

Oregon City United Methodist Church
18955 S. South End Road
Oregon City, OR 97045

Rev. Michael Benischek
503-522-9807
November 15, 2015

Series: Sermon on the Mount

Sermon: Fasting - Ask, Seek, Knock!

Matthew 7:7-14

“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

“Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him! So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.

“Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

Have you ever got one of those notices in the mail that your subscription is about to expire, or an invitation that begin a subscription? A couple of years ago, a Chicago firm had one of its computers go screwy for a day, and messed up the mailing labels. Instead of printing off thousands of different labels to go on mailing to be sent out, they made the same label thousands of times - and mailed out the subscription notice: an unsuspecting rancher in Powder Bluff, Colorado, got 9,734 separate mailings informing him that his subscription to National Geographic had expired. Boxes and boxes of the same notice. The rancher had enough, and he dropped what he was doing and traveled 10 miles to the nearest post office. He actually sent in the money to renew his subscription, and included a note which said: “I give up Send me your magazine ” There is something about multiple requests that brings about a response.

Little children know this. They get it. If they want something, they don't just say, “Mom, could I please have a snack?” No, they say, “Mom, give me a snack, give me a snack, give me a snack. Can I have a snack, mom? Can I? Huh? Huh? Mom give me a snack.” And they repeat that cycle until you break down and give in. They cling. They pull. They tug. They whine. They know how to get what they want. We took the kids to Toys are them last week, just to get ideas for Christmas. There's not a chance we can get them everything they asked for. That's what grandparents are for, so we're mailing them the list.

As I began to think about the verses we have read today, I began to think how wonderful it is that we have a God who actually wants us to ask him for things. He tells us to ask, seek and knock, and that if we do, we will receive, find and see an open door, an open heart and welcoming arms. What a wonderful God we serve. He could destroy the world, but he came to save the world. He could have hidden from us, but he came to us and made himself known. He could be angry with us, but he constantly shows his love and mercy to us. He could remind us of how unworthy we are, but he opens his heart and invites us to ask for what we need from him. It is wonderful and exciting to know this God.

As we consider the words of Jesus, let's first think about this: Prayer's cornerstone is the character of God. Jesus begins by saying, “Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will