

Living the Quest – Asking and Seeking

Thomas Robinson, *Jesus' Call to the Way 4*, September 3, 2017

Matthew 7:7-12 (Cf. Luke 11:9-13)

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

⁸ For it's always the one who **asks** that receives,
and the one who **seeks** that finds,
and to the one who **knocks** that the door will be opened.

⁹ Or which one of you, if their child asks for bread, would give them a stone? ¹⁰ Or if they ask for a fish, would give them a snake? ¹¹ If you then, evil as you are, know to give **good gifts** to your children, how much more **your Father in heaven will give good things** to those who ask him!

¹² So everything that you want people to do for you, you do just that also for them,
for this is the Law and the Prophets.

Matthew 5:48

⁴⁸ **You therefore shall be perfect**, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Matthew 6:33

³³ But **first seek God's kingdom and his justice**, and all these things will be added to you.

Philippians 3:10-15

¹⁰ My aim is to know Jesus and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, becoming shaped by his death, ¹¹ that by whatever path I may arrive at the resurrection from the dead. ¹² It's certainly not that I already obtained this or have already been brought to perfection, but I press on to make it my own, because Messiah Jesus has made me his own. ¹³ Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself to have made it my own. One thing rather: forgetting the things behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Messiah Jesus. ¹⁵ Let those of us who are mature think this way.

John 4:10

¹⁰ Jesus answered the Samaritan woman, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water."

Matthew 5:42; 6:8, 11

^{5:42} Give to the one who asks you, and don't turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.

^{6:8} Your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

^{6:11} Give us today our daily bread.

Matthew 11:28-30

²⁸ "Come to me, all who labor hard and are burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take on yourselves my yoke, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest / refreshment for your lives (*psyché*). ³⁰ For my yoke is good, and my burden is light."

Matthew 13:44-46

⁴⁴ "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

⁴⁵ Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls, ⁴⁶ who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it."

Matthew 16:25

²⁵ Any who want to save their life will lose it, but any who lose their life for my sake will find it.

Luke 11:5-8

⁵ Jesus said, "Which of you who has a friend will go to him at midnight and say, 'Friend, lend me three loaves, ⁶ for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; ⁷ and he'll answer, 'Don't bother me; my door's locked, and my children are with me in bed. I can't get up and give you anything'? ⁸ I tell you, even if he won't get up and give him anything because he's his friend, yet because it so breaks convention, he'll get up and give him whatever he needs."

Luke 15:31-32

³¹ And the father said to the older brother, "Son, ... ³² It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found."

What is Life with Jesus all about?

When we're called to Jesus' Way, what is life like? Asceticism? Health and wealth? Hard work and simplicity? Jesus stresses action, hearing & doing – a house built on rock. How? Start: Seek God's rule. End: You shall be perfect. In between: A quest for life, surrounded by God's care, learning God's love that challenges law & ordinary wisdom. Paul experienced the impact of Jesus. Conventional evaluations of life overturned. Learning Jesus. Releasing the past. Pressing toward the goal of God's call to res. life.

Knocking, Seeking, Asking

Jesus challenged: Ask, Seek, Knock. Often interpreted as prayer. Yes, and also the whole of life: Seek, Knock. Taking off blinders. We don't know how much life can be: How the dimension of God (God's Kingdom) changes every possibility, view, goal. We've so much to learn. Jesus calls us to receive gifts, make discoveries, open closed doors. Ask – be given; receive. Daily bread. Everything is a gift of God. By asking for the very things I work to earn, I learn to see that even my abilities are a gift of God. I learn to see the reality of a created world, a gift of God's love. A world expansive and holy. Ask for water – Living water. Ask boldly. Learn to be the instrument of God's giving. Seek – find. Jesus loved this. Implied: We've lost something; we're lost. Seeking pearls, finding one. Finding treasure. Losing life and finding life, rest. Celebration of finding. Jesus' signs are about giving back life (not things). Jesus always has more to find. Knock – open. Closed doors. No fear, knock! This is God's world. Jesus praises faith that boldly breaks convention. Bleeding woman, Canaanite, Centurion. Knock at midnight.

Shaped for Action by the Generosity of God

The process of shaping life is simple once our eyes are opened to God. Start from the best that you know. Most everyone knows to give good gifts to your children. We also see what it's like as a child to be totally dependent on our parents' gifts of love. Think about that in relation to God: How much more! That's the world you live in. Trust God and learn to experience the life of discovery, boldness, receiving, opening. Then actively do that love for others. Learn the joy of God's life. Love enemies, forgive. Refuse anxiety and judgment. Give secretly, generously. It's a big, wonderful, agenda: Everything you ask, seek, do that with joy for others. You'll be like your Father.