

Sermon 2: Seek and You Shall Find

Introduction:

Good morning, St John. Today, I want to share with you a message that has been burning in my heart, a message about seeking God in Prayer. In **Luke 11:9**, Jesus tells us, "So I say to you: Ask, and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." These words are a powerful reminder of the importance of seeking God in Prayer.

The verb forms in this verse are as follows:

- "αἰτεῖτε" (ask) and "ζητεῖτε" (seek) are both **present imperatives**, indicating a command or exhortation to continuously or repeatedly perform the action.

- "κρούετε" (knock) and "ἀνοιγήσεται" (it will be opened) are both present imperatives, indicating a command or exhortation to continuously or repeatedly perform the action.

Other passages with the same word:

- "αἰτεῖτε" (ask) is used in Matthew 7:7-8: "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened."

- "ζητεῖτε" (seek) is used in Matthew 6:33: "But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."

The same word "κούφιτε" (kouphte) meaning "**knock**" is used in **Revelation 3:20**: "Behold, I stand at the door and **knock**. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me."

Hebrew Term: Tefillah (תְּפִלָּה) Tefillah is the Hebrew term commonly used for prayer. It comes from the root word "palal," which means "to intervene" or "to judge." Tefillah emphasizes the idea of approaching God, making requests, and seeking His intervention.

The term "prayer" refers to communication or conversation with God. It involves expressing reverence, making requests, seeking guidance, confessing sins, expressing gratitude, and simply being in communion with the divine. Prayer is an integral part of a believer's relationship with God and is considered a means of seeking God's will, receiving strength, and growing in spiritual intimacy.

We learned last week a fresh **Definition of Prayer** based on Mathew 18. **Prayer is an earthly agreement between two or more people for the will of the Father to be done on earth as it is in heaven.** Today, I want us to reflect on what it means to seek God, why it is crucial, and how it can transform our lives.

In Genesis 18:23-33: Abraham intercedes for Sodom and Gomorrah. 1 Samuel 1:10-20: Hannah's prayer for a child. 2 Chronicles 7:14: God's promise to respond to prayer and forgive sins. In Psalm 4:1: A plea for answered prayer and Psalm 66:19-20: The psalmist praises God for hearing and answering prayer.

According to **Ina Manly Painter**, God permitted Alexander Graham Bell to be credited with inventing the telephone, which is undoubtedly one of His extraordinary communication devices. However, God kept the most exceptional and flawless method of communication for Himself, which is prayer. While the telephone relies on technological mechanics, prayer depends on God's will, our relationship with Him through Jesus Christ, and the state of our hearts. Technological realities have limitations, but the realities of prayer are infinite.

“I have been driven many times upon my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go. My own wisdom and that of all about me seemed insufficient for that day.”

— **Abraham Lincoln**

1. Seeking God's Presence:

First and foremost, seeking God's presence is of utmost importance. As believers, we have the incredible privilege of seeking God's presence through Prayer. Just as a child long to spend time with their Father, we should prioritize spending time with our Heavenly Father in Prayer and worship. Seeking God's presence demonstrates our dependency on Him and our earnest desire for a deeper and more intimate relationship with Him. When we seek His presence, we are filled with a peace that surpasses all understanding, a guidance that leads us down the right path, and a joy that cannot be found anywhere else.

Illustration: Imagine a young child who eagerly seeks the presence of their Father. They wait patiently by the window, longing for their father's return. And when he finally arrives,

their face lights up with joy. In the same way, when we seek God's presence in Prayer, our hearts are filled with a similar satisfaction as we encounter the presence of our Heavenly Father.

Here is a quote from Saint Augustine on seeking God's presence in Prayer:

"God is always near to us, but we are often far from Him. In Prayer, we seek not His physical proximity but a deeper awareness of His presence. It is through Prayer that we draw nearer to God and find solace in His loving embrace." - Saint Augustine_

- Through prayer, we can seek the presence of God in our lives.
- We need to prioritize spending time with Him in prayer and worship.
- Seeking God's presence helps us find peace, guidance, and joy.

2. Seeking God's Will:

Next, seeking **God's will** is crucial in our journey of faith. Prayer is not solely about presenting our requests to God but about aligning our will with His. When we seek God's will, we surrender our desires and trust His perfect plan for our lives. Through Prayer, we can ask for His guidance and discernment in decision-making. Seeking God's will requires us to set aside our own agendas and seek His wisdom and direction. When our desires align with His will, we experience a harmonious and purposeful life.

Illustration: Consider a compass that guides a hiker through a dense forest. The compass points north, ensuring the hiker stays on the right path. Similarly, seeking God's will in Prayer is like using a spiritual compass that directs our lives. When we align our desires with God's will, He guides us on the right path and ensures we do not go astray.

Here is a quote from **Richard P. Heitzenrater**, a contemporary Methodist theologian, on seeking God's will in Prayer:

"Prayer is not a means by which we bend God's will to ours; rather, it is a means by which we bend our will to God's. As we seek God's will in Prayer, we discover that our desires are transformed and aligned with His perfect plan for us." - **Richard P. Heitzenrater**.

- Prayer is not just about getting what we want but aligning our will with God's.
- In seeking God's will, we surrender our desires and trust His perfect plan.
- We can ask for guidance and discernment in decision-making through prayer.

3. Seeking God's Kingdom:

Lastly, **seeking God's kingdom** is a vital aspect of Prayer. In Matthew 6:33, Jesus tells us, "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." Prayer is a means to seek God's kingdom and an opportunity for us to participate in His work. Through Prayer, we can intercede for others, pray for the advancement of God's kingdom on earth, and align our hearts with His mission. When we seek God's

kingdom through Prayer, He equips and empowers us to make a lasting impact on this world.

Illustration: Picture a team of missionaries diligently praying for the people they are about to serve. They intercede for their needs, their spiritual well-being, and the growth of God's kingdom in that place. Through their prayers, they become active participants in God's work, partnering with Him to bring about transformation and renewal.

Here is a quote from **Martin Luther King Jr.** on seeking God's kingdom:

"Our ultimate goal is not to merely seek personal success or worldly achievements, but to strive to establish God's kingdom on earth. Through Prayer and action, we can participate in the work of justice, compassion, and reconciliation, bringing about a glimpse of heaven in our midst." - Martin Luther King Jr._

In 1 Peter 3:12 - The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are open to their prayer. In 1 John 5:14-15 - If we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. Ephesians 6:18 - Pray at all times in the Spirit. Philippians 4:6-7 - **Do not be anxious**, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God
Colossians 4:2 - Continue steadfastly in prayer.

- In Matthew 6:33, Jesus says, "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

- Prayer can be a way to seek God's kingdom and participate in His work.

- Through prayer, we can intercede for others and pray for the advancement of God's kingdom on earth.

Call to Action:

Today, I implore you to take seeking God in Prayer seriously. Make it a priority to set aside dedicated time each day to seek His presence, His will, and His kingdom. Ask God for faith and discipline to prioritize Prayer in your life. Seek Him relentlessly, knowing He is always ready to meet you where you are. Let us not take this privilege lightly but earnestly seek Him with our whole hearts and watch as our lives are transformed by His presence, His will, and His kingdom.

Conclusion:

In closing, the verse in Luke 11:9 holds a powerful invitation from Jesus Himself. He assures us that when we seek, we will find; when we ask, it will be given; and when we knock, the door will be opened. We have the incredible privilege of seeking the Creator and Sustainer of the universe in Prayer. Let us not take this opportunity lightly. Let us seek Him with our whole hearts and watch as our lives are transformed by His presence, His will, and His kingdom.

I want to leave you with this quote from **St. Augustine**: "You have made us for yourself, O Lord and our heart is restless until it rests in you."

Prayer:

Let's bow our heads and come before the Lord in Prayer: Heavenly Father, we come before you with grateful hearts, acknowledging that you are a God who hears and responds to our prayers. Help us seek You with all our hearts, eagerly desiring Your presence, will, and kingdom. Grant us the discipline to prioritize Prayer in our lives, and may our time spent with you be fruitful. Teach us to surrender our desires and trust in your perfect plan. Equip us to be intercessors for others and ambassadors of your kingdom. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Benediction:

May the Lord bless you and keep you; may his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; may he turn his face toward you and give you peace as you seek him diligently. And may you find joy, guidance, and fulfillment as you experience his presence, will, and kingdom in your life. Go forth in the grace and power of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. _