

DAY 9 ASK

Matthew 7:7

"Ask, and it will be given to you."

Pretty straightforward, right? "Ask," Jesus teaches, "and it will be given to you." It helps me to know what the word ASK really means. In Vine's Greek NT Dictionary—there are seven different verbs for the word "ask." But in our verse, the verb "to ask," (aiteo)—most frequently suggests, "the attitude of a suppliant, the petition of one who is lesser in position than to the one whom the petition is made"; eg., in the case of Jesus' followers asking—something from God, their Father. It's also written

in a verb tense that we would express as, "Ask, and keep asking..." (Not just ask once!) Jesus invites us to Keep at it—never stop!

This teaching happens to apply both to the way we approach others AND the way we approach God. Author Dallas Willard points out, "How beautiful it is to see relationships in which asking and receiving are a joyful and loving way of life."

You might be thinking, though, Asking can be risky. It can, because when we ask for what we need, there's no 100% guarantee that we'll get it—we might not get everything we ask for. But, it's through asking that we learn humility—discover our interdependence, and allow both others and God to demonstrate genuine care for us. In this way, our relationship with God and with one another can become more real, honest, and intimate.

Asking might prove to be pretty tough for some of us. Maybe you were raised in a home where you saw significant adults in your life hide their real needs—and you learned to hide your needs, too. And because we want to look strong and "together," self-sufficient—we learn not to ASK.

Lent challenges us to become more aware of our need for God's grace and for His help. Lent invites us to notice how needy we really are; to stop pretending, and to ask. Our good, good Father wants to not only give us good gifts but Himself as well.

Is it hard for you to be an "asker?" Is there a challenge, struggle or need surfacing in your life right now that might be highlighting your need to ask God, a close friend, or family member for help? God never intends our needs to cause us shame, nor does he intend for us to bear our burdens alone.

Daily Practice

Today, with God's help, step out and ask for the help you need, either from God or from a trusted friend. Ask for help in something you are struggling with or anxious about. (A decision, a difficult situation, a relationship challenge.) Keep asking, and it will be given to you. Amen.

The below reflections are written by congregants & staff of CPC. All reflections are following Trevor Hudson's book Pauses for Lent and are both heavily influenced and borrowed from his work. Any quotes without attribution should be credited to him.