

Ask, Seek & Knock

*“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find;
knock and the door will be opened to you.”*

-- Matthew 7:7

As we continue on the journey toward greater intentionality in our faith we come to deal again with an issue that is more vital than any other in the life of a faithful Christian – prayer. Prayer is the life-blood of faith, it is the very heartbeat of an intentional Christian life

Most of us would agree with the sentiment that prayer is essential to living an intentional Christian life. There is not a single Christian who would dare suggest that prayer is unimportant... yet despite this, the sad reality is that prayer is something most of us fail at. The truth is; we need guidance and instruction when it comes to prayer. But the good news is that the Lord understood this when he was teaching his disciples and so he gave them some clear instructions about prayer – instructions that we can still learn from today.

Firstly, we need to learn the importance of persevering in prayer. We need to learn how to *pray without ceasing*... It is not just about asking once, or seeking in one place or knocking only once. The lesson is for us to go on asking and seeking and knocking, to not give up, to persevere in the exercise of prayer – not so we can nag God into giving us what we want, but so that we can learn the importance of discipline and faithfulness, so that we can give expression to the seriousness of our prayers. Secondly, we need to learn how to *pray for what we need*... Prayer is so much more than presenting a shopping list to a divine ATM we like to call God. Prayer is about pouring out our hearts and souls before God and, when we do that honestly, we will find that what we pray for is more likely what we need rather than what we want. Finally, we need to remember that when we pray we come to *the Father who loves us*... Our prayers are not directed at a far-off, un-interested, creature that is ultimately indifferent to our needs. No! Jesus teaches us that we pray to a God who is known as our father, a Father that loves us, wants the best for us and longs to hear from us. A Father who is wise enough to know what is best for us, loving enough to give us all we need (no matter how high the cost to himself) and a father who is strong enough to give what is needed.

This is the Father to whom we have the privilege to pray, so let's become people of prayer, let's become more intentional about our prayers. Let us learn to pray without ceasing and honestly for what is needed – because our Father invites us to.

Intentional Christian prayer is incessant, persistent and faithful. Intentional Christian prayer is discerning of what is needed and determined to not ask out of selfish ambition or desire. Intentional Christian prayer is deeply aware of the fact that we pray to a loving and faithful Father who not only knows what is best for us, but also desires to give generously.