

Ask, seek, knock. (Quality: Good)

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- [0 : 00] Lord be pleased to help us that I shall pay our full attention to the words as found in the Gospel by Luke, chapter 11, verses 9 and 10.
- The Gospel by Luke, chapter 11, verses 9 and 10. And I say unto you, 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.
- And so we have before us those things that the Lord hath spoken.
- He speaks to his dear people in several ways. But also there are those others that desire, being given that desire, to seek and to look unto the living God for grace and wisdom.
- [1 : 41] And so the Lord alone knoweth them that are his. It is not for us to differentiate between those that fear God and those that fear him not.
- But to the living, to those who fear the Lord, those that are found in that covenant of mercy, that indeed we know not who they are, but by their fruit, says the word, ye shall know them.
- And therefore you and I are brought into those places from time to time where there is a patient waiting upon the Lord.
- He will be inquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them. And therefore there are those seekers too, who have never known the Lord, never heard his word, are ignorant perhaps to the ways and his dealings towards them.
- But as the word declares to that one in great straits, behold he prayeth.
- [3 : 06] And so if you and I have been brought into great straits, into great depths, where we know not where to go nor what to do, but our eyes will be directed up unto the Lord.
- And so he waiteth to be gracious to those that call upon him, that call upon his name. Blessed mercy, it is indeed to be in his hands and to be found watching and waiting at mercy's door.
- But oh, we have to acknowledge too, with shameless face, so slow we are to come to the dear Redeemer.
- And yet here these words are set before us. Ask and it shall be given you. But what a need be, what a preparation, what a pulling down, what a ploughing up of the many things of this dying world before the Lord doth hear and before he works graciously in his people to will and to do of his good pleasure.
- Yet to those that fear him and are blessed by him, there will ever be those thoughts in our mind and that concern that we might ask for grace, for wisdom, for understanding to walk through this world in love and in fear of the Lord.
- [5 : 16] Not that filial fear of sorrow, but a loving fear which he manifests to his dear children in the pathway.
- And what a precious thing it is to fear. As the word declares, the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

And so if you and I are brought into those depths, there will be much wisdom and goodness made known.

For he hath a purpose in all his dealings towards his people to bring them to the throne of grace.

And so how resident we are to come to the throne of grace. Oh, when we know and have proved his loving kindness, yet the enemy of souls is so strong from time to time to keep us from prayer.

[6 : 33] And so, and yet the living soul knows that he must come, he must beg and seek those things which the Lord will sanctify and has set before us in his word that we might be found in the spirit to ask for our soul's need.

And so it comes to my mind, dear Solomon, when quite a young man, yet coming he was to the kingdom to be king at that time over Israel, he had that precious dream that he would, the Lord laid in his heart those things that he should ask for.

And it was indeed, as we all can read, wisdom and grace to do that which is right and pleasing in the Lord's sight.

Oh, that each one of us likewise might be given those living desires to ask for the things that the Lord hath appointed.

Oh, how slow we are, and I speak to myself concerning these matters. And yet he waited to be gracious to those that call upon him, that call upon him in truth.

[8 : 23] He knows his own dear people. He knows their thoughts and their affections and desires. And he is ever waiting upon them to hearken unto their cries.

Yet so slow we are to move. And it is, I feel, because the enemy, the devil, is ever nigh at our elbow and round about us to put us off, as it were.

And yet the Lord knoweth and he will and doth bring his people into those strange paths.

As we walk through this wilderness, it was appointed, it is appointed, prayer was appointed to convey the blessings God designs to give.

As long as they live, shall Christians pray. And only whilst they pray, they live. This is our mercy, friends. Living prayer can wonders do, force a passage through dire straits.

[9 : 40] And so, what a solemn lack there is in this day of living prayer. because we are filled up, I say.

I speak to myself with the things of this time and sense as if they're so important and that we are here forever.

But oh, may we give diligence to make our calling an election sure, to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling day by day.

For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. And if we are the sons of God, there'll be those times and seasons when living prayer will be an exercise.

Praying along day by day, hour by hour have we been there. It is a good place to be and it is through the mercy of God.

[10 : 47] When he is about to perform his wonders and to show his mercy to us in the pathway, he does bring his people into that path of living prayer hour by hour.

And so, it is good that we have passed that way, if we have passed that way, because we shall realize and know that it is the Lord.

Let him do what seemeth him good. Ask. And it shall be given you seek and he shall find.

And so, we have to say with sadness how few seekers there are in this day.

Is the Lord's hand shortened that it cannot save? Is our ear heavy that it cannot hear? No, it is our waywardness.

[12 : 03] It is because we do lack these living prayer and indeed that desire to seek after eternal realities.

You might say, and it is true, well, I have no desire. the Lord has not given me a desire, but the Lord doth and will in his appointed time, because we cannot seek rightly in and of ourselves, but where the Lord has planted his grace and made his truth and mercy known, there will be a seeking and a searching of heart, but by and through his mercy an emptying out, an uprooting, an overturning of all that is of the earth earthy.

Why do we not seek the Lord's mercy if we have known it and have been blessed in times past, because we are full up with the trifles of a day.

All of us, particularly so in this day, there is so much to fill the mind. We make all manner of excuses that we should give credence to them when one thing is needful.

But this I know and am assured that where the Lord has planted grace and indeed he is the author and giver of every good and perfect gift, when he brings and reveals to his dear children that need to seek because he has made them hungry after living realities so will there be that beating upon the breast in his appointed time and way it is a mercy to be given a heart supplied well under the gracious influence and teaching of the Holy Spirit where it is then we seek what a mercy to be found in that posture all these things cometh from the

[14 : 50] Lord and so although it is set before us seek and ye shall find yet we know that it is of the mercy of a covenant keeping God who brings his dear people into many changes dire straits sometimes it is our great mercy to come there or you might say why do we have to be brought into the depths into trouble to seek because we are of the earth earthy because there is an appointed time when the Lord will bring his dear children into that fervent prayer and exercise that is our mercy consider it if there was no trial no changes by the way the hymn writer rightly says would we pray

I cannot quote it correctly but you know the hymn and so how true it is it is because the Lord in mercy doth bring his people to that appointed time through many changes through many afflictions watch says one watch watch and be sober ye children of men and so when the dear Lord is about to deal with his children and to give them that which they so blessedly require they will be brought to humbly seek mercy seek his truth and grace seek to do his will and to walk in obedience to his word so may we each walk there and perhaps we have walked there through the mercy of a covenant keeping

God who is able to deliver unto the uttermost but it is in those particular times that there is much asking but fearful looking as we come into the house of God and day by day as we go forth in our several duties when the Lord is about to appear to show his loving kindness to draw us away from the flesh and this dying world that our hearts affections might be set upon him and upon things above or a blessed mercy it is to be weaned from this dying world and to desire to know nothing amongst men save

Jesus Christ and him crucified he is the drawer he is the giver of every good and perfect gift that cometh down from the father of lights with whom there is no variableness neither a shadow of turning but have we come there dear friends have we made to want and to thirst after righteousness to beg the Lord's mercy day by day as we sojourn here we shall come there the blessed place it is but it is and maybe through much tribulation shall enter the kingdom of God and therefore all these changes are here for all day that we might walk in them that living prayer might be an exercise and a seeking day by day night and day for those things which he hath prepared and sanctified for the people of

God and so that is our mercy to be found in his hand whatever be our streets whatever be our pathway whatever be those judgments in it it cometh from the Lord and it will yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness as exercise thereby it is only those that pass in to those powers know the blessed of it not in the waiting or the seeking but in the fulfilling when the Lord will appear they be given you seek and ye shall find here is our mercy here is the promise but oh how we do lack in those times when we are troubled and perplexed in our souls but these things are our mercy and may we not despise them but through the grace of

[21 : 23] God given they may be sanctified to us in the pathway and that we might rejoice because we have been brought to pass that way the Lord doth lead his own dear people into those various paths where prayer is one to be made prayer is the substance of every inquiry and so the Lord has appointed it that those that seek shall find that which their soul requireth but oh so prone to wander prone to leave the garden we profess the love such is our sad state by nature we cannot keep our souls alive neither can we keep ourselves as we sojourn here but need that grace given day by day to the pulling down of every strong hold and the building up of that most holy faith it is our mercy to be found in his hands waiting at mercy's door with those inquiring minds and when the

Lord in his goodness doth perform those good works it will be to his honor and glory in due time he who has commenced the good work will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ and there will be that following on to know him whom to know his life eternal but few there be that find it in this solemn sad day in which our lot is cast nevertheless the Lord's hand arm is not shortened and it cannot save neither is his ear heavy that it cannot hear it is our iniquities that have separated us from our God and brought bondage into our souls and so to the living child it is a constant concern and desire as he goes forth through this wilderness to seek again and again for fresh discoveries fresh thoughts and concerns and trials to pervade our pathway it is appointed and soon we shall be brought into that path of prayer again and again that we might seek and ask the same things that matters not the

Lord will be inquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them and so he does love to hear his children plead and all such pleading he approves seek and ye shall find knock and it shall be opened unto you so we see that needs be and the mercy that is found in these three words they combine the whole favour and mercy of God to poor sinners and those that are found in that covenant of mercy ordered in all things and sure will be brought to pass through this way more or less in different circumstances the

Lord deals with his anointed in many and varied circumstances that we may not lean upon another oh no no we must come our own way we must prove the mercy and favour of God in our own pathway to teach to instruct and to make us know that he is God blessed forever oh how many do lean on others but it is singular and every dispensation and every trial that the Lord has appointed to his people there it is for their teaching and instruction to bring them nearer and closer that prayer might be in constant exercise as he might say it's only whilst they pray they live and how true that is because

I'm persuaded the Lord doth weigh the hearts of his people they will be waited day by day as they sojourn here that we may not be happy all the day as many are that know not God but whilst we may not be in that posture yet as him writes happiness they are lovely name tell me where and so if we have tasted and felt as a good word of life if we have walked in a measure in the pathway and the light of his gospel feeling the unction and savour of his love in our souls for a period long or short then we shall know the blessing of God which maketh rich and no sorrow is added and therefore there will be a true knowledge and true desire and to him that knocketh it shall be opened or here is the evidence again surely of a living prayer as the

[28 : 54] Lord does take in hand his anointed as he has brought them out of nature's darkness perhaps into that marvellous light so will there be that fulfilling in his appointed time and way and this also is evident as we continue we know there is that blessing to be obtained in those first works but the living soul must come there continually the Lord will have the whole heart and the mind and so he doth reveal himself in those particular ways to bring to knowledge and fulfillment his purposes towards that one of good and not of evil to give an expected end and so we are made to realize that it is not of us in any way but of the mercy and covenant love of a dear savior who has set us apart in this dying world brought us out of nature's darkness caused us to cry and to mourn over our sins and iniquities caused us to be still and know that he is

God blessed forever so will he not leave us there friends and that soul will be strengthened in the way as he cries and cries again for the Lord's mercy but these are precious things and precious parts and so as we look back over the years if we live in soul we'll bless the Lord for all the way the Lord our God hath led us it is for our eternal good these changes and these dire straits when we are left when the Lord sees fit to hide his face to stain our pride yet all these things are needful needful day by day as we sojourn here to make us look up unto the dear redeemer for fresh supplies of grace for his mercy and for his nearness oh if we have been enabled and blessed to walk through these changes then

I'm persuaded we shall praise him from whom all blessings flow and praise him because he hath awakened us out of that sleep of death and brought us into that glorious liberty of Christ and so I must say too there are some too that seem seemingly to come thus far or it is not for us to question these things but I persuaded if the Lord has planted grace in your heart and mine he will not change but will ever bring us into those changes as we sojourn here that there might be a seeking a patient waiting a groaning because burdened day by day with sin and unbelief but he will open up to us and to him that knocketh it shall be opened so doth the

Lord realize and know our sad state by nature our whole dependence is upon him fixed but oh our mercy is to feel it and yet to praise a covenant God for his loving kindness and tender mercies towards us day by day but we have to know and those first works as it is laid before us here that we have to come and come again the Lord reads out in most hearts and so what a mercy it is to be found in his hands and yet to be able to look back in our path and see the mercy and covenant love of a dear redeemer to such a hell deserving sinner but when he commences a good work he will perform it unto the day of

Jesus Christ he will constrain all those that are found in that covenant in that appointed time and way to press forward and to come and plead his mercy at the throne of grace to ask and it shall be given to seek and ye shall find so there will be in our experience a walking out of those times and seasons to the blessing of the Lord and to feel our unworthiness as it were so unworthy of the least of these his favours but when he when that appointed time rolls on apace not to propose but call by grace there will be that willingness and that blessing in the day of his power all fears will and are swept away when the

[36 : 27] Lord doth fill the souls of his people with that joy and wisdom which giveth life and so will we rest there oh may that be our portion seeking ever to hear his voice to do his will and to walk in his commands so will he have it and so will it be manifested in that appointed time and way ask and it shall be given thee seek and ye shall find may that be our sweet hope and portion as we sojourn here for his name sake amen and