



Matthew 7:7-11 ⁷“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. ⁸For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. ⁹“Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? ¹¹If 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!

Here is a delightful true story about prayer from Charles Swindoll.

On one occasion, evangelist Dwight L. Moody had been recipient of numerous benefits from the Lord. In his abundance, he was suddenly seized with the realization that his heavenly Father was showering on him almost more than he could take.

Encouraged and overwhelmed, he paused to pray. With great volume he simply said, “Stop, God!” Now that’s spontaneous and refreshingly honest and short.

It is also a nice change from, “Eternal, almighty, gracious Father of all good things. Thy hand hath abundantly and gloriously supplied our deepest needs. How blessed and thankful we are to come to Thee and declare unto Thee...and on and on, grinding into snore city.

Swindoll said after he told that story in one service, a fellow said to him, “I’ve got another one for God. God, start! I mean, He can stop on Moody, but I want Him to start with me, I need some of that!”

Yes, God start! I wouldn’t mind some of that! I’m guessing none of us would mind being overwhelmingly blessed.

That idea of being fully blessed is truly at the heart of our text this morning. That invitation by Jesus to ask, seek, and knock. And that promise God will answer our prayers.

I’m surprised at how quickly I forget God answers our prayers abundantly. And that God wants to bless us above and beyond all we could ever hope or image.

How about you?

Sometimes I struggle with remembering God’s true heart towards us. Life steps in and trips us up. Life gets messy...like my recent encounter with covid. And I forget how completely generous and lavish God intends and desires and is with us.

Jesus' teaching today reminds us that God is a starting kind of God and an abundant blessing. Are we doing our part? Are we getting the ball rolling?

We are to ask for what we need.

God will answer our prayers.

Keep in mind, God also promised to give us good gifts. Meaning God will answer based on what He knows is truly good for us, what is best for us to grow spiritually mature, to be faithful servants of the Kingdom.

But God will answer our prayers.

What a comfort, what peace, how exciting!

We are in our third week of our Reset sermon series, inviting everyone to reset themselves back on God. And we are talking about prayer.

We kicked off our Dynamite Prayer Initiative last Sunday. But a quick review. This Dynamite Prayer Initiative has two parts.

First part of the initiative, an invitation to go through a 28-day devotional called Dynamite Prayer. It's a daily devotional that takes maybe 5 or 10 minutes a day. You can do it on your own.

Or you can join a small group on Tuesdays at 12:15am, for the next four weeks. There is still time to join, we have 13 or 14 people signed up and we had a wonderful time last Tuesday.

Sign up table in the entry way along with more devotionals. We sold out but now we have more copies, 50% off, selling for \$8.50. Good deal!

The second part of the Dynamite Prayer Initiative is to invite people to pray for our church twice a day, using these beautiful Dynamite Prayer cards.

It's really just part of the Breakthrough Prayer initiative you have already experienced as a church. We have done this here in the past.

So, these cards...the front of the card...pray at 9:02 am and 9:02 pm, or whatever works for your schedule. And there is a prayer on the back of the card.

And at the appointed time, simply take the card and pray the prayer...

God Who Sees Us, stir up this truth in our daily experience, **“the same power that the Father used to raise Jesus from the dead is at work in us.” (Eph 1:19-20)** Breakthrough, speak, show, and inspire us so that we may follow where your Spirit is leading us next at BUMC. Amen.

Takes maybe 21 seconds. A daily, 1 minute commitment, to pray for our church. Pretty simple.

Just imagine how our God, who promises to answer our prayers, just think of how God will respond!

All the good and blessings God will do in our midst, in response to our prayers. Could you imagine God blessing us until we have to say STOP!?

We are a praying church. Great opportunity to start that up again.

As part of preparing for this Dynamite Prayer Initiative, we have learned from watching others that it is just smart to review the materials beforehand.

When Sheryl Lehman and I started reviewing the devotional, we go to thinking, what if we invited more eyes to preview the devotional with us? Wise for more eyes to determine if this resource is any good, worth your time.

Our little “God story” is how quickly we had a group of 6 of us ready to preview the devotional. We went through just like a small group for four weeks. Each week a really good experience.

It seemed like God was up to something, preparing us to launch this initiative.

And now we’ve found that every single one of us wants to go through the devotional again! Proof the devotional is good. The content is impacting me even more 2nd time around, not kidding.

And last but not least, every single one of the members of the “previewing the Dynamite Prayer devotional group” wanted to share what their experience was like engaging with this content.

So, let’s hear from two others on that team.

Gayle...

Thank you for sharing! So, encouraging for us to hear how God is at work in your lives. Share our appreciation...

Three stories of how God worked through the Breakthrough Prayer Initiative/Dynamite Prayer Initiative in my previous churches.

In one church, a woman was watching me preach one Sunday and her eyes got really big! And I wondered what I had said even as I had to keep on preaching. After church, her eyes were still big and I walked over and asked her if she was okay.

She told me that she felt like God had just asked her to start a children’s ministry. My mind was racing...because we didn’t have any kids. Zero. And so I said, “Really?!” And she nodded her head.

And then I said, “Well, you better do it then.”

That next couple of Sundays...about 13 new people came to that church. Word had gotten out about our new Children’s Ministry and young families came!

Second story related to Breakthrough prayer, one church finally took the next step to break ground and build their new church.

They had been waiting 26 years to take that next step. And finally, somehow (I think it was God in Breakthrough prayer) they got unstuck, took the step, and now their church is so beautiful.

Third story...I’ve already shared about the kayaking, pontooning, bonfiring, snacking experience we had over two years, it’s still going on. Wonderful turn out, new people joining the fun, and then being part of church. Tremendous stirring of God in people’s lives.

But in that third church, we had been praying for a long while and not seeing much happening. Is God really faithful to answer prayer? And they saw the good God did in the other churches.

And then finally God broke through. Finally, the seeds of prayer bore fruit. Kayaking, pontooning, eating! Amazing times together, week after week!

To close, we hope you participate in some way! Maybe God will raise up a team of adults to lead Youth Group? Or a new ministry will form? Financial provision. Who knows how God will answer and keep answering, but it will be good!

So, don’t forget to grab a Dynamite Prayer card...handing them out in the entry way.

Let’s ask, seek, and knock on God’s door. Let’s pray and watch how God will answer our prayers...in big and small ways, with good things for our church!

As we turn to our Time of Reflection...I invite you to draw near to God in prayer, in the quiet of your own hearts. Think through a next step to take... listen for God’s invitation.

Is it doing the devotional, joining a group, or committing to pray for your church, or some other way God is inviting you to reset yourself on the Lord?