

ONWARD

from the desk of Chris Greer



Hey there, . It's Chris ☐☐

Have you ever known (or been) someone who gets stuff simply because they ask for it?

I'm not usually that guy. But I recently dropped into Cinnamon Creme Bakery for their killer cinnamon rolls, and I spotted a massive bowl of fresh cookie dough on the back counter.

Before I could stop myself, I blurted out, "Can I have some of that!?"

The clerk grinned and said, "Don't move." She proceeded to heave two huge helpings of raw dough into a box, and when I tried to pay, she winked and said, "This one's on the house."

That delicious tale points to a relationship-opening part of prayer I used to overlook. Any guesses about what it is?

Read on...and let's get unstuck and keep moving onward.

quote of the week

"When I pray, coincidences happen, and when I don't, they don't."

— William Temple

Developing a conversational relationship with God is one of life's sweetest opportunities, but we often miss out for one simple reason: *We forget to ask.*

Now, let me clarify: We rarely forget to ask God for big stuff, like physical healing, financial provision, restored relationships, and merciful forgiveness.

But, do you ask God, moment to moment, about the "small" stuff?

For example, after asking God to heal your friend's cancer or save your family member's soul, did you also ask...

- God, do you want me to go see her today?
- God, which of his needs do I most need to be aware of?
- God, will you help me sense what it's like to be sick or unbelieving?

- God, are there any words of encouragement or Scriptures you want me to share?

What kinds of conversations might you and God have if you asked immediate, at-the-moment questions like these?

Jesus said, “Keep on asking.”

Then he promised, *“For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened.”* (Luke 11:9a, 10)

Our materialistic and consumeristic indoctrination fools us into thinking that everything – including Jesus’ teaching on prayer – is about procuring *stuff*.

But Jesus’ words (not to mention his life) reveal otherwise: *“How much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him.”* (Luke 11:13)

God loves to give good gifts. Primary among them is the gift of himself.

In fact, did you know the well-known verse – *“You don’t have what you want because you don’t ask God for it.”* (James 4:2) – is situated in a passage about humility and connection with God?

Intimate connection is what we most need. And he gives it when we ask...and he gives it *through* our asking.

Here’s how this hit the ground for me this past week...

For some time now I’ve been thinking about reading the Psalms. I thought about studying them numerically, chronologically, by genre, by praying them, or by reading a commentary on them.

But, honestly, the Psalms (and all those options) overwhelm me.

So, I asked God a simple question: *God, how do you want me to read your Psalms?*

Then I paid attention for his response. Here’s how it came...

- I was initially drawn to the word “genre”, so I googled “Psalms genres” (super spiritual, I know). My search led me to seven interesting Psalms genres. [Nudge #1]
- The next day, while reading an unrelated book, the topic of “genre” came up again. [Nudge #2]
- Later, I stumbled across EveryPsalm.com: a site with original songs for every Psalm and a simple, thoughtful explanation of the Psalms genres. [Nudge #3]
- Then, last Sunday, our pastor preached on biblical lament, which happens to be one of the primary *genres* of...you guessed it... *the Psalms*. Can't make this stuff up. [Nudge #4: Question answered]

See what happened there?

I asked, sought, and knocked – talking with and listening to God in everyday moments – and he provided prompts that “nudged” (my word, not his) me in his direction.

So...guess who started reading the Psalms, organized by genre, this week? Yep. Me.

Could I have faithfully read the Psalms *without* God leading me this way? Of course. We always benefit from the faithful reading of Scripture.

But if you could opt to read the Psalms on your own, or as the result of a conversation with the Living God, which would you choose?

I'll choose the latter. Every time.

And all we have to do is ask.

Onward,

Chris

P.s. , can you guess what any of the seven genres of Psalms are? Give it a try. Then look below for the answers...

NEWS and EVENTS

12 Rules for a Christian Life: My latest book goes on **SUPER sale** for a limited time starting TOMORROW (7/13).

Cheap Kindle version [HERE](#)...

Discounted Paperback version [HERE](#)...

FREE Audiobook version [HERE](#) ([via this link only](#))!

LTL (Lunch Time Lectio): Need help paying attention to God in the middle of your weekly madness? Join me for [LTL \(Lunch Time Lectio\)](#) - a simple, guided way to pay attention to God through Scripture.

Thursdays in July - 12pm (CST) - on Zoom.

[CLICK HERE](#) to get the link.

dad joke of the week

My wife asked me the other day where I got so much candy...

I said, "I always have a few Twix up my sleeve."

Well, my curious friend, here are the seven genres of Psalms! (in no particular order)

- Praise
- Lament.
- Thanksgiving.
- Trust (or Confidence).

- Kingship (or Royal).
- Remembrance (or Covenant).
- Wisdom.

Did you guess any correctly??

Some scholars say, broadly speaking, that *all* the Psalms are included in just two genres: Praise and Lament.

That says a lot about biblical prayer: It's all about full worship and complete honesty before God.

Pray on, my friend!

Did you miss one? Check out past ONWARD posts at Chris-Greer.com/onward.

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