

YOUR PROBLEMS CAN LEAD TO GOD'S PROVISION**A. FIRST, PRAY FOR GOD'S PROVISION (:7-11)****1. Let's Take A Minute And Look Closely At Those Three Words (:7)**

- a. ask (*aiteo*) = 71; ask 48, desire 17, beg 2, require 2, crave 1, call for 1
- b. seek (*zeteo*) 119; seek 100, seek for 5, go about 4, desire 3, misc 7
- c. knock (*krouo*) = 9; i.e. at the door
- d. All three are Present, Active, Imperative verbs
 - 1) present = something that is always happening now, continuously (e.g. breathing)
 - 2) active = you do it / not done for you or to you (e.g. breathing)
 - 3) imperative = an instruction, "do this"
 - 4) :7 = be always asking, always seeking & always knocking
- e. Why would the Lord want you to be always asking, always seeking, always knocking?
 - 1) what does one usually ask for? something they want / need
 - 2) what does one usually seek? something that's lost / missing
 - 3) why does one usually knock? to get in / gain access - so you're no longer shut out

2. What We're Really Talking About Here Is A Life Of Constant Dependence (:8)

- a. God is cultivating a relationship where you are completely dependent on Him
 - 1) not just vertically in your relationship to Him, but horizontally in your relationships w/others
- b. Too often we forget to depend on the Lord for wisdom when it comes to dealing with people
 - 1) we think we know what to do & how to do it - but we don't; we think we're Superman - but we're Clark Kent
 - 2) (James 1:5-8) *If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.*
 - 4) (James 4:3) *You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.*

3. When You're In The Flow Of God's Nature, Under The Guidance Of God's Spirit, You Can Know, For A Certainty, That He Will Provide (:9-11)

- a. Need something? Ask Me. Missing something? Seek Me. Wanna be near me? Knock on my door
 - 1) (rock/bread) "I won't give you something that doesn't meet your need"
 - 2) (snake) "I won't give you something that will hurt you"
 - e) "I won't invite you in and then keep you out"
- b. After all, We are God's children (:11)

B. THEN, REMEMBER GOD'S RULE (:12)**1. In Ancient Literature This Is Usually Stated Negatively**

- a. Don't do to others whatever you don't want them to do to you

2. Stated Positively, This Is Really A Summary Of :1-11 (cf. "Therefore...")

- a. If you want to be treated with love & grace by others, be loving & gracious toward them
- b. If you want people to have your back instead of being out to bust you, then have theirs
- c. If you only want people who see clearly to help you when your struggling, then work on improving your own vision

3. This Is Even More Than A Rule To Remember; It's A Picture Of What It Looks Like To Live Out Your Relationship w/Jesus; A Picture That Ought To Be Etched Into Our Awareness

- a. When your relationship w/Jesus saturates & dominates every aspect of your life the way it's intended to - when you're always asking, seeking & knocking - you can't help but be acutely aware of how your words, actions & reactions effect other people, how they reflect on the Lord, & how they confirm, or contradict, your testimony as one who claims to love the Lord, serve the Lord, and be surrendered to the will of the Lord
- b. (:12b) Jesus says "this IS the Law & the Prophets"
 - 1) meaning; this is what it looks like when the Word of God has it's full effect on the human soul

Closing

1. And You Thought This Was Gonna Be A Nice Lesson On Prayer :)

2. Your Problems Can Lead To God's Provision; CAN

- a. It all depends on you & the degree to which you surrender
- b. To be always asking, seeking & knocking implies that you recognize your need for His wisdom, His help & His presence
- c. (:8) That's what Jesus wants you to know