

PACIFIC RIM BIBLE STUDIES POLICY

Thank you for entering our site. The notes and any other material that may be on it are supplied to you in grace; there is no charge for them. You may download the notes from the site to your own computer; you may make copies of them for your personal use, and you may distribute them to other people, as long as it is done without charge and the entire study is kept intact. They are not for sale at any price. And, as long as you do so with the web site address on them: www.pacificrimbible.com. This is also a notice of intent to copyright.

GRACE GIVING POLICY

There is no charge for the Pacific Rim Bible Studies on line studies, or for any other doctrinal material that Pastor Phillips teaches. Grace is not for sale at any price! Bible Doctrine, whether in its taped, printed, or on line form will be supplied to the Believer-Priest who is positive to the Word of God as long as the Lord supplies. Believers are free to give in grace toward the Tapes and Publications ministry of Pastor Phillips, as the Lord leads them, and may send their grace gifts to:

BEREAN BIBLE CHURCH
1725 EAST STREET
REDDING, CA 96001
USA

SALVATION

If you are not a believer in Jesus Christ, or aren't sure and would like to become one, then you need to believe that Jesus Christ was and is the Son of God, that he was God who became a man, that he lived a sinless and perfect life, keeping the Law of God perfect in every way, that he kept faith perfectly, and that he was crucified on that cruel cross for your sins, mine and the entire world- he died for our sins! His death on the cross paid the penalty fully, one time for all sins that we have ever committed and that we will ever commit. He died; he went down into the bowels of the earth, even into Hell, and was raised from the dead on the third day in a resurrected, eternal body. He ascended back into heaven, was seated at the right hand of God, and is now Lord over heaven and earth. He is coming again to judge the world, to raise the dead, where he will give an eternal, resurrected, glorified body to everyone that has believed on him as their Lord and Savior, and to establish his kingdom one earth.

You come become a Christian right now as you read this, by personally placing your faith and trust in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior; believing that he is God's only begotten Son, that he died on the cross for you and that he was raised from the dead and is now seated in heaven at the right hand of God the Father. *"Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved."* Acts 16:31a And when you do trust Christ, and Christ alone, as your Lord and Savior, then go to God the Father in prayer and tell him so. Tell him that you have believed on his Son, thank him for his Son, and thank him for forgiving your sins and saving you! *"That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord", and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved."* Romans 10:9,10 *"For, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."* Romans 10:13 *"Therefore, being justified by faith (declared righteous), we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."* Romans 5:1

November 2008

H. 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 και οταν στηκητε προσευχομενοι αφιετε ει τι εχετε κατα τινος ινα και ο πατηρ υμων ο εν τοις ουρανοις αφη υμιν τα παραπτωματα υμων

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.

“If ye have ought against any”, or, “If you hold anything against anyone”. ει τι εχετε κατα τινος. The word for *against* is *kata* and it denotes having an hostile attitude toward someone. This covers the entire anger complex of bitterness, resentment, malice, etc.. And it deals with not only people in the present time, but people in our past that have hurt us.

The word for *have* is the present active indicative of echo, to have and to hold. The present tense tells us that this is something that is going on in the present, but it could also be linked to something that went on in the past! In our culture we would say, “hanging on to something”. So it's describing the believer who is still angry over something. Now they might be angry over something that has recently happened, or they may still be angry over something that happened a long time ago.

The word *if* is in the first class condition, which is, if you are hanging on to your anger over something, and let's assume for the sake of the study that you are, then you need to forgive them. Or it may be anger that pops up from time to time over a past event.

The solution for anger is forgiveness. Here we find that, if we are presently angry, then that anger blocks our faith and our prayers. Meaning that God won't grant them. Now something may have recently happened that we are still “steaming” over. Or something could have happened a long time ago, even in our childhood, that we never fully dealt with and that anger over the incident still pops up.

The word for *forgive* is *aphiete*, which is the present active imperative of aphieimi, which means to let it go. **Nothing can be done about the things that happened to us in the past, and revenge tactics will not give us the peace we need either. There is only one way that we can deal with the hurt that we have suffered, and there is so much injustice in this world, (but not from God), and the only way to deal with it all is forgive!**

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, are 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!

I. From faith unto faith.

“For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.” Romans 1:17 εκ πίστεως ες πίστιν

We might stop and take a look at the necessity for living by faith in the lives of all Christians. We are saved by faith, (in Christ); we are empowered by the Holy Spirit as we live in the sphere of faith; and we are to walk by faith. Faith in God; faith in his promises; faith in Bible Doctrine.

Now this translation has translated *ek pisteos eis pistin* as “from faith to faith”. The preposition ek denotes the **origin** of something, that something has come from, or out of, something else, or that it is the source of something, and in some cases it denotes the material out of which something else is made. Iron comes out of, or from, ore, because the ore contains iron. So what we have is “out of faith” telling us that one must begin with faith first, and from that faith, then one is able to go on in faith unto faith.

The next preposition is *eis* used with the accusative, which is used to indicate the **goal! One goes from the source of faith with the goal of going toward faith**. But *eis* has several implied concepts found in it. First there is the concept of **direction**. One is coming out of something and heading in a certain direction. Second, it has the concept of **goal**, as noted, where someone is coming out of or from something, but heading toward a certain goal. Third, *eis* also has the idea of **motion** found in it, in that, it is moving in a certain direction toward a goal. And four, it has the idea of **penetration**, into, where it **actually arrives at its goal**.

So what it's telling us is that the believer in Christ is going to be going from one concept of faith in their life, and from that concept centered around faith, they are to be going toward another concept centered around faith, *from faith to faith*, or, *out of faith unto faith*. Or, for the purpose of our study, **we go from one faith idea to the next faith idea**.

These faith concepts, that we are continually going toward as our goals in life, become faith objectives. And because it is faith that works in accordance with God's grace, then these faith objectives are also grace objectives. And as the believer in Christ goes from faith to faith, from one grace objective to the next grace objective, his/her life now becomes characterized by faith.

And, as we have also seen, as the believer lives in the sphere of faith, **they will be living in the sphere of the power of the Holy Spirit**. So what that means, is that as the believer in Christ's life is characterized by going from one faith objective to the next faith objective, they will be maximizing the amount of time that they are filled with the Holy Spirit in their life!

It's a win win situation. As the believer goes from one grace blessing to another; they will be filled with the Holy Spirit much more often in their lives; they will have purpose, goal and direction in life, instead of just wandering around aimlessly and wasting their lives; and their mental attitudes will be characterized by optimism, enthusiasm and hope!

But to do that they have to start living by faith. And the first point of faith that they start from is their faith in Christ as their Savior. God gave them, (and others), the faith to believe on Christ, and he will give them the faith for the rest of their journey. And he does this through the teaching of His Word. But they need to make the decision to live by faith, and then they need to make the decision to embark on their first faith venture, to the second, and so on, until they go to be with the Lord.

J. The powers of the coming age.

*“For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have **tasted** of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, **and the powers** of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.”*

One of the privileges that the Royal Family of God will be exercising throughout eternity, in addition to ruling with Christ under God, is having access to the unlimited power of God. It's not that **we** have this power, the power belongs to God. But we will have access to that power, through God granting us our requests throughout eternity.

Many Christians incorrectly think that to “fall away”, *parapipto*, means to lose their salvation. But *parapipto* was a nautical term and what it actually meant was to drift off course. At one time these believers were attending a local church, taking in Bible Doctrine and living life in the filling of the Holy Spirit. But because they caved in to the social and economic pressure of the religionists, they drifted off course from grace by going back to the temple, thus crucifying the Lord afresh. And as long as they were doing that they couldn't be spiritually renewed.

They had a taste of the powers to come in eternity future that God has for the entire Royal Family of God. They had seen the power of God operating in their lives as he answered their prayers. They had seen his power operate in the sphere of their faith. But they turned away from that to go back to religiosity in the temple. When one turns from the faith dynamic, they always turn to religion or some other activity of the flesh nature.

K. The Word of God develops faith.

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” Romans 10:17 αρα η πιστις εξ ακοης η δε ακοη δια ρηματος θεου

It is through the communication of the Word of God, and the doctrines that it teaches, that the believer in Christ can develop their faith. Faith, that is, biblical faith, is not indigenous to people. To have it, we must receive it, and we receive it through the source of God which he gives to us through his Word.

So faith, that is, *the faith*, originates from the source of hearing the teaching of the Word of God. It comes to us through the instrumental agency, dia, of the doctrinal communication of God's Word. Which also means that if there is no doctrinal teaching, or no accurate teaching of the Word, then the believer in Christ will not be able to develop their faith.

The subject matter in view in the passage is believing on Jesus Christ as your Savior. *“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” Romans 10:9 And then calling on the Lord to be saved, as a manifestation of that faith. *“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” Romans 10:13**

Paul, then, goes on to explain where this faith to believe on Christ comes from, or what its source is. It comes from the Word of God itself. More specifically through the doctrines pertaining to the person and work of Jesus Christ, dia rhematos theou, or the Gospel. Thus establishing the pattern of how faith is developed in the soul of the believer; it comes through the teaching of the Word of God.

L. Asking, Seeking and Knocking. A.S.K.

*“**Ask**, and it shall be given you; **seek**, and ye shall find; **knock**, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.” Matthew 7:7,8*

We certainly would not want to have a study on having Faith Ideas; **ideas** inspired by faith, **decisions** made by faith, being **empowered** through the exercise of faith, the **activity** of faith, and faith **success** without incorporating the need for the believer to be **asking**, **seeking** and **knocking**!

When we take the three concepts of asking, seeking and knocking together we end up with the one idea of **persistence**! If we have a faith idea, then we are going to have to be persistent toward seeing it become reality. We will have to keep on asking, keep on seeking and keep on knocking. We will need to keep on praying to God; keep on exploring new avenues and keep on looking for opportunities.

The word for ask is the second person plural, present active imperative of the verb *aiteo* and was the petition of an inferior party to his superior for him to grant something, such as the subject of a kingdom going before his king to grant a request. For Christians, it is the believer in Christ going before God the Father in prayer with a request.

The first thing that we see is that it is in the second person plural telling us that this applies to all believers in Christ. All believers in Christ are to be placing their requests to the Father in prayer, in the name of Jesus Christ, for their many needs and bonafide desires.

The next thing that we see is that it is in the active voice showing that the believer in Christ is volitionally responsible to do so. No one else can do this for them, for as believer priests they are individually and personally responsible for their own lives and their priesthood function, which includes the matter of prayer to God.

The next thing that we see is that this matter of asking God is in the imperative mood, the mood of command, which tells us that the Lord is commanding all believers to be placing their requests before God the Father. And the last thing is that it is in the present tense, which tells us that this is to be an ongoing function in our lives. Not once or twice then quit, but to keep on asking.

So what this tells us is that, if there is something in life that we want to do, or something we want, (not a lust), or something we need, or something that we should be doing, **or if we have a faith idea**, then we're commanded by the Lord to go to the Father and keep on asking him for it. Not once or twice and give up, but to **keep on asking him for it!**

We have the use of the iterative present, which means that something is done continually at intervals. Which means that if we keep on asking God in intervals, and keep on doing that, then it will become a practice for us and that's where we want to get at in our prayer life.

The use of the imperative mood here not only denotes a command, but it also tells us that we have been brought under authority. Christ may have set us free, but we are still mandated to obey. The Lord had instructed the disciples, which applies to us also, that we can ask anything of the Father in his name and the Father will grant it. Now maybe believers will do this of their own free will and maybe they won't. But if a command is introduced, then that means we are ordered to be asking God. And by obeying the command we end up doing what we should have been doing all along and all is fine.

1. “Ask, and it shall be given you;” αιτειτε και δοθησεται υμιν

Now he commands, “Keep on asking”, and then he goes on to tell what will happen when we do! “And it will be given to you”! And he uses the future passive indicative of the verb *didomi* to give, which carries the idea of a king granting a favor.

Being found in the future tense it tells us that the receiving of the request will occur at some time in the future, which introduces the idea of the time factor. The believer should not get discouraged when he doesn't get the answer to his prayers right away. He needs to see that there will always be a time factor involved. It may be a short time, and it may be a long time, but always the receiving of the thing asked from God will occur at some time in the future.

The next thing that we notice is that the future tense is used with the indicative mood which brings out the idea of certainty. Telling us that if we keep on asking the Father, then we can count on him granting our request. And with the gnomic use of the future tense, action that can be expected to happen under usual conditions, we have it that we can expect God will grant it under normal conditions. An example of an abnormal condition was when Ruchbah was requesting something from the Lord in Jeremiah 45, but was told by God that he was about to destroy the nation, so don't expect great things.

And with the use of the passive voice, the **voice of grace**, it shows that we receive the action of the verb and that it is God the Father who is doing it. The believer cannot supply it for himself; he cannot do it for himself; all he can do is receive it from the hand of God, but he is responsible for praying for it. And with the use of the imperative mood in *asking*, we see that we are compelled in love by the authority of Christ to be asking God for things, so we can be blessed.

2. “Given to **you**”, is the dative plural of *you*, which, in the plural, denotes all believers in Christ, and it is the dative of advantage, which means that it is to our advantage to be receiving things from God. Christ commands us to continually be asking the Father for things because he wants us to be blessed!

Christians need to develop the practice of living in the spiritual life dynamic that God has provided to all of us. But how do we do that? **How do we get out of our bad patterns of living and into the good pattern of living in the spiritual life dynamic?** Which is what the idea of godliness is all about.

The grammar of the Greek tells us how this is done. We have to begin somewhere and start doing what God wants us to do, so there is introduced the imperative mood, the mood of command. **If we're not doing the right thing**, then you will find the arist imperative used to command us to start an action that we are not presently doing, “**start doing this or that**”. **If we're doing the wrong things** in our lives, then you will find the present imperative used with the negative particle, *me*, which is a command to “**stop doing this or that**”. And **if we're already doing the right thing**, then you will find the present imperative used which means, “**to keep on doing it**”.

Now that we've begun to do what God wants us to do, then we need to start doing it more and more. **So we go from not doing something at all, to the place where we're doing it more and more. And from there we want to get to the place where it becomes a present active participle, that is, we are now doing it all the time as a way of life.**

And this takes us to the practice of *asking*, *seeking* and *knocking*. God wants us to keep on asking, to keep on seeking and to keep on knocking. Not just once in awhile, but all the time as a way of life. And if we do, **then we will continually be receiving, finding and having doors opened for us.**

3. “Seek” – ζητετε – present active imperative – *zeteo*

Zeteo goes way beyond just having a desire for something, or merely wishing about things. It involves the mind, heart and will all motivating the body to a course of action. If someone was seeking a large pocket of gold nuggets on some creek up in the mountains that he had heard about, he wouldn't be sitting on the couch wishing he had it; **he would be up there looking for it! That's seeking.**

Thinking about it isn't seeking! Talking about it isn't seeking! Seeking entails action! Seeking is not passivity! Seeking means that you're to get out and go after it! Which means that you've got to want it bad enough to go after it!

The active voice tells us that we're volitionally responsible to keep on seeking our faith ideas, no one else can do it for us. The imperative mood tells us that we're commanded to keep on seeking after our faith ideas. And the present tense tells us that we're not to give up, but to be continually seeking after our faith ideas in life. And all this speaks of the idea of **persistence!**

And one also wants to remember, that, as the believer is continually seeking after the fulfillment of his faith ideas in life, that means that he will constantly need the empowerment of God to do so, then he will be continually living by faith and constantly filled with the Holy Spirit!

4. “And you will find” - και ευρησετε – future active indicative – *heurisko*

Again the gnomic future of *heurisko* is used to tell us that finding what we're seeking for can normally be expected to occur under usual conditions, but also with the idea of absolute certainty. As seeking is an act of faith, so is finding is the result of that act of faith.

And we want to notice and emphasize the use of the active voice in this where the subject produces the action of the verb, which in this case, is both seeking and finding. As the believer in Christ obeys the Lord and is actively seeking his/her faith ideas, then they will be finding them. **It's our faith activity of seeking that causes us to be finding the things that we are looking for.**

And by the use of the imperative mood of command we see that the Lord's heart expressed in all this because he wants us to find them. He wants us to have faith goals, be actively seeking after them, and we will find them! So he commands us to keep on asking, to keep on seeking and to keep on knocking.

But we also want to note, that **if we are not seeking, then we won't be finding anything!** The farmer wants an abundant harvest of his crops. So he seeks out the right seed, the best fertilizer, the optimum time to plant, the best hired help that he can find, he works long and hard hours, then one day he walks out the door to see a field full of his crops!

And once again, the future indicative not only emphasizes the absolute certainty of this, but it also brings out the idea of the **time factor**. Whatever it is that we are seeking will be found, it will be discovered, but **at some time in the future!** Too many Christians get discouraged in all this when they don't have their faith ideas or dreams realized right away. Remember, it was many, many years before Abraham got the son he wanted so much.

So this introduces the idea of patience, or patiently waiting. One of the concepts found in the faith rest life is **waiting patiently for the Lord to come through**. It may seem like forever for us, but he always comes through with his provisions and blessings. So what we have to do is encourage our faith by looking into the Word of God.

5. “Knock” - κρουετε – present active imperative – *krouo*

In the present active imperative we again have the command *to keep on knocking*, which not only shows **persistence** in the believer's faith and action, but **aggressiveness** as well. This type of faith is not the type where one passively sits around waiting for things to come to you, but the kind of faith where one is aggressively going out seeking for God to bless you.

It is well known that the birds of the air belong to God and he uses them to scatter seed to the four corners of the world. Yet the **farmer** does not passively sit around and wait for God to use his birds to plant the desired seed in his field! It's just the opposite. He is actively at work, in faith, from sunup to sundown working his field and planting his seed in the faith-hope that he is going to have a good harvest. His job is to plant the seed, but God is the one who gives the harvest.

The hard working **salesman** knows that to make money, so he can feed his family, he needs to sell his product. But to sell his product he has to see people! Which means that he has to get up, leave his home, and go out and knock on doors, whether residential or business. And if he doesn't get any results on the first door, then he keeps knocking on doors until he does!

Too many believers misapply the concept of faith using it only in a passive sense, where it should be applied in an active sense in many instances. There is a place for passive faith in our Christian walk, but what this passage is calling for, with the active voice where the subject produces the action of the verb and the imperative mood, is an **active, aggressive faith** where the believer keeps on asking, keeps on seeking and keeps on knocking!

6. “And the door will be opened to you” - και ανοιγησεται υμιν – future passive indicative – *anoigo*

Literally, “*And it shall be opened to you*”, or, “*A door will be opened to you*”. Opening a door can be used literally, where a real door is opened, or it can be used figuratively for the opening of **a door of opportunity**. And this is what we have here used in the future passive indicative which stresses the absolute certainty of it.

We want to notice that **asking** is an act of faith, **seeking** is an act of faith, and **knocking** is an act of faith. And each one of them have their results: receiving, finding and doors being opened. **But take note; receiving , finding and having doors opened only comes to those who obey and act in faith!**

The passive voice is used here to show that someone else, (God), is the one who opens the door. It is Jesus Christ who opens the doors that he wants us to go through and closes the doors that he doesn't. “*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.*” Revelation 3:8

The translators have put it as, “*a door will be opened to you*”, when the original has it as, “*it will be opened to you*”. Either way, the idea is the same, for one would be knocking on a door. One thing that stands out is the lack of the definite article, the. **A** door will be opened, which tells us that one never knows what is going to happen, which way the turn of events will go. One may be going out in life seeking various opportunities having a certain thing in mind. Yet all the doors he knocks on, (and remember you have to keep knocking), have no opening for that which he had in mind. Yet he keeps on knocking in faith for he knows that something will turn up. And then a door is opened! Not the one, perhaps, that he had in mind, but something altogether different. So what does he do? If a door has been opened for him, and God is the one who opened it, he goes through!

7. “For every one that asketh receiveth” - και και ε αιτων λαμβανει – present active participle – *aiteo*, present active indicative – *lambano*

We now have a change in grammar. The first time he uses the imperative mood commanding them to keep on *asking* and the future tense to tell them that, if they do, then they will *receive*. Now he's using the present active participle of *asking* to show that by continually obeying his command to *ask* this will become a practice for them, and with the present tense of receiving he's telling them that *continually receiving* things from the Father will be an on-going reality for them in life.

Continued obedience to Christ's command to keep on asking the Father for your faith goals and ideas will result in a habitual practice, which in turn, will result in the believer in Christ continually reaping God's grace blessings. God honors faith because it is in keeping with his grace. As the believer in Christ is filled with the Holy Spirit, and consequently is inspired with faith ideas, which become faith goals, and as he asks the Father to make them happen, then he will be receiving them!

8. “And he that seeketh findeth” - και ο ζητων ευρισκει - present active participle – *zeteo*, present active indicative – *heurisko*

We have the exact grammatical construction with this command as we do with the other one. The first time he uses the imperative mood commanding them to keep on *seeking* and the future tense to tell them that, if they do, then they will *be finding*. Now he's using the present active participle of *seeking* to show that by continually obeying his command to *seek* this will become a practice for them, and with the present tense of *finding* he's telling them that *finding* the things that they are *seeking as a way of life* will be a continual reality in their lives.

Pas, all, is found at the beginning of the passage to tell us that this is open to all believers, but the answer, **the benefits, come only to those who do it!** Thinking about asking, seeking and knocking is not the same as doing it! Neither is talking about it. **It is the one who is asking that will be receiving!** **It is the one who is seeking that will be finding!** **It is the one who is knocking that a door will be opened to him and only to him!**

9. “And to him that knocketh it shall be opened.” - και τω κρουοντι ανοιγησεται - present active participle – *krouo*, future passive indicative – *anoigo*

The use of the future indicative here is to be taken in the sense of absolute certainty. It is an absolute certainty that doors will be opened by God, (they don't open themselves), **but they will only be opened to the one, (present participle), who is knocking on them!**

We also want to note the **progression of the ideas** in this passage. **It goes from asking, to seeking, to knocking.** And it all **begins with a faith idea.** The believer in Christ has **an idea** inspired by faith. He **believes** that this idea can come to pass, that it will be. In faith, he then takes it to the Father and **asks** him to make it happen. Now, in faith, he goes out **seeking** the fulfillment of this idea wherever the Holy Spirit may lead him. And in faith he goes out **knocking** on doors for the opportunity. Each concept more bolder and aggressive than the one before it.

For example, a believer might come up with the idea of getting a degree in this field or that. He believes God can make it happen, so he goes to the Father and asks him to do it. He gains entrance into college, passes all the required courses, and then one day he has his degree. But now what? He now asks the Father to get him a job, he then goes out seeking employment, knocking on door after door seeking some door of employment to open up for him.

M. The a fortiori argument.

“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?” Mt. 7:9-11

If a human father, who is evil, knows how to give good gifts to his son, how much more will our heavenly Father, who is perfectly righteous, give us good gifts! If sinful man reaches this level of behavior, then how much more above that is our loving, righteous Father!

This same *a fortiori* argument is found in Romans 8:32, “*He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?*” If God gave us his Son to pay the penalty for our sins, that why wouldn't he give us all things? If he has already done the most for us at our worse, then why wouldn't he bless us and our faith ideas as his children?

And even this *a fortiori* argument is designed by God to give us faith. The faith we need to come to him with our prayer requests, and the faith needed to act on our faith ideas! What it does is reveal the intentions and love that the Father has toward us to give us confidence before him.

What this passage in Matthew teaches in the matter of our faith and prayers is **persistence**. Faith? Yes. Patience? Yes. And most definitely persistence. Persistence in continually going back to God in **prayer**, until he grants our requests. Continually **seeking** that which we're looking for: job, housing, education, answers to our lives, etc.. And continually **knocking** on the doors of opportunity, until God finally opens up one for us.

What we must guard against is sitting around on our laurels in pessimism, hopelessness, unbelief, or an incorrect application of faith, but to take this matter of faith aggressively, not only before God, but on out into life expecting God to come through for us. We've seen the passive side of faith and the active; **here the active side of faith is aggressive!**

If we've come up with some faith ideas, ideas inspired by faith, and they are not lust ideas, then we need to start making faith decisions toward their realization, place them before the Father, and start moving in the direction of their fulfillment. And that means we are going to have to start asking God, seeking after them and knocking on doors of opportunity.

It may very well be that America is going to be hit with some real economic problems, many areas of the country are already suffering. And we may wonder how are we going to handle it, or get through it? So what are we going to do? Sit around feeling sorry for ourselves, or worrying about things? Or, are we going to take our faith and our relationship with God as our Father and by faith take action?

We've put our faith in Jesus Christ as our Savior; we're now sons and daughters of the Most High God; we have the indwelling Holy Spirit; we have the peace of Christ; we have the Word of God and all its promises; we have the faith that he has given us; we have his promises...so, we're going to keep on asking him to supply the food, the money, the jobs, our needs in logistical grace. Our whole person is going to keep on seeking those things from the Lord. And we're going to keep on knocking on the doors of opportunity, any door, until he opens one up! Why? Because he promised that's why!

Pastor Mike

