



## Asked and Answered

Becky Combee

Matthew 7:7 states, “Ask, and it shall be given you.” I love this verse because it does not say you “might receive” or you “could receive.” It does not urge us pray and hope for the best. It is definite! You will receive. What a marvelous verse of Scripture!

This well-defined promise of God is reiterated by the words of the apostle John, “Ye shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you.”<sup>1</sup> It is further accented by his voice in 1 John 5:15, where he states, “Whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.” There is no greater commitment of our Father than “it shall be done” and “we know that we have.”

Similarly In James 1:5, our gracious Father addresses our need for wisdom. Here, the apostle James writes, “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.” The word “upbraideth” is a great word. It means to scold, lecture, chide, or rebuke. In other words, God is not going to say, “That’s the dumbest thing you’ve ever asked me.” He will answer! Wisdom will be given to you!

I used to upbraid our daughter when she took

piano lessons. She would ask the same question over and over again, and when I got tired of answering, I would scold her. I know that’s been many, many years ago, but I’m sure my response to her was unkind. Reminds me of the words of a song, “Be careful little mouth what you say.” In spite of my rebuke, she became a quality musician in the high school band.

Now, I am sure everyone has asked God for something they did not receive. But God, who cannot lie, has said that you will receive.<sup>2</sup> Since the problem is never on God’s end, the fault must be ours. And it is!



In the book of James, we have several clues to this dilemma. First, we must ask. The apostle James declares, “Ye have not, because ye ask not.”<sup>3</sup> Much religious tradition (tradition is not always based on Bible facts) encourages us to lean back and relax because God will answer if He wants to. If He doesn’t help us, there is nothing we can do. This is a misunderstanding of sovereignty. Certainly, God is absolutely sovereign or supreme in authority. Yet our sovereign Father has given specific promises in

His Word, and He will always keep His Word. First Kings 8:56 declares, "There has not failed one word of all his good promise." When we read this verse, our heart leaps with anticipation. Every Word – every single word – God has spoken is the seed which will provide our answer.

The prophet Isaiah agrees when he writes that the Word spoken by God will not return unto Him void, but it will accomplish what He (God) pleases.<sup>4</sup> The Voice Translation quotes this verse, "But it will do what I wanted; it will accomplish what I determined." In the Bible in Basic English, we read, "So will my word be which goes out of my mouth: it will not come back to me with nothing done." Oh, what a comfort! God's Word works!

With this understanding, we see clearly our second step. First, we ask. Second, our petition must be in agreement with God's Word and according to His will. The apostle John says, "If we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him."<sup>5</sup> Listen to the cry of the Spirit when He says, "We know that we have." Because we have embraced God's Word, His precious promises, we are assured of His answer. According to 2 Corinthians 1:20, "For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us."

This brings us to the word of caution uttered by James. "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts."<sup>6</sup> The word "amiss" means to ask badly or evilly.<sup>7</sup> When I ask because of my own lusts or strong desires, I ask because I'm concerned only about myself. I say, "I need. I want. Give to me. Do for me."

Definitely, my heart is not in the gospel message, which says to consider others better than yourself,<sup>8</sup> and, according to the apostle James, this can lead me to fight and war in order to obtain.<sup>9</sup>

BUT, If I abide in God and in His Word, I will always ask according to His will.<sup>10</sup> My heart will be intertwined with His vision and His purpose. I will bear much fruit, the fruit of answered prayer, and I

will be filled with joy.<sup>11</sup> When I wait upon the Lord, resting in Him, focused on His Word and His presence, I become stronger and stronger in His Kingdom. I am secure. I am content. I am filled with peace.

Peace is the absence of frustration, irritation, and aggravation. But, more than that, it is the presence of the God of Peace in my life. Peace



beyond understanding because He is here! Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you."<sup>12</sup> With His peace on our heart, we are not troubled, anxious, or afraid. According to the prophet Isaiah, we will have perfect peace.<sup>13</sup>

The songwriter penned it accurately when he said, "Peace, peace, wonderful peace, coming down from the Father above!"<sup>14</sup> Peace is God's gift to us when we trust in Him. Live in His peace this Christmas. Let peace flood your heart as you celebrate His birth!

*Merry Christmas!*

*Becky*

<sup>1</sup>Jn 15:7 <sup>2</sup>Tit 1:2 <sup>3</sup>Jas 4:2 <sup>4</sup>Is 55:11 <sup>5</sup>1Jn 5:14-15 <sup>6</sup>Jas 4:3 <sup>7</sup>Strong's Hebrews and Greek Concordance, G2560 <sup>8</sup>Php 2:3 <sup>9</sup>Jas 4:2 <sup>10</sup>Jn 15:7 <sup>11</sup>Jn 15:11 <sup>12</sup>Jn 14:27 <sup>13</sup>Is 26:3 <sup>14</sup>"Wonderful Peace" by Warren D. Cornell, 1889