraham asked God for a son. Hanna asked God for a child. The Son asked the Father for the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. Unbelievers ask God for forgiveness and salvation, through faith in his Son. *"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."* Romans 10:13 The publican asked God for mercy. *"And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner."* Luke 18:13

By always having to ask God for everything in life a connection of dependency is established between man and his Creator. In it is recognized; first of all, because the earth and all of heaven belongs to God he must grant permission. Secondly, it also recognizes that the individual is not capable in his own right to do this, so he goes to the only one who can make it happen.

But there is a promise to this. If we **ask** God, we will **receive**. If we **seek**, then we will **find**. If we **knock**, a door will be **opened** to us! Virtually every Christian, who has read the Bible, knows this passage of Scripture. But by going into the Greek, we see so much more! All we need to do is believe what the Lord says, keep on believing it when our faith is small, and keep on asking God for the things we need or want.

“And it shall be given you;” - *kai dothesetai humin*. Or, it shall be **granted** you. To **give** is the future passive indicative of *didomi*, which meant to give, or to grant. The future tense, when used with the indicative mood, denotes the idea of the absolute certainty of something! Which means that the request will be **absolutely granted by the Father**.

The use of the future tense also tells us that this will be done sometime in the future, which tells us that, whether long or short, there will always be a time factor involved in the matter. When the request is put before the Father, it is granted then and there. But the actual receiving of the request will be done somewhere down the road.

The next thing we see about this is that it is a gnomic future, which is used to express an action that can be expected to happen under usual, or normal, conditions! So what this is telling us is that the granting of our prayer requests to the Father can be expected to happen under normal conditions.

Case in point is Baruch. Baruch was Jeremiah's scribe and he served at his side in the Lord's work for decades. As the years went by, and he also had gotten considerably older, Baruch, apparently, desired certain things for himself, probably concerning his declining years. They aren't denoted in the passage, or in chapter 32, but Jeremiah had purchased a field under the Lord's direction and that might have had something to do with his desire.

Now under normal conditions that wouldn't have been a problem and the Lord would have granted a request. But this was not a normal situation for the Lord was going to destroy the land by the Babylonians! “*Therefore this is what the LORD says: I am about to give this city into the hands of the Babylonians and to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, who will capture it.*” Jeremiah 32:28 NIV “But the LORD has told me to say to you, “*This is what the LORD says: I will overthrow what I have built and uproot what I have planted, throughout the earth. **Should you then seek great things for yourself? Do not seek them. For I will bring disaster on all people, declares the LORD, but wherever you go I will let you escape with your life.***” Jeremiah 45:3-6 NIV

With the indicative mood used here with the future tense the emphasis is more on the side of certainty. Which tells us, to keep on asking and it will be given you. So, under usual conditions, one can normally expect that God will grant our request.

With the passive voice being used it tells us that God is the one doing the giving, while the believer can only be receiving. He cannot supply it for himself; he cannot make it happen, he can only receive. But the believer is responsible for the matter of praying! That is something he can do, and must do.

And with the use of the imperative mood of command, we have Christ commanding the believer to be continually asking the Father for what he wants or needs. This shows the intense desire that Christ has for us to be blessed by his Father and to be given many things, things that will benefit us. **Evidently a command is needed to compel us toward that action**.

To you is the dative plural of *su* and it's to all of you. **All of us** are to be constantly asking the Father for the things we need, or want, and **all of us** will be given the things that we are **asking for**. The dative case is interesting, because it's the dative of advantage. Which is to say that the things that God gives us will be to our **benefit**! And we might clarify he will only give us things that are good for us! “*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?*” Matthew 7:11

Seek, *zeteite*, is the present active imperative of *zeteo*. *Zeteo* goes way beyond merely having a desire for something. We may want some things, wish for others, but *zeteo* speaks of the involvement of the whole person in the matter; the mind, the heart, the will, and motivating the body to a course of action! The farmer may wish he had more money in his pocket; he may want to have a good crop, but to **seek** those things means **he's going to have to get out there and start working his field!**

And in the present imperative it tells us that we're not only **commanded** to do it, but **to keep on doing it all throughout life!** What this tells us is that Christians are not to be idle dreamers, or couch potatoes, but the type of people, who not only want things in life, (good things that are beneficial to them – not lusts), but actively seek them! We cannot simply just sit around wishing things were better. We have to actively pursue after a better life.

Now **seeking** can be an action out of one's lusts, which is what we see most people do! But **seeking** can also be an act out of one's faith! Just like **asking** is to come out of faith, and **knocking** is come out of one's faith. So also **seeking** is to be out of faith! **Knocking** would be the extension of seeking, the next step of faith included in the idea of seeking.

Seeking entails action! It is not a passive concept, but one where you get up and go out after it! It is not thinking and talking about it, but a concept where you want something bad enough to go after it. And to keep going after it. Today we would say, “He or she is a “**go-getter**”! What does that mean? It means that they don't sit around wishing something was dropped in their lap, but they get up and go after it!

Now many will start thinking about the wish list they have of the things they want. But what about seeking the **kingdom of God**, instead of the things of this world? “*And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.*” Luke 12:29-31 What about seeking the **things above**? “*If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.*” Colossians 3:1 What about seeking after **peace**? “*Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it.*” 1 Peter 3:11

“*And ye shall **find**;*” - *kai heuresete*, is the future active indicative of *heurisko*, which meant to find or discover something. Again we have the gnomic future, which tells us that finding what we are seeking for can normally be expected to happen under usual conditions and with the certainty of the action.

But with the active voice being used here, it's not that we will receive it, but that we, **ourselves**, will find it! Where the other is granted to us, (by God), in this one **we** will find or discover it. **It is our action of seeking motivated by faith that causes us to find whatever it is that we are seeking!** But if we're not seeking anything, then we won't find anything.

And again, because the imperative mood is being used here, we have the Lord's heart expressed for us, in that, he wants us to be seeking after the things we are asking for, because if we do, then we will be finding them. So he commands us to keep on asking, keep on seeking and keep on knocking on doors.

I know there are temporal things in life that we need that we're to ask for, but we need to start incorporating into our priorities spiritual concepts, such as, seeking after **peace** in our lives, seeking after **tranquility**, seeking after the **wisdom** we need, to be **mature**, complete and lacking in nothing, **pleasing** the Father, doing **God's will**, to go on to **maturity**, etc..

Knock, *krouete*, is the present active imperative second person plural of *krouo*. Which tells us, once again, that we're commanded to knock, (and this is directed to all believers in Christ), and we're commanded to **keep on knocking!** Which also tells us that **we're never to give up!** Even if the door we are knocking on does not open to us, we're commanded to go out there and **keep on knocking!** Why? Because **faith assures us that eventually a door will be opened to us!**

This also tells us of the believer's faith manifesting itself in **persistence** and **aggressiveness** in the matter. This type of faith is not the type where one just sits around and **waits** for something to happen, but one where the believer aggressively goes out seeking doors of opportunity. It is an active, aggressive faith seeking for God's blessing on you. **Asking leads to seeking and seeking leads to knocking.** All three are commanded by Jesus Christ. Our faith comes in when we believe what Christ says and then by faith we do it. Knowing it doesn't give us the success – **it's doing it!**

It is well known that the birds of the air belong to God and that they scatter seed throughout the four corners of the earth. Yet the farmer does not sit around in passive faith and wait for the birds to scatter seed in his field! He is actively at work each day from sunup to sundown tilling his fields, planting the seed, watering the ground in expectation of a good harvest. His job is to plant the field, and he does so in faith, but God is the one who gives the harvest. *“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” Galatians 6:7*

The hard working salesman knows that to make money to feed his family he has to sell his product. But to sell it, he has to see people. Which means he has to go out and knock on doors. And if he doesn't get any results on the first door, then he has to keep knocking on doors until he finally does. Or he has to keep making phone calls, until he finally gets a sale.

Too many believers misapply faith using it only in a **passive sense**, when most of the time it is used in an **active, aggressive sense!** And the usual reason as to why we don't is because we're **afraid!** Afraid of rejection, afraid of failure, afraid that we won't get any results! But God promised us good results, if we keep on knocking! Thinking about it and talking about it is not asking, seeking and knocking.

“And it shall be opened unto you:” - kai anoigesetai humin. To **open** is the future passive indicative, third person singular of *anoigo*. Now the word door is not in the original, but is supplied by the context. Context demands that what you're knocking on is a door. And it takes a literal concept of knocking on a literal door and uses it figuratively for **an open door for opportunity.**

The future tense tells us that this **will occur at some point in time in the future**, which brings in the **time factor** once again, that it is an absolute certainty that it will occur, that is, **a door will be opened**, but like the other two verbs we have a gnomic future, which tells us that the action of having a door opened can normally be expected to occur under usual conditions.

But instead of having the active voice being used here, which would denote that the subject would be producing the action of the verb, the passive voice is used to tell us that a door will be opened to us! We do not open it ourselves, nor can we, but a door will be opened for us by God. It is Jesus Christ, who opens and closes doors for us. *“I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee **an open door, and no man can shut it:** for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, **he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth;**” Revelation 3:7,8*

The Greek neither has the definite article **the** in the passage, nor does it have the word **door**. And even if the word door were to be found, which it isn't, then it still wouldn't have the definite article. So what does that mean to us? First of all, it says that we're to keep on knocking, and when we do a door will be opened. It doesn't say that **the** door of opportunity of what we've been looking for will be made available to us, but **an opportunity will present itself to us!** And what that means is that, as we go out seeking things and knocking on doors of opportunity, what we may actually get is **something different than what we're looking for and something better!**

You see, one never knows what is going to happen when you go out and keep on knocking on the doors of opportunity! One never knows which way the turn of events will end up. But if you sit around doing nothing, then nothing will happen. One may go out in life seeking various opportunities and having certain things in mind. And so he goes out doing what he's supposed to do and that is keep on knocking on doors. Yet all the doors he knocks on do not open up for him. So what does he do? He keeps on knocking on doors because that's what he's supposed to do! And because he keeps on doing that because he knows, by faith, that something will turn up.

Opening and closing doors is one of the ways that God leads us in our lives in the way he wants us to go. If a believer is persistent in doing what he wants to do, and it isn't the will and plan of God for him, then God will keep closing doors! The believer may keep on going after the things he wants to do, but if God keeps closing doors on him, then his action of knocking is of no avail. But if the believer has a change of heart in doing the will of God in his life, and then goes out knocking on doors, then eventually God will open up the door for him that he wants him to go through!

If believers are going out in the world in their own strength and works knocking on doors seeking to gratify their lusts, God is not going to open doors that provide the opportunity for them to do that. But if they desire to do his will for their lives, and if they are knocking on doors by faith so they can do that, then a door will be opened to them.

So **faith** becomes a pivotal player in this, not only as a **motivator**, and an **assurance** that we will get the things we are desiring, but also to ensure we are on the **right track** and doing the **right thing**. We have to see how important faith is in this matter. We have to trust God in this matter of opening and closing doors. Why? Because he is directing our steps, so as **to give us our true heart's desires, not what we are lusting after!**

Asking the Father for our needs and wants in life is an act of faith. And to **keep on asking** him is an act of faith. **Seeking** doctrinal things in life is also an act of faith. And to **keep on seeking** them is an act of faith. And **knocking** on doors of opportunity is an act of faith. And to **keep on knocking** on doors all throughout our life is an act of faith.

Pres. Act. Impv.	Fut. Ind.	Pres. Act. Part.	Pres. Ind.
<u>Begins With</u>	<u>Future Certainty</u>	<u>Continual Practice</u>	<u>Results In</u>
Keep On Asking	It will be given you	The One continually asking	Is continually receiving
Keep On Seeking	And you will find	The One continually seeking	Is continually finding
Keep On Knocking	It will be opened	The One continually knocking	Has constant open doors

B. Guarantee of future blessings.

“For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.” Matthew 7:8 - πας γαρ ο αιτων λαμβανει και ο ζητων ευρισκει και τω κρουοντι ανοιγησεται.

“For every one that asketh receiveth;” - *pas gar ho aiton lambanei*. We begin with the word **for**, *gar*, which is used to explain the reason **why** for something. “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:” Matthew 7:7 The word *gar* explains the reason **why** the Lord **commands us** to keep on asking, to keep on seeking and to keep on knocking; **why** he wants us to do these three things. He then goes on to explain the reason **why** in verse eight. “For every one that asketh **receiveth**; and he that seeketh **findeth**; and to him that knocketh it shall be **opened**.”

Next we have the word **every one**, *pas*, which refers to a group, a group of people set apart from other people, who, in this case, refer to **those who are asking**. It is the **ones** who are **asking** that will be the ones who are **receiving**! As for the rest, those who are not asking God for things, they will not be receiving. You have not, because you ask not. It's as simple as that.

The Lord not only commands us to do this, but also commands us to keep on asking, seeking and knocking, until it becomes a life long pattern for us. The Christian's continued **obedience** to Christ's command to ask, seek and knock results in a habitual practice, which will result in the believer continually reaping God's blessings in the future throughout their lives!

The word for **ask** here is the present active participle of *aiteo*, which tells us that the believer, again, is the one responsible for doing the asking, but in the present participle it tells us that he or she is to do it as a way of life! We see how the present imperative of verse seven works in this matter, the command to keep on asking, for if we keep on asking, then **it will become a practice** in our lives!

Receiveth, *lambanei*, is the present active indicative of *lambano*. The present tense here is what is called a **customary present**, which is used to denote that which habitually occurs, whether in the past, present, or future. Which tells us that if we are continually asking the Father for things in our life, **then we will be habitually receiving them in the future!**

The indicative mood was used to denote the reality of it. To the Greek there was **reality and then there was that which was **not real****. In the **not real** category, there was that which had the **potential** to become real, which could be real, if certain conditions were met. And then further away from reality was that which could become real, it had the possibility of becoming real, although there was no guarantee of it becoming real.

Now why is this important to us? Because, if we continue to obey Christ's command to keep on asking the Father for the things we need, or want, and in so doing this becomes a pattern in our lives, then the reality is we will continually be receiving those things we have been asking him for throughout our lives! So the indicative mood becomes **a guarantee** for us!

This also brings in another concept and that is the **lag time principle**! We present our requests to the Father. Now we know that because there will always be a **time factor** involved in between the time of the **request** and when we **receive** it, we know that we will be receiving it sometime in the **future**! And if we keep on putting request after request into the Father, then we know that somewhere down the road **we will be continually receiving those things we asked him for back in the past!**

“*And he that seeketh findeth;*” - *kai ho zeton heuriskei*. **He that seeketh** is the present active participle of *zeteo*. The word *pas* that we had for the group of those who are asking applies also to the group of those who are seeking. To **seek** is open to all, but **finding** what you're seeking is only for those who are seeking! “*And the one who is seeking is finding.*”

The grammar for this verb is the same as the grammar for asking. We have the present active participle with **asking** and the present active indicative is used for **receiving**. Here we have the present active participle used with **seeking** and the present active indicative for **finding**. The active voice tells us that **the believer** has to do the **asking**, and do it as a way of life, and it tells us that he also has to be actively **seeking** as a way of life.

And if he is constantly **seeking** for things in life, then, as a habitual practice he will be finding things throughout his life here on earth! Two types of people come to mind. One is the person who sits around doing nothing and complaining that nothing ever happens to them, or, for them in life. The other person is always finding things and having opportunities presented to them, and that's because they are out and about looking for things.

“*And to him that knocketh it shall be opened.*” - *kai to krouonti anoigesetai*. To **knock** is the present active participle again of *krouo*, but to **open** is the future passive indicative of *anoigo*. The future tense used here with the indicative mood should be taken in the sense of absolute certainty. If, as a pattern of our lives, we are knocking on doors of opportunity, then doors will absolutely be opened to us.

Doubt and unbelief are so much a part of the believer's life here on earth. We want to believe; we want to step out by faith and trust that the Father will come through for us, but we still have our doubts. So the Lord comes through, like a firm parent, commanding us to keep on asking the Father, to keep on seeking in life and never give up, and to keep on knocking, because he knows how much the Father loves us and wants to do things for us! And he will, if we keep on coming to him!

The group of those believers, who are asking the Father for things, are constantly receiving them. The group of those believers, who are seeking things, are finding things. And the group of those believers, who are knocking on doors of opportunity, are constantly having opportunities presented to them!

Now he gives us an **a fortiori argument** in verses nine to eleven. “*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?*” Matthew 7:9-11 If a human father, who is evil, knows how to give good gifts to his son, then how much more our heavenly Father, who is righteous, will give good gifts to his children!

Does this passage talk about faith? Yes! Obedience? Yes! Patience? Yes! Action? Yes! Persistence? Yes! **Faith, obedience, patience, action** and **persistence** are all found in the believer continually asking, seeking and knocking. What we must guard against is sitting around in despair and unbelief, but to take faith aggressively in life and to do what Christ tells us to do expecting the Father to come through for us like the Lord promised. Now if this is true and is to be applied in the normal times of life, how much more does it need to be applied in times of **economic uncertainty** and **trials!** The Father promised us logistical grace to supply all our needs and so we need to be continually going to him in prayer and faith for the things that we need and want. “*And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:*” 2 Corinthians 9:8

Why Faith?

The Scriptures talk about faith over and over again and it prompts the question **why**? Why is faith so important in this matter of man's relationship to God? Why can't it be based upon our works, or our good deeds, or our own personal sense of righteousness? Billions belong to religions that do that, so why is Christianity any different?

The reason why goes back to the nature of God and his righteousness. Righteousness demands righteousness, and when there is no righteousness, then his justice demands punishment. So when it gets back to our righteousness, or our good deeds, then they are all as filthy rags in the eyes of a holy God and therefore must be condemned and punished.

This is why God deals with us, gives us things, and blesses us, solely on the basis of grace and faith. The **grace** of God because all the merit lies solely in the **one giving in grace** - God. Grace is not merited, it cannot be earned, and one does not deserve it. It is a gift. In the matter of **faith** there is no merit to faith at all. Any merit there is in faith is in the **object of faith**, not in the one exercising faith! This is why faith is so important, because it is the only thing that works in accordance with God's grace and that does not compromise God's righteous integrity. And with faith there has to be something one believes and that is the **truth** of God's Word! **Biblical faith always has the Word as its object.**

That's why the scriptures say that, apart from faith, it is impossible to please God. *“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.”* Hebrews 11:6 And that's why we have to **walk by faith**. *“(For we walk by **faith**, not by sight:)”* 2 Corinthians 5:7 And live our lives by faith. *“Now the just shall **live by faith**: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.”* Hebrews 10:38

Faith in the promises of God is not only the means by which we live our lives in the devil's world, and please God, but it is also the means by which: we appropriate the blessings God has for us, advance in our spiritual growth, are promoted by God, face difficulties, go through trials, overcome adversity, the attacks of Satan and gain the victory! And faith comes to us through the Word!

When facing a situation that seems to have no solution, the eyes of faith look at it and says, “God can and will work it out for me”. The eyes of faith focus in on the **possibility** of it with God handling it, instead of the impossible. Things can be impossible to us, but not with God. With him all things are possible. *“And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is **impossible**, but not with God: for with God **all things are possible.**”* Mark 10:27

One of the concepts of faith is what is our **focus**? What are we looking at? Are we looking at the **problem**? Or are we looking at the **promises**? I guess it all boils down to those two things. Are we looking at the **problems** or the **promises**? **Faith looks at the promises of God**. When the Israelites went into the land that God was going to give to them, the only thing could talk about was the giants in the land! They were looking at the problems, not the promises! *“And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the **giants**: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.”* Numbers 13:32,33 And because of their unbelief they were not allowed to go into the land. Instead they wandered around in circles for forty years, and their mental state deteriorated accordingly to their unbelief.

When a believer looks at a difficult situation and says, **impossible**, in a way he's telling the truth. It is impossible – **for him!** But what is he looking at? **Himself!** It is impossible for us to do these things, or to go through these things, or to face certain things in life. But faith stops looking at oneself and looks to the promises of the God, who says, “*with God all things are possible.*”!

Abraham did not stagger at God's promise to give him a son, but believed him. “*He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;*” Romans 4:20 Having a son at his age was impossible – but not for God! As God said, nothing is too difficult for him. “*Is any thing too hard (difficult) for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.*” Genesis 18:14 “*Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard (difficult) for me?*” Jeremiah 32:27

In Mark 9:23, “*Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.*” KJV “*If you can?*” said Jesus. “*Everything is possible for one who believes.*” NIV All things are possible to the one who believes, who, in this case, was Jesus Christ himself, for it is the **power of God that is made available and operates in the sphere of faith!**

If a believer is living by faith, then he is **dependent** upon the grace of God, the power of God and the provisions of God. If he is not living by faith, then he is depending on himself, his works, his strength, his ideas, or other people, for whatever it is that he needs. A grace believer is a faith-oriented believer, and a faith-oriented believer is a grace-oriented believer. And in both scenarios he is always oriented to the Word of God and the promises that God has made.

The statements that the Lord makes to his people, “*Ask, and it will be given you*” Matthew 7:7, and “*And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.*” Matthew 21:22, or, “*And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask, by means of prayer, believing, ye shall receive*”, (expanded) **reflect the believer's relationship to God, his dependency on him and the need for faith.**

Where do we get faith?

We get it from the Word of God! “*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*” Romans 10:17 Arminianism teaches that every man possesses within himself the faith necessary to be saved. While those who believe in election say this is not true. We say that although man may have the ability to believe all sorts of things, man does not inherently possess the faith necessary for salvation. That faith is given to us from God and it comes through his Word.

One of the problems of Arminianism will show up later on in the Christian life, when it comes to trusting God and exercising faith. Many times a believer will try to muster up faith from deep within themselves, only to no avail. And try as hard as they can – they can't! The problem is, and that's because they believe they have inherent faith, they cannot come up with the faith to believe!

The problem is that they are **looking for faith in the wrong place!** **Instead of looking into themselves** for faith, they need to be **looking to the promises of God!** It is the promises of God that give us faith! It is as we focus our minds and hearts on the promises that we get the faith to believe them! In the giving by God's of his exceeding great and precious promises, for the purpose of us partaking in the divine nature, **he was also giving us the ability to believe his promises!** “*Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*” 2 Peter 1:4

Romans 10:17 tells us that **faith comes to us by means of the Word of God**, ἀρα η πιστις εξ ακοης η δε ακοη **δια** ρηματος θεου. The preposition dia is used here to denote the instrumental thing by which an action takes place. What it's telling us is that the faith the unsaved need to get saved, as well as the faith that the saved need to believe the promises and all of God's Word, comes to us through the agency of the Word of God!

What it also tells us that **faith**, this kind of faith, the faith needed to trust in Christ and to believe the promises of God, is not an inherent quality in mankind. Inherent being a quality existing in someone or something as a permanent and inseparable element, or attribute of their being. And if God provides faith through his Word, this would eliminate the last vestige of whatever works and merit man would try to hang on to. It would tell us that God really provides it all through his grace!

A simple, but powerful, demonstration of this was when Peter was walking on the water over to the Lord. Matthew 14:29 *“And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.”* Peter was walking on the water because **he believed he could!** And he did, **as long as he kept his eyes on the Lord!** But when he got his eyes off the Lord and directed them to the wind and the waves – **he sunk!** *“But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.”* Matthew 14:30

Keeping his eyes on the Lord gave him the faith to do the supernatural, which, in this case, was to walk on water. But as soon as he looked away from the Lord to the wind and waves, which speaks of the storms and trials, the problems of this life; **his faith started to ebb**, then fear set in and he began to sink. Which also speaks to the issue of the pressures of life, which can only be kept out of the soul by faith in the promises of God, causing stress in the soul, which always result in fear in the soul! So the key is to keep our eyes on the promises of God, for from them we get faith!

Abraham was another example in this where the Lord had promised him a son. Now Abraham believed him, but as time went by his faith started to lag. So the Lord reappeared to him reassuring him of his covenant promise to give him a son, which bolstered Abraham's faith! What was it that bolstered Abraham's faith? The words of promise from the Lord! So where did his faith come from? From the restating of the promise God made to him!

If Abraham had the inherent faith needed to believe the promise God made to him, he would have had plenty of time in the ensuing months to muster it up! But he didn't! Why? Because he did not possess the faith needed in the first place, but his faith came to him as the result of God speaking the Word of his promise to him.

Isaiah the prophet said, **“Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.”** Isaiah 45:22 He is talking about the unsaved of this world being saved and they do so as they look to the Lord in salvation. It is as they turn to the crucified, died and resurrected Son of God that faith is aroused, activated, or comes about in them. It is as they hear the words concerning Christ, **δια** ρηματος θεου, that the faith needed to be saved comes into existence.

The Christian, who is going through suffering and trials and needs more faith, is told to look to Christ. **“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”** Hebrews 12:2 The word **look**, *aphorao*, meant to turn away from everything and everyone else so we can look to Christ, for when we do, then the faith needed to believe the promises comes into play.

This is it! This is what we have to believe! If we want to get our faith up and running again; the one thing that we have to is **look to the Word** and be totally and thoroughly **convinced of the idea of possibilities!** Not to just adopt the concept of looking at the different possibilities that there are in life, or the various possibilities there are to deal with our problems, but **to adopt the possibility thinking that all things are possible with God!**

The key to all this is to start focusing our complete attention, once again, back on the teaching of the Word of God. For it is as we start concentrating on the Word with our entire soul, and having confessed any sins we might have committed, that we recover the filling of the Holy Spirit; and it is there in the sphere of the filling of the Holy Spirit that **our faith starts to soar.**

The possibility thinker looks not to himself, but to God who has the power. He knows that he can do all things through Christ who strengthens him. While the negative thinker looks to himself, to his circumstances, to his abilities, and says it can't be done...(because I can't do it)!

But we don't have to concentrate on a doctrine dealing with faith to get our faith back up and running, we can look at many passages of scriptures. For example, we can look at a passage that deals with the difference between the soul and our bodies, *“For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.”* 2 Corinthians 4:16. The body is decaying each day, which can be quite painful and discouraging. But when we concentrate on the soul, the inner man, which is the real us inside, we see that it can be renewed each day. And Paul said because of that they didn't lose heart, faint, get discouraged.

Mark's statement on the mountain emphasizes the idea of prayer. Whenever there is something that the believer wants, then it is expressed to God in prayer. So **Mark's faith is a faith that believes and prays.** *“For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.”* Mark 11:23,24

Prayer is the vehicle by which one's will is expressed and directed toward God; God's almighty **power** is its source and assurance; **faith** is the opening through which his power works; and God's **sovereignty** is its only restriction.

Anger blocks our faith, our faith ideas and our prayers. *“And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.”* Mark 11:25 The temporal particle hotan indicates an action that is potential, conditional and repeated and refers here to the matter of prayer. So, **whenever** we pray, and as **often** as we pray, there is a condition attached to it, that is, we are not to be angry toward someone. If we are, then we are to forgive them.

We have to ask ourselves, is being angry worth it? Usually the people that we are angry at don't even know that we are! We're trying to hurt them with our feelings of anger, but the only person that we are hurting is ourselves and those around us! And to add to that, our prayers are not being granted, we're out of fellowship, not filled with the Holy Spirit and just plain miserable. **So is it worth it?** Our anger blocks the filling of the Holy Spirit, and without the filling of the Holy Spirit we have no *agape* love mental attitude, no joy and no peace. We also don't have any faith or faith ideas. And without the protection of the spiritual life inside us, then our soul is run over by the sin nature to the place we are totally miserable. So is it worth it? And the answer becomes quite clear, **no!** That's why we have to let these things go, and we have to adopt the lifestyle of just letting things go by! It's not worth it!