

What About... Getting What You Want

By RJ Regan



In John 15:7, Jesus said, “If you remain in Me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.” Wow, that is a powerful statement! Ask whatever I wish, and it will be done. Kind of sounds like a genie-in-a-bottle, doesn’t it? But not so fast. This verse is not a free-for-all, land-of-delusion kind of thing.

Abiding in Christ

The first part of the verse says “If.” IF is a conditional statement, meaning IF something, THEN something happens. In John 15:7, the conditional statement is “IF you remain in Me AND My words remain in you..., THEN ask...” What does it mean to remain in or abide in Christ? Obviously, it means to be in close contact with or a relationship with, to align your thinking with His thinking, your desires with His desires.

So what do we know about Christ? For starters, we know He is the way, and the truth, and the life (John 14:6). We know He cares, “I have loved you” (John 15:10). We know He can do all things, knows all things, and is all powerful (Col 1:13-20). So, in essence, to remain in Christ and His words (the Bible) to remain in you means to deal in truth, reality, action, knowledge, power, and caring.

Letting His Words Remain in You

The second key is letting the Bible (His Words) remain in you. This means reading Scripture for yourself, dwelling on the truth, the pure wisdom, and the love found inside, and even memorizing some favorite verses, and allowing the words to guide your thoughts, actions, and decisions. The Bible becomes more than a book; it becomes the lens through which you view the world. You become transformed by the renewing of your mind (Rom 12:2).

When God’s Word shapes your thinking, your desires begin to reflect His plans and purposes. For instance, rather than wishing solely for wealth, you may find yourself praying, as young King Solomon did, for wisdom to steward resources, to lead people, and to judge correctly (1 Kings 3:1-12).

Asking in Alignment With and Understanding God’s Will

With these foundations in place—abiding in Christ and letting His words shape your mind—your prayers take on a new dimension. Jesus says, “Ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you” (John 15:7). This is not about treating God like a genie but about asking from a place of alignment with reality and truth.

You see, you have a role to play. When God gave Israel the Promised Land, they had to go in, fight, and subdue the land. Yes, God gave it to them, but they had to do something as well. It took seven years for them to subdue the land and another ten years for Joshua to settle all the people where they needed to go (the whole book of Joshua).

So, yes, ask and He will give you whatever you ask. But are you remaining in Him and are His words remaining in you? And, just as importantly, are you willing to do what you need to

do? God will do His part, but you must also do yours. When your desires align with God’s character and purposes, and your actions are thoughtful, wise, consistent and true, your prayers carry both authenticity and power.

God is like a loving father. I loved it when my son, as a young boy, would come to me to spend time, ask questions about life, and even share his desires with me. Even if they were wild, crazy, and illegitimate desires. I loved that he wanted to share them with me. I would ask him questions to unpack where his heart was, to get behind and understand his desires. I think that is how God treats us. As a loving Father, come to Him with whatever you ask. Don’t be shy. Be honest and truthful. If you are concerned that your desire is illegitimate, you can always say, “God, if what I am asking for is ultimately not good for me and will not be good for You or Your glory, then please do not give it to me.”

So, from that mindset, ask yourself, “What do you want?” Truthfully, “What do you care about?” In reality, “What are you willing to take action on, to understand, and put some of your power toward achieving?” Start writing things down. Make a list of whatever comes to your mind. For example, I want to be financially out of the rat race, own some lakefront property, and an airplane to get there. When I get stuck, instead of asking what I want, I ask myself what I DON’T want. For example, I don’t want to be unhealthy, broke, alone, angry, tired, and stupid.

Trusting God’s Timing and Methods

It is essential to remember that God’s promises come to fruition in His time and in His way. Sometimes, His answers may not look like what we expect, but they are always for our ultimate good and His glory. Trusting Him means being open to His wisdom, even when the path seems unclear and uncertain.

Conclusion: A Life of Fulfilled Desires

John 15:7 teaches us that getting what we want is not about rubbing the lamp of a genie or manipulating God but about transforming our mind to think more like He thinks. When we abide in Christ and allow His Word to dwell within us, our desires and prayers begin to align more with His will. The result? A life marked by purpose, fulfillment, and joy in knowing that our wants are met according to His perfect plan.

So remain in Him, let His words guide you, and watch as your life overflows with answered prayers that reflect God’s glory.