

Prayer - God keeps His promises. ^{God not a man unfaithful} when He breathes the earth shakes.

Hymn - 432 (129)

S. Item -

Reading - Luke 11. 1-13.

Ask, seek, knock.

Luke 11. 9. V

- Our task today is to simply understand this verse.

• They are the famous words of the Lord.

- They are spiritual (the Bible is a book for the soul primarily).

• He's not giving us tips on etiquette or persistence in gaining any earthly access.

• He's instructing us, in that sublimely simple way He has in how to come to Him as God.

- So, we would do well, not only to understand but, to obey His instruction for us.

First

- Let us break the ~~verse~~ into its simple elements.

V

Ask

Seek

Knock

given

find

opened.

- He promises - and never breaks His word.

What is this all about?

- Well, always remember not to take verses in isolation. The Bible is one.
- The rest of the Bible is a commentary on any one verse.
- We do have examples of people doing this very thing mentioned in our verse.
- We also have examples of people coming to the Lord in a wrong way.

So let's look at a few.

Firstly Asking.

Why does a person ask?

- In order to get something
- A reply
- A response
- An answer
- A much needed pardon.

But some ask wrongly.

- They may ask questions simply to put up barriers.
- They don't really want an answer.
- They seek just to confound the one asked of.

Take Herod for example. Luke 23: 8-12.

- He treated Jesus like some earthly celebrity or illusionist.
- He came proudly exerting his authority over Jesus questioning him.

He did this more out of curiosity than to seek wisdom.

He was a man of the world and wanted to be impressed.

But the Lord does not impress the earthly minded and will not reveal Himself to such.

"He answered him nothing"

- Herod's true heart is revealed in (v11) "Herod ~~and~~ ^{with} his men of war set him at naught" (those who trusted in violence and mere physical outward strength - base men as shallow as a puddle of water!)

They counted Him as nothing - who was the King of Creation!

And some people do the same today.

They pay Christ some mind they even ask some questions

But they're more ready to mock than to learn. He will not reveal Himself to such.

They will receive no reply from God.

They ask - but they do not ask aright. some even pray but not right.

The asking the Lord is speaking of is prayer.

But a true, humble & sincere prayer of faith

Not a false, proud & insincere prayer of unbelief.

James 4:3 "Ye ask, and receive not... Don't treat God like a genie!"

- But look at one who asked aright.
- Read Matt 8. 5-13.
- The centurion came humbly, not like Herod.

He was a Man of strength & authority but he came to the Lord as King.

- This is how we should pray - knowing our place

"Our Father ^{which} ~~is~~ art in heaven"
 - The Lord had just taught them this.

- Next we have to Seek

- Why does a person seek?
- Because they're looking for something
- They may need it desperately
 - like food, or water
 - or clothing
 - or shelter
 - or even the truth.

- But some say they seek, but are like Lord Nebuchadnezzar, who only saw what he wanted to see and so when the French navy came near is reported to have said "I see no ships" because he put the telescope to his blind eye. He didn't want to see.

- Or they seek like the thief for a policeman. It has been said that man in his natural rebellious state seeks God like a thief seeks a policeman - Namely NOT AT ALL!

- Pilate is an example of this type of seeking.

- The Lord was brought before him. He didn't come to the Lord.
- He would rather have had nothing to do with the man.
- The Lord even spoke to him about truth but Pilate didn't want it.

□ John 18.38.

He was so false he didn't even recognize the King of Truth when he was standing before him plainly.

- But look at the true seeker. There was one who was so anxious to see the Lord, but knew he was small. So he climbed to get a better vantage point.

- What are we doing in order to see the Lord better?
- Climbing takes a bit of effort.
- So does attending the meetings
- So does reading the word & good books to help.

- Of course I talk of Zacchaeus.

Luke 19.2

- He had sought riches and found them vain.
- Now he sought the Lord with effort, he ran before the crowd even, he knew where the Lord would pass

And what was the result?

The Lord looked at and saw him

And spoke to him.
Even came to his house and taught him graciously.

What a different response to Herod & Pilate.

This is how we should seek God.
Zacchaeus found Him that day and so shall we.

Then what about knocking

It is the knocking on a door in order that it be opened and the person enter.

Note, there is something to be done
But what is a knock!
A simple act of faith.

We knock on the door of the Kingdom with hopeful expectation

knowing the Lord has bidden us to do it. Promising to open.
But some knock and almost at once seem to say "There's no one in"

Later He says: Even we being evil know how to give good gifts to our children - how much more God.

"I'll try, but I'll get no answer"
They are ready to give up even before they've really knocked.

Sometimes we must knock more than once - we must show the Lord our earnestness by our persistence - For where else are we to go?!

Those who knock so as not to be opened, knock faintly so as not to be heard.

They ask not to be answered.
These knock as if to say "Don't open the door."

Is this our prayer?
It asks not to be answered.

Ask yourself - Do you really want the door to be opened and to come into the Kingdom? If so -

then knock that door!
It has been hammered on before, and opened, and will be again.

Who knocked in the wrong way?
The rich young man.
"What should I do" He said.

~~Ex 18:28~~ Matt 19.16

He was self righteous (He thought he could save himself)
He didn't see the Lord as God just a 'good master'
He loved his riches and possessions more than God.

Such a man is too 'puffed up' in self righteousness to fit in the 'narrow gate'

Such a man is too mistaken to even know whose house he knocks at

Such a man has his arms too full of worldly possessions, pleasures and 'precious' things to even be able to knock properly.

Who knocked in the right way?

- The woman who grabbed the hem
Luke 8.43 even in the crowd.

- In Matthew we learn what she was thinking
Matt 9.21 "for she said within herself, if I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole."

Do the same!

reach out for the Lord in faith.

- Grab His hem like the women and be whole.
- Shake Him to wake Him as the disciples in the boat in the storm.

• Knock on the door like the man in the Lord's parable.

Luke 11.5-8

These are the verses we find just before our verse.

They teach us well.

so let us do the same.

- Being not only just hearers of the word but doers also.

Ask, seek, knock (He is the God who will be prevailed upon) But come correctly.

See the God with whom we have to do.

He is the God who will call us to account one day - Find Him

• settle your accounts through Christ's redemption before that day

Ask the Lord for mercy & never question His character. See Job 38.1-4 to put us in our place. He only asks one question: But can you answer well?

John 18.37-38

37 Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the

truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.

³⁸Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all.

Luke 11:9

⁹And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

James 4:3

**³Ye ask, and receive not,
because ye ask amiss, that
ye may consume it upon
your lusts.**