

Ask #1

In teaching us about prayer, Jesus emphasizes one point over and over, in the strongest possible terms: Ask! Bring all your needs to God your Father. Jesus repeatedly drives this message home, with both word and example.

Matthew 7:7-11

In the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5, 6, 7), Jesus teaches us how to live in the presence of our almighty, all-wise, all-loving Heavenly Father. He says that since we live every moment in the presence of such a God, it only makes sense to bring all our needs and concerns to Him. He delights to answer our prayers! Even an earthly father enjoys granting his child's requests when the child asks for something good. If we earthly fathers, with all our flaws, eagerly give good gifts to our children when they ask, won't our Heavenly Father gladly grant our good requests?

"Ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you." (Matthew 7:7, NASB)

Luke's version of this teaching adds a meaningful twist. There Jesus says that if we ask our Heavenly Father for something good, He will give, not just a good gift, but the very best gift: *the Holy Spirit* (Luke 11:13, NASB). The gift that our Father most delights to give is Himself!

Luke 11:5-8

Jesus drives this point home with a story. Suppose a friend comes to you in the middle of the night, long after you've gone to bed, and asks to borrow food to feed an unexpected guest. What's more, imagine yourself in that time and place. It's dark, and there are no electric lights. You'd have to get up and light a candle or lantern. The door is bolted, and your family is all asleep with you, probably on the floor of your one-room cottage. Answering the friend's request means waking up the whole household.

You'd like to tell him, "Don't you know what time it is?!? Go away! Don't bother me!" But because he asks, you won't turn him away. You'll get up and give him all you can, as much as he needs.

Your Heavenly Father never sleeps, He's never inconvenienced, and His supply is endless. Won't He gladly grant your good requests if you are bold enough to ask?