

ASK, SEEK, KNOCK, REPEAT

SERIES: JESUS IS KING | WEEK 9 | 12.13.2020

Hey, if you have your Bibles turn to Matthew Chapter 7, Matthew Chapter 7, we'll turn the lights on for you, Matthew 7, verses 7-11, we're going to read that, we're going to get right after it, Matthew Chapter 7, verses 7-11. Here's what it says:

7 "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. 9 Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? 10 Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? 11 If you then, who are 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!"

– MATTHEW 7:7-11 (ESV)

Father,

We ask You this morning that You would come in a mighty way, a fresh way, Lord, to this place. Lord, I specifically ask for your Spirit to use this message for your glory, use these words. Father, I pray for the hardened hearts in this room that You would soften them. I pray for the marriages that You would restore them. I pray for the doubt that You would change doubt to faith this morning through your Word and your power and your goodness. Teach us, Father, teach me how to pray. In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen.



So we are in a series called JESUS IS KING, so we've been looking at the book of Matthew and talking specifically the last few weeks on the Beatitudes. And so Jesus, the humble King, is on the mountaintop speaking to an audience, some of them are made up of His followers, some not, and He's talking about Kingdom conduct. So He's talking about the characteristics of the people in His Kingdom—how they are to live, how they are to think, their integrity, their character, how they are to treat the world. And so He's talking about all these things in the Beatitudes; He's talking about attitude. And we get to this part here in Matthew Chapter 7 where He's finished talking about Kingdom character and impact and walking in a way that's redeemed, and He says this is how we are to as people in the Kingdom approach the King in prayer.

So as we are people—if you are a believer in Jesus—as you pursue the King what are you to do when you're before the throne? So let me ask you just a general question: When's the last time that you saw God do something only He can do through prayer? I'm going to give you a moment, think about that, when's the last time that you prayed something that only God could do and He did it? Anybody have a testimony? Amen. Something where you're like, listen, we have a saying here at Calvary and I love it, it's a saying called something only God could do. And this is this is the heart of the saying: It is that there are things in this world that nobody—no government, no person—is going to be able to do, but God can. So we go before the Lord asking Him to do something that people can't do, circumstances can't do, money can't do, time can't do, only God can do. And so we plead to God for something that He can do and then He shows up and He proves that not only is He authority over all that is but that He listens to those He loves.



And so we have this question of do we have a heart of prayer? Is that the posture in which we pray? That we pray to God knowing that He is the only One that can answer these prayers in our lives. That

prayer inside that maybe you've been praying for a long time but you keep going to God with. Like, how many of you maybe are praying because you've been sick for a long time and the doctors can't help you and the medicine can't help you but, man, you know that if God wants to He can fix that illness, He can change your circumstances so you keep asking God because you know that He is the One who can ultimately do it. Anybody? How many of you have maybe somebody in your family, maybe a child who isn't walking with the Lord for 20-30 years but you know that God is great and that He can redeem that person; a brother or sister, a friend who doesn't know Jesus but, man, you know that God can change their heart so you keep asking Him every time you pray at night, that's your prayer request, your go-to.

I would even call it the "impossible" prayer, the person that you're like, listen, I don't understand how that will work, I don't understand how You're going to be able to change it, but I know You can. Anybody? So when's the last time you prayed like that, prayed for something that only God can do? Because we are called that prayer is our appointed means in which we talk to the King, it is our access to the King. And, in fact, we are called to make a business of prayer, to make it a priority in your life. Not just praying for your meal, not just praying for your job, not just praying for a test that you're coming up, but make it a priority to pray and seek after the Lord for His presence and His goodness and His purpose in your life, to seek the face of the King.

And so here is how in Matthew 7 we are told that we are to approach the King through prayer. The first thing we're told to do is ask. And, in fact, it says that if we ask it will be given to us. That's the first promise that we see in Matthew 7 from Jesus the King. And so I think about this, okay, what are some asks that we have? So I think of Elizabeth—remember Elizabeth?—Luke Chapter 1. So Elizabeth is barren, she can't have a child, and so what we hear about Elizabeth is that her whole life Elizabeth is asking the Lord to have a child only to find herself getting older and she didn't have a child. So the ask that you have that maybe God hasn't answered for a long time and you don't know if He's ever going to answer, that was Elizabeth. But what do we find out in Elizabeth's life? That God eventually, when Elizabeth was older, gives Elizabeth what? A child, and the child in fact changes the world.



And so what we learn from that is that sometimes we ask for something and God's timing is different than our timing. Amen? And so we may think God doesn't listen when we ask, but God has a plan and His timing is better than ours. And we learn that from Elizabeth, and that He is not not listening but His timing is better. So sometimes we ask for things and God says no and so we try to get those things anyway, we run ahead of God and we grab things only to find that there was danger in that thing. And we run after the world, we run after relationships that we have no business being in, cars we have no business buying because we can't afford it, houses we have no business living in, because we ran after God's provision, God's answer, and we find ourselves alone because we ran in front of the King only to find that it wasn't good for us, it wasn't what we were called to have, because we didn't wait on the Lord. So sometimes we ask in patience.

Another thing we ask, I think of Lazarus, remember in John Chapter 11? So Lazarus dies, but he's dying at the time and his sisters run and they tell Jesus, "Hey, your friend is dying, heal him." So these are the sisters coming to Jesus saying you can heal our friend and Jesus takes his time, He doesn't rush. And so the story is that Jesus takes a couple days to get to Lazarus and when He gets to Lazarus, Lazarus is dead. And so what does Jesus do when He arrives? He doesn't panic; He brings Lazarus back from the dead. And what do we learn? That when we ask God—look at me, church—God is not limited by the

laws of man. There is not an ask that you can make that God is limited by because logically He created those laws, so my God can suspend the laws He created if it's for His glory and if He wishes. So we learn that we don't even have to ask for the limitations of our world, we can ask for things beyond our world, "Father, You can do anything You want to do because You are the author of all these things." We've learned that in Scripture, that death does not hold back answered prayer. That's powerful, church, don't miss that.

**GOD IS NOT LIMITED TO THE NATURAL LAWS OF THIS WORLD.
NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR HIM.**

We also think of other asks like Nicodemus.¹ Right? Nicodemus, John 3, the religious ruler, he's kind of in charge of the Jews, very educated person. Nicodemus' ask was more of knowing God, if He's real. Nicodemus had a lot of truth questions, logical questions. So Nicodemus sneaks out at night and He finds Jesus and He starts asking Him questions because He knows that He can go to God with his questions because God is big enough to answer those. So He asks about being born again and how can a person be born again, and Nicodemus has all the status in the world but yet he's going to God to answer questions that He has in his heart that no man, no written scroll could answer. And so we can go to God knowing that He will answer our prayers in His time for His glory. We can go to God in desperation knowing that there's no limit to the conditions of this world.

But let me ask you this question because this is kind of the call we have: Is prayer a primary pursuit in your life? Like, if you're, like, what do you do more than anything? What is that? Because, in fact, in Scripture we are called to be like a beggar asking for food, that's the posture we are to have with our prayer; that we go to God because there's nowhere else to go. And so we go often to God, it's the primary pursuit of our lives is to know God. Listen, I'm gonna throw a wrench in the worldview we live in—secular humanism—which has taken over our schools and taken over our universities, they say the primary pursuit of life is happiness. I'm calling nonsense. The primary pursuit of life is not happiness.

**THE PRIMARY PURSUIT OF MAN IS KNOWING GOD – NOT HAPPINESS.
HAPPINESS IS CIRCUMSTANTIAL, IT'S TEMPORARY – GOD ISN'T.**

Happiness is circumstantial, it is changing, you cannot grab happiness and not lose it, it's fleeting. The primary pursuit in life is to know God. Will He give you joy and peace in that pursuit? Absolutely. But the primary pursuit of God is you as a created being knowing more about the Creator that made you. That is where your purpose is found, that is where your joy is found. And so in prayer we are pursuing God, which is the primary pursuit of our lives. That's why we should make it a priority in our lives, because if we're not pursuing God through prayer we're pursuing the world. That's your options.

And God says n-n-no, we are to ask often for the things that God can do and only He can do. I'll give you an example. A couple weeks ago I was going into a bookstore and I remember being in the parking lot and before I went into that bookstore I was like, *God, I want to be used by You.* I was, like, I mean, *I want You to use me in that bookstore, give me an opportunity to share your faith or do something.* And so I asked God, I said, "I want You to show up here." And one of my mentors used to tell me walk in expectancy; God is with you, He's going to show up, He's going to use you, you just have to ask. And so I remember going into this bookstore and it was empty, completely empty.

¹ See John 3:1-15

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I remember, like, the coffee shop was empty so you know, like, things were crazy. So I go in this bookstore and it's completely empty and so I go up the escalator, some of you probably even know where I'm at at this point, I go up the escalator and I'm, like, looking at philosophy books and I'm looking at some different types of books, so I grab a couple books, you know, I see the Harry Potter section, whatever. And so I'm looking around and I see nobody, no one to talk to, no one to be asked, so I go down the escalator, I go over to the journals, and I'm seeking the Lord and I said, "Father, I want You to give me somebody. I'll talk to anybody, just give me somebody and I'm gonna talk to them because I asked and I know You're gonna show up." And there was no one around.

And so I turn and I looked at the register and there was a lady at the register and she did not look nice, she looked so mean. And so I was like, *That's not her!* [LAUGHTER] Right? My heart, my, like, that's not, that's not her. The guy's in, like, he's like out in the street, I'm gonna meet him on the way. But I was like – and so there's only one person in the store and it was the person working at the store. And I have all these insecurities but I'm like, *Okay, God, that's the person*, because God said to me at that moment, He's like, "That's her."

So I get my books and I walked up to the register and I give the books to her and – all by herself – and I said, "Hey, um, can I, I just wanna know if I can pray for you?" This is a true story, guys. And she starts bawling and she says, "I just lost my husband two days ago," and she starts talking about how – she's an older woman – now she was lonely and she's living in an apartment and she didn't know how she was going to provide, and she doesn't go to church anymore. And so I just kind of heard her heart and I asked if I could pray for her and I just leaned in and I prayed for her and I asked God to just kind of provide for her and I introduced her to our church family and just said, "Hey, I'd love to come alongside you." And I just prayed that God would give her a peace and a comfort during his time that only He could give. And I remember walking out to my car saying, "God, You showed up. That You're real, and when I ask You show up because You want to not only change this world and redeem it but You want to show me how powerful You are and how good You are."

So here's a promise, church, if you want to know if the Spirit of God is real, ask Him to do something and be uncomfortable in it. Step into a situation where you don't have the answer but God answers through you. Anybody know what I'm talking about? That God shows up, His Spirit is powerful and tangible and He makes Him self known. And you're like, man, "God, You're real because I asked for something only You can do and You did it." And that's a powerful thing that God says, listen, ask something big, ask something that you've tried to fix, that you've tried to work out but you can't. God says n-no, ask Me. I love you, I want to provide for you, and I want to show up in a way that you look at that and say, man, if it wasn't God it wouldn't have happened.

So God says ask so that you can understand more about who He is, His love for you, His character, His conduct. The more you ask the more you know who He is. And the primary pursuit of your life is to know Him, not for Him to give you stuff. You know why oftentimes we think God doesn't answer— because we're asking God to build our throne and not His. We're asking for stuff that we want, not what He wants in our lives. And if He loves you He's not going to give you something that will destroy your soul. And if you pursue it independent of Him, He's not going to have that thing satisfy you. That's why for a lot of us our souls aren't satisfied even though we have a lot of stuff, because your soul is satisfied in Him and only He can give you that. So you can ask Him for a car, you can ask Him for a house, but you're not asking Him for



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something that's actually tangibly what you need. So I think everyone in this room, here's my challenge, you need to ask more of Him—God, I want more of You, show up in my life tangibly, change the things that only You can change.

Another thing He says to do is not just ask so that we have a deeper understanding of who God is, He says that if we are to seek the King and we're before the King, we are to seek Him, seek Him, He uses that word, and when we seek Him there's a promise—He says you will find Me, you will find if you seek. Okay? So what does that mean?

I think of Luke 5, remember the story, I think it's [verse] 17² where Jesus is teaching in a room, like in a house, and oftentimes people crowded around Jesus, not necessarily for what He said because people were often blind to the truth He was speaking at that time, but they loved the miracles. People love to have stuff that benefits them. Right? He's healing people so a crowd gathers around Jesus, and the story is that a bunch of friends—in fact, it doesn't say friends, just says people—grab this paralyzed man and they want Him to get to Jesus. They want access, like Pastor Lee was saying last week, access to Jesus, but the crowd was too many.

So I want you to take your mind out of like the Sunday school version of this. Okay? Bring it into the reality because this is a true story, that these men climbed up on a roof with a paralyzed man. Okay? I



Luke 5:17-26 – Jesus Heals a Paralytic

feel bad for the paralyzed man. Can you imagine how in the world did they do that? I don't know, ropes or whatever, climbed up on the roof and the story is that there was a hole in the roof and these men lowered the paralyzed guy down in front of Jesus. Now put yourself in Jesus' situation. You're in this room filled with people, all of a sudden this paralyzed guy just like comes down and you're just like what in the world. Can you imagine, like, washing the dishes and all of a sudden somebody drops through your roof how crazy that would be? Like, seriously, how crazy? So Jesus sees the heart of these

people, sees the heart of this man's friends knowing that, man, their attitude was whatever it takes to get to Jesus we're in.

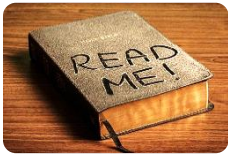
However, we need to do that we're going to navigate our circumstances because we need Jesus, we're going to get to Him, we're going to seek Him out. It wasn't a passive thing, it was hey, listen, we're going to look at every opportunity, every opening we're going through. And so Jesus sees their faith and He heals the man. And when I think of seeking it's in that heart of the idea that we have access to the King of kings through prayer. Like, I want you to feel that humility. Like, the God who created the universe is listening to us when we talk to Him. Anybody ever think about that? Anybody ever stand before an ocean and feel very small? That God, when He says n-no, I want you to talk to Me and I'm gonna listen to you, and I'm gonna – when you seek Me – I'm gonna show up. I'm gonna grab you. I'm gonna make myself known to you, just seek Me. There's a humbleness there. There's a humility that comes with the idea that we have access to the King but we're not called to be lazy, we're called to pursue it in all things. We are to dive into that access.

So I'll give you a story that humbled me because it reminds me that I have the privilege of having access in a way that most of the world hasn't in the history of humanity and we take it for granted. We keep

² See Luke 5:17-26

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our Books dusty on the bookshelf even though we have access to the King of kings through knowledge and the revelation of His Word. How dare we take that for granted.

I remember a few years back I got to go to China on a mission trip and we spent a month teaching English, building relationships with the people, and one of our translators was a believer and he took me to an underground church. And so it was everything you think it was. I snuck into an underground church, it was pretty dangerous, didn't tell my wife until after, but I snuck into the underground church. And I remember going to this small apartment and there were five or six people in this apartment and they had their Chinese Bibles and I walked in—they didn't even have a Bible, they had this little piece of paper and on the piece of paper was like three or four sentences that their underground church representative gave them. And I remember looking at that and I remember saying that these verses are wrong, the references were wrong, the theology was wrong, but that's all they had. True story.

And we spent three hours talking about this piece of paper and they were asking questions about what does the Bible tell us about God and how does that change their whole life knowing that now they know who God is, what He actually is like. He's not this distant, cold thing that you worship when you're at a church and there's this reverence but He's kind of distance—that's not the God of the Bible—He's personal and real and intimate. And so they started to understand that God loves them and He's not distant, that He's near, and it changed them because they have access to the King through this little piece of paper with poor theology.

And then I said to them after about a couple hours, I said, "Hey, I've gone to school for ministry, I know a little bit about the Bible. I would love to answer any questions that you have." And they started pouring questions on me; deep, deep theological questions that they've been asking and thinking but they had no access to an answer. They just loved Jesus anyway. But they had all of this heart seeking—*I want to know what does God think about this and this and what does He say about this*—and they had all of these questions. And I remember as I answered them being so humbled knowing that I had the privilege to understand what the King of the universe had to say about those things. What a gift. And at that moment I thought, man, there is a seeking that's in their heart that I want to never not have.

Any of you who have ever sought the Lord through His Word or sought the Lord through His people or through prayer, how many of you can attest to this because some of you, you know the Word more than me, you're pursuing God more/longer than me, that as you pursue God and you open up new truths, the depth of who He is becomes deeper and deeper—anybody can attest? Amen? That you think you know and then you read the book of Romans again and it blows you away because you missed that and that and that. God is an ocean of truths that's found when you pursue Him, an ocean of truths, not shallow.

So when He says seek He doesn't say seek until you find all of Me. He says n-no, the posture is every day I can wake up and find more in the Word. Every day I can wake up and know more about the God who created me, more about His life and His character and His purpose for my life. It's an ever-pursuing pursuit that God's calling us to. This is what it means to seek; when you seek God you find more intimacy with Him. Because those underground church people they said that I was the answer



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to the prayer and this is their prayer, they said God, teach us more about You. That was their prayer. They didn't understand. Teach us more about You. And they said, "You were an answer to our prayer. You were somebody that could teach us more about God." And they praised God for it. Thank You, Lord, that we had somebody who could teach us more about who You are. What a gift. And I remember coming back thinking *God never, never make me think that I've got this or that I know enough not to pray, that I know enough not to seek*, because God says n-no, when you seek you find more and more of Me.

The third thing He says to do before the King, and I think this is a huge one, He says we are to knock. He says, in fact, when we knock it will be opened to us. And so here's what He's talking about, He's saying knocking is a persistent thing. There's somebody in this doorway, there's somebody on the other side and I need access to them so I'm going to keep knocking. I think of Jesus in Matthew 26 when He prays in Gethsemane, He's the King of kings, I want you to think about this with me. Jesus, God in flesh, prayed. He prayed. God who created all things, when He was in flesh He made a priority to go alone and seek the Father's face, so if you think that you don't need prayer—you're wrong. That somehow God doesn't care about your prayer—you're wrong, because God Himself prayed.



Jesus praying in Gethsemane
Matthew 26 & Mark 14

He's teaching us, Jesus is teaching us the posture of how powerful it is to get alone and to seek the face of God; and to ask Him and to knock and to go to Him because there are things that only He could do. And so Jesus is in that situation so it says He snuck away from His disciples and He's—the King of kings—falls on His face and asks the Lord to take this burden from Him, but He says if it's in your will, Lord, I'm gonna do it because it's about your glory. Father, if you can take this burden from Me take it, but if not, give me the strength to endure. This is what the King of kings is doing, He's posturing before the Lord saying Father, it's about You.

Lord, if You don't want to give me a child, that's okay, it's for your glory, just give me the strength to endure it. This is the posture of Jesus before the Father and this is what we're called to do. And so as He's doing that the story is that He goes back to His disciples and He finds them falling asleep, finds Peter falling asleep, and there's this famous line that says this your spirit is willing, but your flesh is weak. Your spirit is willing but your flesh is weak.³

Here's what Jesus says about prayer is that you in this room, your soul is starving to do this; your soul needs to spend time with its Creator and needs to be in relationship with God, but your flesh is distracted. That's why it's so hard at times to pray, that's why it's so hard at times to be in His Word. Why? Because the enemy knows how much it feeds you so he distracts you. But Jesus is posturing this idea that, listen, I'm only here for a short time, He says to His disciples. So I want you to notice it says He goes back three times, He goes back and falls before the Lord and knocks again, and He goes back and they're falling asleep. And He says why are you falling asleep, I'm only here, He goes back and He knocks again.

So let me put this in a practical application here. How many of you in this room have a prayer that you've given up on? A prayer that you've prayed to God but you don't think He answered and because

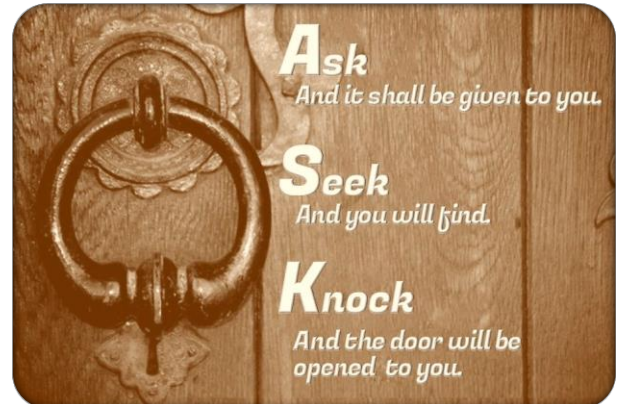
³ Matthew 26:41 & Mark 14:38 [Jesus speaking to Peter]: *"Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."*

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of that you stopped praying it. Let's be honest think about that, what's that prayer? You've got a sibling, a friend, that you've been praying for years and years and nothing has changed and so you're like, "God, You must not answer that door. I'm just done knocking." What's that prayer that you've given up on? But, man, I pray that the Spirit of God if He does anything this morning would do this—that we would knock again. That this is what Jesus is saying when He's saying knock; knock at the door before the Lord as if the enemy is chasing you because the truth is he is and you have access to the King. And here's the game changer, church, if you don't know this, this is the game changer: Jesus gave you a key to the door so now you have access to God and you can walk through it.

And if you knock and He doesn't answer, knock again. Here's why: There's nowhere else to go. There's no other door to knock on. You run away from that door you run toward the world and there's nothing there, there's nothing in the world to go. And so He says knock again. So what is that thing in your life that you need to go to the Lord and say, "Father, there's nowhere else to go. This is something I'm holding, this is a burden I'm holding but it's heavy and I can't hold it anymore. Take it from me." And you knock and you knock because that's the only person that can. I'm laying the foundation for what I'm going to call out this morning in the heart of our church, which is the posture of asking and seeking and knocking because we all desperately need to do that.



I had the privilege of going to a prayer conference a couple years ago in Ohio, some of the pastors, and the whole entire prayer conference, the whole thing was prayer and we pursued God in many different forms of prayer. We lifted Him up in worship through prayer, and we prayed over His Scripture. But at the end of this conference the prayer mediator kind of put a circle of chairs and then He put one chair in the middle and He said, "Okay, for you here," and there were a lot of pastors in this prayer conference, he said, "if any of you have a prayer that you want to kind of sit in the middle and seek the Lord in prayer and ask Him, we're all going to surround you and pray with you."

And I remember this gentleman, uh, probably in his 50's, walked up, looked like he was a pastor, walked up and sat down on that chair and he just started to weep. And not like the weep that a normal grown man would weep, a weep that was like a deep, painful I-just-lost-somebody-dear weep. And so all of us, there was like this silence that happened in that room. And the man is sitting on this chair and he looks up at God and he says, "Father, I have lost my son." He lost his son in a car accident. And he says, "Lord, I am lonely. I miss my son." And he's just pleading, he's looking up and he's crying, and he says, "I lost my son. I'm hurt, I'm in pain." And he's pursuing God, he's pursuing the only One that's going to do something with that.



Man weeping,
crying out to God

And all of us pastors, we were around him but there was nothing we could say that's going to calm that man's heart. It was greater than us. It was too big for us. But yet he was knocking on the throne knowing that God can give him peace that we can't give him. God can give him, comfort that we can't give him. And so here's this man pleading and knocking at the door of God, and we're just pleading along with him for the God of the universe to show up in the way that's mighty because only He can.

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And when I think about knocking I always think of that man who has nowhere else to go but the access to God is where He goes because there's a pain inside of him, he loves God, he believes in God, but there's something there that God needs to fix or God needs to give Him peace and it's not of man. And so he's pleading after the Lord. That's what I think of.

And so Christ, as He talks about asking and seeking and knocking, He uses this comparison at the end to just drive it home. He says okay, here's what I want you to understand about when you go to Me. He says picture the most loving parent that you can imagine—for some of us, maybe we didn't have a loving parent, so you have to picture somebody else, somebody else's family—picture that parent who is loving and imagine a child running to that parent who is hurt and in pain and in need. What would that parent do? This is what Jesus says – that parent would run and grab that child, love that child, speak comfort into that child, embrace that child, make that child feel safe. And Jesus says now remember this, that parent is a sinner. At times that good parent is selfish, is lazy, gets angry at that child, is broken and needs a Redeemer and yet they're good. He says how much more do I love you and I am good, I am perfect, I'm without fault.

So right now in this room, think of maybe your mother's love and God says, "I love you more than her. My love is stronger for you than her love is for you. My love is more steadfast for you than her love is for you. I'm more patient than her, I'm more kind than her, and I can give you something that she can't give you." It doesn't dilute parenting but it elevates our God, doesn't it? He's not cold or distant, but He is the author of all that is good, all that we love, and we find the fullness in Him. And so, church, I'm gonna change the posture right now in this room and I'm gonna call you to respond to the King this morning. God showed up in a mighty way first service and I'm praying—listen, I have no power over this, this is the Spirit of God. And I'm praying that God will tug at your heart to pursue Him in a new way.

So if you're watching online, listen, when I go through some of these things if it's you I would invite you to click on that live prayer, have prayer with our pastors, hey, fall on your knees in your living room with your family and plead out to Jesus. Hey parents, you want to model Christ-likeness, model a pursuit of Jesus that is on your face before your children, that's modeling. Or if you're driving the car pull over, fall on your face on the side of the road, be safe but do it. If you're in this room I'm going to invite you up front to this altar that we've created here up front just to pray out to the Lord. We're gonna have people come alongside of you and pray for you. There's no shame in this. If you fear men – don't. Your priority with God is way more important than what people think of you. This world will continue after you die; your relationship with God is going to matter more.



And so here's the truth. Some of us in this room, we need to ask something of God this morning. Who are you? You need to ask for something. For some of you, you need to ask for God to fix your marriage because your marriage is broken and you pretend it's okay but, man, you've tried counseling and you've tried talking, but it's like this [BANGS HIS FISTS TOGETHER] you clash and there's nothing you can do to fix it, and there's nothing she can do to fix it. You need God to come in and do something only God can do. You need to bring your family before the Lord and say, "God, we need You to lead this. We've tried fixing it the way the world says to fix it, but n-n-no, we need You, we need your power, we need your grace, we need your deliverance from this bondage we have." Some of you need to come and ask for the Lord to change your marriage.



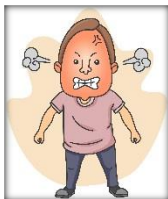
ASK, SEEK, KNOCK, REPEAT

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Some of you, you need to ask for the Lord to overcome addictions in your life. You need to come and say, "Father, I'm addicted to alcohol or drugs or dependency on substances because I've chased after the world, and I've tried to blur the lines between what I actually need by numbing it." And so you're addicted to things and you've tried to stop and you can't, and you need to go to the Lord and say, "Father, I need You in this."

Some of you right now, you're addicted to pornography, you're addicted to bringing images into your mind so that you dehumanize everyone around you. And you've tried to overcome it and you've lost. And you need to go before the Lord and say, "Father, I need You. I need You to do something in me."



Some of you have an angry spirit and you got anger that comes up and only your family sees it, but it's there. And you need to give it to the Lord and say, "Father, this is not the spirit You want me to walk in. I'm asking You to take this anger from me and give me a spirit of gentleness, a spirit of peace. I need You, Lord, in all of these things."

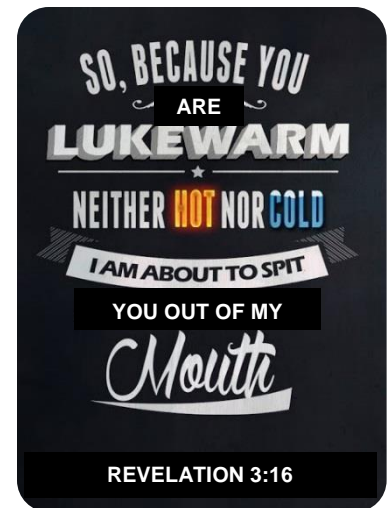
Some of you have big asks today. Don't you dare be afraid to ask, the enemy wins when you don't ask. Listen, if you think this church is about perfect people, you're in the wrong place.

Some of you, you need to seek this morning, you need to seek. I just wrote down a couple examples: You're indifferent towards Jesus, you've always been indifferent toward Jesus. You've grown up in the church or around the church but you've never pursued, you never ask the deep questions of, like, this: "God, if You're real, show me." You never ask that question. You never actually spend time pursuing truth, you've just kind of coasted.

And for some of you, you need to seek God for the first time in your life. You need to come up and say, "Father, I need to know if You are real; and if You're real, I need to know that your presence is real because I need You." And you have a posture of saying, "Father, help me to learn, help me to grow."

Some of you, you've sought approval from the world your whole life. You sought after people to satisfy you and right now you need to change the trajectory of your life; no longer seeking after relationships to satisfy me, houses to satisfy me, wealth to satisfy me, I'm going to change what I'm seeking from stuff to the person of Jesus. I need to change what I spend my time dwelling on, change what I get upset about, change what I fear, and I need to replace it with the pursuit of You. Some of you, you need to seek after the Lord rather than relationships to fill that void. How many broken relationships does it take to realize it's not there? Church, I am inviting you up right now, respond to some of these things, don't let the enemy win.

Here's another one, some of you need to knock at the door again because you've given up on God. Some of you, you'll never say it but you're angry at God because He didn't answer that prayer that you needed to answer. And you're like, "God, this is a good prayer." How many of you have ever said, "God, why aren't You answering this prayer? This is a good prayer." And you've given up knocking because you don't think God has answered—and you need to knock again. You need to knock again about that child



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who does not know Jesus, and you need to start praying for that sibling, praying for that friend, praying for that neighbor, praying for your parent who you don't think will ever come back. But you know God is big enough to transform their lives and to make them fall in love with Him. You need to pursue that again.

There's a burden inside of you that is too heavy and you need to give it to the Lord. It's too heavy and right now you need to give it to the Lord. "God, I have debt and I don't know what to do with it. I keep having collections call me. This pandemic's not helping. I'm overwhelmed with that and I feel alone and I don't know where to go." Give it to the Lord. Bring it to Him and say, "Father, help me to make good decisions, to be wise, to fear You and not other people, to not put my hope in stuff."



Some of you have a desperate need to ask God for something only He can do—ask Him, please ask Him because there's nowhere else to go. But listen, God says if you ask, you will find. If you seek, I'm there, I'm going to give you what you seek. If you knock, I will open the door. This is a promise that our God just made to this church, to us today, in the midst of everything that's happening. Some of us, we have a fearful spirit, we need to give it to the Lord. And so all I'm doing is I'm showing you that there's tons of things every day of your life that you need to bring before the Lord. And so whether it's now or later, bring it before the Lord.

So here's what I'm going to do, thank you for those who responded. We're going to give time in worship, give time in prayer and just seeking the Lord in this place and I'll come back and close.

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KEYWORDS: ask, seek, knock, pray, pursuit, access