

The Beauty of Asking and Receiving

- I. **One of the greatest revelations found in the teachings of Jesus is that God wants us to ask and receive (John 16:22-27).**
 - A. Our communion with God the Father produces good desires coming from the heart (John 15:7; Psalm 37:4).
 - B. Wrong desires come from communion with the wrong father (James 4:1-3).
 - C. One of the saddest scriptures in the Bible is, “You do not have, because you do not ask God” (James 4:2).
 - D. In Jesus’ last address to his disciples, he mentioned asking and receiving five times.

- II. **Everything starts with believing God and His promises (John 14:1; 14:6-14; Hebrews 11:6).**
 - A. Jesus takes every believer on faith-building journeys where we learn to pray, receive, and trust.
 - B. A divine partnership forms as we sense how much God makes himself vulnerable to our desires when we pray alone and with each other (Matthew 18:18-20).

- III. **Jesus is the true vine. We bear fruit by embracing God’s words and commands (John 15:1-8).**
 - A. Our first command is to receive God’s forgiveness (cleanness) by faith (Ephesians 2:8-9; John 15:3-4; I John 1:8-9.)
 - B. Vines are supposed to grow grapes (Amos 3:3).
 - C. Small, religious ways of looking at God’s commands hinder us from asking for the meaningful things God desires (forward momentum—not perfectionism).
 1. Personal, unique spiritual gifts and dreams (Ephesians 2:8-10)
 2. Doing good (beautiful deeds) (Matthew 5:14-16; 26:10)
 3. Great purposes and designs that God has for the whole earth (Matthew 28:18-20; Jeremiah 33:3).

- IV. **God’s love releases a freedom to know the Master’s business and to make requests as His friends (John 15:9-17).**
 - A. “We love, because He first loved us” (I John 4:19).
 - B. Tangible hugs (“*phileo*” love) from the Father produce sensitivity to the needs of the people around us (John 5:19-20; I John 5:14-15). “As the ‘blessed ones,’ we can walk through this world and offer blessings” (Henri Nouwen).
 - C. We don’t have to look any further than the love of fathers and mothers for their children to understand how God responds to us (Luke 11:11-13).

*Mike Hudgins
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