

Upcoming Events...

1 Corinthians Class: Every Tuesday at 12:00 p.m.
Business Meeting: Next Sunday, December 10 at 4:30 p.m.
Ladies Bible Class: Sunday, December 17 at 4:00
Establish Master Calendar for 2018
Corporation meeting: Budget/Financial Report
Barnabas Group Meeting: December 26

Perseverance

“Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.” James 1:12

“We count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord’s dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful.” James 5:11

December Birthdays

6 Olivia White 17 Bill Brown 27 Sue Tanner
29 Noah McKnight 30 Richard Karns 31 Bob Pescador

December Anniversaries

12 Ron & Peggy Woodruff 18 Jim & Marie Burruss

Regular Meeting Times

Sunday.....9:45 a.m.
Sunday.....10:45 a.m.
Sunday.....6:00 p.m.
Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

Preacher:
Mike McKnight

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Knock, Knock, Keep on Knocking

By Jon Mitchell

Matthew 7:7-11

“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 the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him!”

Do a Greek word study on each of the action verbs commanded of us in verse 7, and we’ll see that the verse would be better translated like this: “Keep on asking... keep on seeking... keep on knocking...” In other words, persevere. Don’t give up. Start by asking, by simply making an inquiry of God. But don’t stop there. Start seeking out his will. Continually study the entirety of his Word (Ps. 1:1-3; 119:160). But still don’t stop. Start knocking. Here’s where real perseverance comes in. Put into action and application what we find his Word to tell us.

Every single day, ask God to guide us, seek out his guidance in the Word, and continue to knock on Heaven’s door by active, penitent, continual obedience...and what will happen? The will of God shall be given to you. You will find what you seek. The door shall be opened.

God is not our enemy. He is the best Friend we shall ever have. He is our Father, our Heavenly Parent. He blesses us every single day in more ways than we can count or even know in part because we’re so used to them that we take them for granted. The best gift of all which he offers is the gift of salvation freely given through

his Son (Rom. 6:23). All believers ask for this salvation. Keep asking. True believers will seek it. Keep seeking. The saved will knock on his door, and it will be opened to them...because they choose to obey his Word (Matt. 7:21-27; Heb. 5:9).

It's all about persistence, friends. Perseverance (Luke 11:5-8; 18:1-8). Not giving up. Perhaps we're being tempted to give up our efforts to bring the gospel to lost souls because no one has jumped into the baptism yet after one study with us. Don't give up. Persevere in our Bible studies, and we'll be surprised at the blessings which come (Ps. 119:97-104). Keep on sowing evangelistically, and we will reap (Gal. 6:9).

Keep on asking, keep on seeking, keep on knocking...

Lord Hear My Prayer

By Tim Dooley

In Psalm 143:1 David pleads, "*Hear my prayer, O LORD, give ear to my supplications! In Your faithfulness answer me, and in Your righteousness.*" We all want our prayers to be heard and answered but the sad fact is many simply do not know how to pray. It is not uncommon in regard to prayer to hear folks say they don't know what to say or how to say it." Even the disciples asked Jesus to teach them how to pray (Luke 11:1).

While Jesus answered His disciples with the model prayer (and the outline He sets forth for us there is indeed a great place to start) I want us to consider something Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount. In Matthew 7:7-8 Jesus sets forth important factors that, if followed, will benefit us with regard to prayer. Jesus said, "*Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.*" The application of this in line with our subject of prayer is that our prayer should be...

Simple. Jesus said, "*Ask.*" Asking is a prerequisite of receiving. Verse eight says, "*For everyone who asks receives.*" James said, "*You do not have because you do not ask*" (James 4:2). Prayer is not as complicated as men often teach or think. Keep it simple, talk to God.

Intense. Jesus says, "Seek." Seeking is a precondition of discovery. Again in verse eight Jesus says, "he who seeks finds." Through the prophet Jeremiah the Lord said, "*And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart*" (Jeremiah 29:13). Prayer should be a pouring out of ourselves to God.

Persistent. Jesus said, "Knock." Knocking is the persistent action by which the divine storehouse of God's blessings is accessed. Notice again Jesus says, "to him who knocks it will be opened." We often think of persistence in prayer in the framework of repeatedly asking God for the same thing, but may I suggest that persistence here may have more to do with Paul's instruction to, "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17). How persistent are we in prayer?

While these things will all help us in regards to aiding in the Lord hearing our prayers there is one other crucial factor that must be mentioned. Above all else, in order for the Lord to hear and answer our prayers, we must be right with God! James 5:16 says, "The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much." 1 Peter 3:12 declares, "For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their prayers; but the face of the LORD is against those who do evil."

If we are not in a right relationship with God today we need to understand that our sins are hindering the ears of the Lord from hearing our prayers. Isaiah 59:2 proclaims, "*But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear.*"

Jesus died for every man on the cross, became our advocate, so that we might have access to the Father (Ephesians 2:18). If you will come to Him in obedience, repenting of your sins, confessing His name, and being baptized for the remission of your sins, He will cleanse you and open His ear to you. If you are a Christian who has fallen away, if you will repent and ask His forgiveness, you can once again enjoy the privilege of saying, "*Lord, hear my prayer,*" and the assurance that He will.