

# Jesus Teaches About Persistence and Prayer

## Matthew 7:7-11

by David Servant

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*Jesus teaches that persistence and effort are necessary to receive requests, and that lazy people who refuse to ask, seek and knock never make any progress in life.*

**Scripture:** Proverbs 10:4, Proverbs 13:4, Proverbs 21:25, Matthew 7:7, James 1:6

**Topics:** "Persistent Prayer", "Faith And Effort"

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### Description

David Servant delves into Jesus' sermon on the mountainside, suggesting that beyond prayer, Jesus was addressing laziness and the importance of persistence. While Jesus' words on asking, seeking, and knocking can be related to prayer, they also emphasize the need for proactive effort in all aspects of life. Jesus encourages His followers to be diligent in seeking, asking, and knocking, highlighting that those who put in the effort are the ones who see results. This principle applies not only to material pursuits but also to prayer, emphasizing the need for believers to persist in faith and not give up easily.

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### Transcript

This portion of Jesus' sermon on the mountainside is commonly considered teaching about prayer. However, I think Jesus had more in mind than prayer in what we've just read. I think He was also talking about laziness and persistence.

Jesus first talked about asking for things, which could certainly apply to prayer. However, He then mentioned looking and knocking . Do those terms also refer to prayer? Perhaps, yet as we continue to read, we have to wonder. Jesus went on to say that everyone who asks, receives, everyone who seeks, finds, and to everyone who knocks, the door is opened. We know that is not always true concerning prayer. Although there are scores of examples of answered prayer in the Bible, there are also examples of unanswered requests, and certainly it is not true that everyone , non-Christians included, receives what he asks for in prayer.

For this reason, I wonder if Jesus was simply encouraging His followers to be askers, seekers and knockers in every area of their lives. It is true that the only people who receive their requests are those who make requests, the only people who find are those who seek, and the only people who have doors opened to them are those who knock. Those who wait around for things to happen or improve without any effort on their part are usually disappointed. As one Chinese proverb says, "Man stand for long time with

mouth open before roast duck fly in."

Many people are lazy. Even Christians sometimes try to make excuses for their laziness by saying things such as, "Well, if God wants me to have a certain thing, He'll just get it to me." But that isn't true according to what Jesus said. People who get jobs are those who seek for employment, asking employers. People who go to college are those who knock on doors and fill out applications. People who get married are those who seek for a potential mate. If you want things to improve, you have to work at it and be persistent, never giving up. Everyone who puts forth that kind of effort is rewarded. But lazy people who refuse to ask, seek and knock never make any progress in life.

This concept also applies to prayer. Christians who assume that God will automatically give them whatever He wants them to have are wrong. According to Jesus, our heavenly Father wants to give us good gifts, but we must ask (see Matthew 7:11). Furthermore, we shouldn't be satisfied, as many Christians often are, with receiving something other than what we've requested. Jesus said that if a child asks his parents for bread, they won't give him a stone. And if he asks for a fish, they won't give him a snake! Our heavenly Father loves us even more than any parents love their children. We should expect that He is not going to give us something other than what we request, and when it appears as if He has, we should not be discouraged, but continue to persevere in faith until we possess what we desire. Strong faith never quits!

Q. Have you ever become discouraged and given up on reaching a goal? What do you think Jesus would say about that?

A. If your goal is a good one, He would encourage you to keep asking, looking and knocking. With God on our side to help us, there is always good reason to persevere.

Q. Proverbs 22:13 says, "The lazy person is full of excuses, saying, 'If I go outside, I might meet a lion in the street and be killed!'" Can you think of any other funny excuses that lazy people use to avoid work? Are there any excuses that you use to avoid work?

Application: Proverbs 26:14 says, " As a door turns back and forth on its hinges, so the lazy person turns over in bed."

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Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/david-servant/jesus-teaches-about-persistence-and-prayer-matthew-77-11/>

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