

Knock

Matt 7:7

1

7 "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

This verse answers so many of the questions that are so often asked. What about the people who have never heard the word of God? Why do some people believe and some don't? Why do people fall away?

Now, I have no doubt that, when looked at strictly, the three encouragements of this verse, which, really are the same, were first intended for believing Jews. Jesus was speaking to his disciples. Remember, what Christ told them in the verse just prior to this...

Matt 7:6

2

6 "Do not give what is holy to dogs, and do not throw your pearls before swine, or they will trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces.

Was the statement in verse 7 intended for the disciples or for the people they were preaching to? Interesting question. Maybe it was intended for the disciples, when they began to feel that their faith had begun to weaken, and Jesus was telling them that to find the strength they needed to carry on, they only had to ask. Maybe it was intended for the people, that when they decided it was time to seek after God, that the door would be opened. More likely, the answer is all of the above. What we need to understand is that this is a promise from God. It is an assurance to any and to all who seek to find God and to increase their faith. God's promise is that if we will but look for Him, He will make sure we find Him. **3** In each of these exhortations, or encouragements, Christ places a burden, a responsibility to pray, to come to God in humble supplication, asking for His favor. Friends, we need to abound in prayer. We need to depend upon it and know that failure in prayer can and will undermine the foundation of our peace, sap the strength of our confidence, and, without question, will weaken our faith and commitment; but if we abound in prayer to God we can grow strong in the Lord, abide in his love, and we shall be a blessing to those around us. Is prayer an afterthought? Is something to be done only when in trouble? Prayer must be such a joy that and a part of our being that it becomes an essential element of our life. We need to know that it is not only a duty, but a privilege of enormous magnitude that God has given us.

This is what Christ is exhorting His disciples and the people to do. We sometimes focus on the statements without realizing what the statements entail. But, for this lesson, we are going to look at the statements that Christ made and see what applications and thoughts we can draw from them.

Ask! Seek! Knock! And don't stop until you receive; don't stop till you find; don't stop until the door is opened. Therein lays the responsibility that the exhortations of our Savior lay upon us. The burden of asking, seeking, knocking is ours and ours alone. I use to tell my children that the only possible answer to a question never asked is NO. If we don't ask, we can never receive. If we don't seek, we can never find, and if we don't knock, then the door is never opened.

In the three encouragements there seems to be a gradation, an increasing of intensity: as we noted earlier, it is the same thought put a different way, and made more forcible.

4 A) Ask

That is, in the quiet of your spirit, speak with God concerning your need, and humbly beg him to grant your desires: this is a good and acceptable form of prayer.

If, however, asking does not appear to succeed, the Lord would move you to a more concentrated and active motivation;

5 B) Seek

Look for what we can do to help. If we go through our lives doing nothing but asking, then we are shirking our responsibility and will accomplish nothing. That does not, by any means, diminish the importance of asking, it is just the understanding that while God may open the door of opportunity for us, we must still walk through it. And isn't that the third of Christ's encouragements...

6 C) Knock

How much do we really want what God is offering? What are we willing to do for it? Are we willing to knock, seek, and ask? The only conclusion that can be drawn is that we are to ask God for His blessings, we are to seek those blessings, and we are to be willing to take whatever opportunity He presents to share those blessings with others.

Heaven, isn't that what this is all about? If not, why are we here, why bother? The glory of heaven is beyond the wildest imagination of man. The joy of heaven should be the desire and goal of every man.

1 Peter 1:3-4

7

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, **4** to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,

First published in 1677 and then in its complete form in 1678 the Pilgrim's Progress, a book by John Bunyan is the story of man's progress through life in search of salvation. It remains one of the most entertaining allegories of faith ever written. Set against realistic backdrops of town and country, the powerful drama of the pilgrim's trials and temptations follows him in his harrowing journey to the Celestial City. Along a road filled with monsters and spiritual terrors, this Christian man confronts such characters as Worldly Wiseman, Giant Despair, Talkative, Ignorance, and the demons of the Valley of the Shadow of Death. But he is also joined by Hopeful and Faithful. Bunyan, in his book, says concerning the Celestial City,

8 *"Now over the gate there was written, 'Knock, and it shall be opened unto you.'"*

His ingenious allegory is as truthfully instructive as it is fanciful. Isn't that what Christ is instructing, it is our responsibility to come to God through Christ, then He will open.

So, we want to look at some thoughts from what Christ said to His disciples...

- 9
- 1) The Door of Mercy may Appear Closed
 - 2) A Door Implies Access
 - 3) A Promise is Given

Far too often in a man's life, there are times when the future is bleak, has no definition, doesn't seem attainable. It's at times like these that...

- 10
- 1) The Door of Mercy may Appear Closed

I think that that is what is implied in the text...

11 ***"Knock, and it shall be opened unto you"***

One of the first things that I learned as a kid at Halloween was to knock on the door or ring the doorbell to let the people there know that I was on their porch begging for candy. If those who dwell where you seek to enter don't know that you are there, how can they open the door for you? If the door stood wide open to just anyone, there would be no need of knocking; but, and here is the real point...

12 ***The doorway to God is closed only as long as we choose it to be***

To a large extent the apprehension that many feel is the result of their own fears. They think the gate is closed because they feel it ought to be; they feel that if God dealt with them as they themselves would or as they would deal with their fellow-man, He would be so offended with them He would shut the door of His favor once and for all. Man fears that, like those in Noah's day, he will find the door of the ark closed, and he himself shut out to perish. Sin, lies at the door, and blocks it. Our feelings of guilt and hopelessness close up the gate of grace in our judgment. Yet, that isn't so. The gate is not barred and bolted; though, in a certain sense, it may be spoken of as closed, yet in another sense it is never shut. The Lord is glad to open the gates to His grace and mercy to every knocking soul. It is closed only in our apprehension rather than as a matter of fact; sin shuts the door. Entrance into the door of Christ is freely offered to all men...

Rom 5:12, 15

13

12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned— **15** But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many.

God, through Christ, has opened the door, it is fear, shame, and lack of faith and commitment that stand in the sinner's way, and push him back. Please remember this point; when the door to salvation is closed against us, we are the ones who have closed it.

We all know what it means; how continuance in sin makes it ever harder and harder to yield to the knock of Christ, and how evil habits creeping up one after another hold the soul so fast that it

cannot open to His knocking. Jesus has been knocking at some of our hearts ever since we were children; and still he knocks. It is often difficult to understand why we have such a hard time hearing the knock sometimes.

Luke 13:22-25

14

23 And someone said to Him, "Lord, are there just a few who are being saved?" And He said to them, **24** "Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able. **25** Once the head of the house gets up and shuts the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock on the door, saying, 'Lord, open up to us!' then He will answer and say to you, 'I do not know where you are from.'

Do you see what Christ is saying here, once the head of the house closes the door, all the knocking in the world will not get Him to open it back up. That is the dilemma, when do we knock? This brings us to our next point...

15

2) A Door Implies Access

Matt 11:28

16

28 "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.

God, Christ, says...

17

"Come unto me"

Why bother with a door if it remains closed. When we get home from services the dogs hear us and come into the garage to wait for us to open the door to the house. I like to tease them and start to open the door and then close it before they can get in. They get all excited and bark at me. This way when they do get to come in, they are nice and calm about it. If the door stays shut, don't invite someone to come in. Yet that is exactly what God does, He invites man to come in. It reminds me of the Winchester mystery house, you open a door and you're looking at a brick wall. The door is a fake, but nothing is a sham in the house of the Lord. His doors are meant to be open until Christ returns to take all those who have entered through the door home to heaven. They were made for the purpose of allowing man to enter.

John 10:7-9

18

7 So Jesus said to them again, "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. **8** All who came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. **9** I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.

Jesus is absolutely clear in what He says...

19

"I am the door"

This fits perfectly with what He says in...

John 14:6

20

6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.

You see Jesus has openly stated that He is the way, the door, and that no one gets to the Father except through Him. Why is that so hard to understand? Why are there so many who think that they don't need Him, that they can get to God without him?

Therein is the truth of our last thought...

21

3) A Promise is Given

From before the beginning...

1 Peter 1:17-21

22

17 If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay on earth; **18** knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, **19** but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ. **20** For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you **21** who through Him are believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

The coming of Christ was known to God before creation because God knew that the free will choice which He gave to man would lead man away from Him and that if He wanted to have a relationship with His creation He would have to provide an avenue for that to be able to occur. In...

Gen 3:15

23

15 And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel."

Then in...

Gen 12:3

24

3 And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed."

This is the promise made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that in their seed, all nations of the Earth would be blessed. The promise that God has made is that through Jesus Christ, man would have the opportunity to come back to a relationship with Him.

Jesus is the door, the only door by which man can come to God; there is no other name under heaven by which man can be saved.

But as with any door, the decision to go through it is up to us. I guess it depends on how bad you want to get to the other side.