

# Sermon Discussion Questions



LOOKOUT  
MOUNTAIN  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH

## “THE NECESSITY OF DELIBERATE PRAYER”

### Discuss

Every caretaker of children can testify to this truth: being with children means spending at least half your time and energy answering questions and fielding requests. Saying “yes” can be a real delight. “Sure—here’s a cookie for you.” Eyes light up, smiles are genuine, and for a few moments all feels right with the world. Sooner rather than later, however, we always come around to having to explain why sometimes the answer is “not right now” or “actually, let’s see if we can come up with a better idea.”

When Jesus told his disciples to ask, to seek, and to knock, he gave no such explanations. He didn’t say, “Ask, and sometimes you will receive, but sometimes you’ll need to wait.” He didn’t say, “Seek, but of course, you won’t always be able to find what you want.” Why are these promises so breathtakingly free of any reservations? Does our Father in heaven (unlike our fathers on earth) *always* say, “Yes”?

- 1) This passage comes immediately after the Lord’s Prayer, and the entire focus is on asking.
  - What was Jesus teaching his disciples by telling them the story about the man seeking bread from his friend?
  - What did he want them to understand about God, about themselves, and about prayer?
- 2) Matthew Henry sums up this passage nicely: “Those that would be rich in grace must betake themselves to the poor trade of begging, and they shall find it a thriving trade.”
  - If we are encouraged so strongly to ask, how should we regard petitionary prayer? Is it a less worthy or more selfish form of prayer than praise or confession?
  - Why do we sometimes hesitate to bring our requests to God or even fail to pray about what we need altogether? (The poet and hymn writer William Cowper once wrote, “Have you no words? Ah, think again. Words flow apace when you complain and fill your fellow-creature’s ear with the sad tale of all your care.” Why do we share, at length, our problems with others, but are reluctant to pray about them?)
- 3) When Jesus says that those who ask will receive and that those who seek will find, what kind of good gifts is he promising?
  - We all know that God is not a heavenly Santa Claus, nor do we believe that, no matter what, we can “name it and claim it.” So what can we ask for and expect to receive? What should we ask for? (If time, see Phil. 4:6-7, James 4:2-3, and Eph. 1:15-17.)
  - How should we understand or perceive answers to prayers that seem to be a “no”? Or feel like no response at all?

DATE: January 26, 2020

SPEAKER: Chad

SERIES: Prayer

PASSAGE: Luke 11:5-13

### Pray

O LOVER OF THE LOVELESS,  
Draw us to you and keep our hearts focused on all that you are and have done. Cause us to remember the riches we have as your children. Help us to savor the reality that we can come to you with every need and that you will always respond with the best kind of “Yes!” When we ask, we can be certain that you will always give us what we truly need. You never turn away from us. As your sheep, we know that you hear us *every* time and that you will never let us go. Sink that wonderful and amazing truth into our souls so that we eagerly come to you whenever we are losing patience, whenever we struggle, and whenever we are mourning a great loss. Thank you for being our everlasting, wise, loving, and giving Father. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

#### PRAY FOR HOME MISSIONS

Transformation Project

#### PRAY FOR WORLD MISSIONS

Joy and Roger Gulick serving in Missionary Care with Entrust