

Extreme MAKEOVER

Matthew 7:7-11: Asking God for things like a Four-Year Old

Last Thursday, Korban and I went to Arbys to order his favorite, curly fries. As we waited for our food to arrive, the sun had a direct path to his window and pierced the side of his head. He put up with it for a little while and then blurted out. "Stop it Jesus, Stop it!" I had to calm him down before he went ballistic on Jesus. Such is the life of a four year old. He sees the world simply. Jesus made the sun and he is responsible for it beating down on his face.

Korban also makes me laugh at the dinner table. He does not pray often, but when he does, it is for a very long time, usually when you are completely famished. He thanks Jesus not only for the food, but also for the soy sauce, the ketchup, the Diet Coke, and every person who is around the table.

Over and over again, his faith demonstrates the appreciation for the small things. We could learn from him. The Bible teaches that God is all-powerful, all-knowing, and always present, but it also encourages us to think in personal terms such as viewing him as a Father who loves his children. Sometimes we need a four-year-old child to show us how we should trust, appreciate, and love God.

Korban is at the stage in life, where he is filled with questions. Many, many questions! "Dadda, why did Jesus create the world?" "Because he loves you, buddy." "Why does he love me dadda?" "Because you are very special to him." "Why am I very special." "Because you just are buddy." "Dadda, how come I just are?"

Korban also has no problem asking me for things: When we go to the grocery store he says, "Dadda can I have a Kit Kat?" When we go to Costco, he asks for a swimming pool. When we go to Sears he wants a driving lawnmower. In fact, Korban asks for so many things sometimes I grow weary. But you know what, God never feels that way. God wants us, His children to ask for things. Unfortunately, something happens to us, as we grow older in our faith. We quit asking God for things. In this section, Jesus wants us to ask like a four year old.

7. Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: 8. For every one that asks receives; and he that seeks finds; and to him that knocks it shall be opened

Three words reveal God's heart on this issue. **Ask, Seek, and Knock.**

1. The **asking** part is the most obvious, yet as I mentioned, it is the hardest. Many followers of Jesus feel guilty or selfish asking God for things. We tend to think there are others out there in worse shape than us, that we are too me focused, or that God has better things to do. Yet, God wants us to ask Him for things like a four year old.
2. **Seek** is the second action verb Jesus mentions. When you seek something, you go **beyond asking**. For example, a person can pray that God would provide a job, but seeking means actively hitting the pavement and filling out applications. Seeking implies that you are searching for or pursuing something. You cannot search for something by just asking. Sometimes Christians believe that if you ask, you should not seek. That it is somehow works related. You should simply do nothing and trust God. But again, we have to understand God is our Father and he wants us to think like a four-year old.

There is only one way Korban can earn a Kit Kat from me. He has to have a good behavior report from his Day Care provider. He has to obey his teacher, listen during learning time, and when it comes to the other kids, he has to avoid name calling, crowding them, or taking away their toys. Each morning I take him there, I remind him what he needs to do to receive the prize. Every time he is motivated to behave well because he seeks the Kit Kat. He knows that candy bar is within his reach. That is what it means to seek. It goes beyond asking. Jesus, said earlier in the Sermon on the Mount, that we are to seek the Kingdom of Heaven and then all the other things we seek in life will be added to you.

3. The third verb is **knocking**. We are to knock at God's door. Knocking in this context involves **persistence**. It is not just asking for something one time and calling it good; but rather to *keep on asking*. The verb implies continuous recitation. The Bob Dylan classic says it well: Knock, knock, knocking on heaven's door. That is how we are to approach God. Keep asking like a four-year old.

In our home we have a study with two French doors and class casing to see through. When I study, I like to close the doors so I can focus. However, it does not take long before my four-year old peers through the window and begins to knock on the door. Usually he wants something like for me to hold him or to get him something to drink, like a cup of milk. There are times I am busy and I tell him to wait a minute. But my son is impatient and it is not long before I hear another knock at the door with a petition. When a four-year old wants something, he wants it now. They have no trouble in being persistent.

Likewise, God wants us to be persistent.

In this passage, Jesus makes a fantastic promise. If you ask, seek, and knock, you will receive. In other words, Jesus says there is a 100 percent chance guarantee that God will answer you. He will provide good gifts.

Now I will be honest with you. Sometimes when Korban knocks on the den door, I get a little frustrated because I just want some peace and quiet. It shows up in my tone. It is not that I do not want to give to my son, giving to him brings joy; it is just that there are times that I do not like to be disturbed or inconvenienced. There are times when I get irritated if he is always knocking on the den door. This is what Jesus is getting at here.

9. Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? 10. Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? 11. If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father, which is in heaven give good things to them that ask

What Jesus is saying here is that God is a better father than I am. My frustration, my tone, my irritation, just drives home the point that I am sinful, or as Jesus delicately puts it, evil. As much as I try to be a good father to my son, there are times when the sin just steps forward in my life. I still provide for him; I still give him things that are good; I just recognize that I am not a perfect father like God.

God is not like this toward His children. He is perfect and he does not get irritated and complain because he is inconvenienced when He is asked to do something. As Jesus mentions, He provides far much better than any human father could ever dream to provide for his children. In other words, God will provide better things that a Kit Kat or a swimming pool or a tractor lawn mower. God absolutely loves it when you ask for things, and He wants you to keep asking, keep seeking, and to keep knocking so He can be an unlimited source of provision. . We have to be persistent like a four-year old.

The Objection:

Now many may hear this today and raise one big objection. They might think, "Wait a minute, there have been plenty of times where I asked God for things and never received anything. How do you handle such a command to ask God and expect to receive."

The first thing is to recognize that we do not get everything we want. Our Christian experience has taught us that the name it claim it movement, simply does not work like they claim, no pun intended.

Secondly, there are times when what we ask for is not good to us. In other words, there are times when we think we are asking for bread but God sees it like us He would be giving us a stone if He said yes. There are times when we think we are asking for a fish, but again God sees it as like granting us a serpent in disguise.

My four-year old wants a tractor lawnmower and many times he has requested we get him this "toy." But we all know that he is not aware how dangerous such a gift really is to his being. My 22 month old wants an alarm clock he can plug into the electric socket, but again such a gift would not be good for him. As a father, I want to give my children good gifts.

What does that mean for you? If you are not getting that relationship with that person, or that job promotion, or that house you want, it is possible in God's eyes you are asking for stones and serpents. Jesus says as a father, he wants to give you good gifts.

Thirdly, sometimes God puts your request on hold until just the right time. Many people discover this later when they are in a new relationship, or they have received a better job, or an even better home. In other words, God wants to give you what you want—and He will—it is just not the "gifts" you are looking for at the present time. How many times have you heard people realize that now that they know what they know, they are thankful God said no before?

Today, Korban has told me that he wants a "red car" because in his eyes, the world would be better if everything is red. However, after we talked he realizes though he wants a car like momma and dada, it will be best for him when he grows up. Today he says, when I grow up I am going to get a red car.

Conclusion:

Remember Jesus wants us to be persistent. He wants us to ask God for good things. There is nothing God wants more than for us to be dependent on Him, as opposed to ourselves. He wants us to give God the glory for everything we have. Like a four-year old child, Jesus wants us to be persistent.

It is to our benefit to Ask, Seek, and even knock on God's door for the blessings we desire. You have to understand God loves you beyond what you can comprehend and He wants to bless you in ways that joyously surprise you. But as someone once told me, "A closed mouth never gets fed." Let's open our mouth and ask God for those "Kit Kat's" that bring us joy. Like a four-year old.