

What Is Your Request?

Sermon #0981

Study by W. D. Frazee—September 2, 1966

"Then said the king unto her, What wilt thou, queen Esther? and what is thy request? it shall be even given thee to the half of the kingdom" Esther 5:3.

What if the king said that to you? You could have anything you wanted, even half of the kingdom. It would be too bad to ask something out of the dime store, wouldn't it? But this wasn't the end of it.

"And the king said again unto Esther on the second day at the banquet of wine, What is thy petition, queen Esther? and it shall be granted thee: and what is thy request? and it shall be performed, even to the half of the kingdom" Esther 7:2.

"Now what is thy petition? and it shall be granted thee: or what is thy request further? and it shall be done" Esther 9:12.

Three times in three days the queen is given the opportunity to ask for anything she wants. The king of the world empire said you will have it.

What a glorious opportunity. She asked for something big. What did she ask for? The life of her people. She got what she asked for.

Now we will see a similar setting, but a different response.

"And when a convenient day was come, that Herod on his birthday made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief estates of Galilee; And when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased Herod and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee. And he sware unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom. And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist" Mark 6:21-24.

Did she get it? Yes, she got it. And friends, you are going to get what you want. Be careful what you ask for. What is your request? It shall be granted. What is your petition? It shall be done. Esther asked for the life of her people. Salome asked for the death of a prophet. Both got their request. What are you going to ask for? God is in the business of giving people what they want. It takes a long time, but it is going to get done. Everyone in the universe is going to get what he wishes.

You say, I don't believe that.

Wait and see.

It is interesting to what length God goes to please everybody. Fish like water. God made a lot of it. Birds like air. God made that all around the world. Some people like peaches. God made trees that grow hundreds of peaches. Some people like apples, watermelons, mangos, sweet potatoes, and I could go on with a long list of things. It is evident that God is trying to please people.

But not everybody appreciates that sort of thing. Peter tells about a creature that was washed, and it went back to wallow in the mire. It was a sow. Why in the world does God allow hog wallows around? Because there are hogs that want them. And God is going to let creatures have what they want.

It is too bad to see men wallowing with the hogs, but there are plenty of people who are. And God doesn't close all the breweries and distilleries. He doesn't stop all the narcotics. He doesn't close up all the nightclubs. People are getting on TV and the radio and movies a mass of filthy hog wallowing. You wonder why God doesn't hold up His hand and stop the whole thing. Why is the filth ground out by the pounds? Because people want it.

Is that what you want? If you do you will get it.

Yesterday someone called my attention to a very interesting article in the Youth's Instructor, September 20, 1966. It was written by Paul Harvey. He is known all around the world as a commentator. A friend of his son was attending Wheaton college. He complained about the strict rules of the campus conduct. The pledge that the college required of the faculty and students this man considered unrealistic in our more enlightened age. He said it is ridiculous to tell college students that they can't dance or drink or smoke. Paul Harvey said:

"Don, please quit Wheaton.' Our animated dinner conversation was suddenly suspended in mid air. Don had expected an argument. Instead he received a blunt recommendation to quit the campus he considered out of step.

"Partly for my own eavesdropping son I went on, 'Please,' Don, 'leave Wheaton as soon as you can. Go to some school where you feel fit, but don't try to change Wheaton. Please don't try to make this school over in your image. Let there remain a few schools,' I pleaded, 'where the atmosphere is comfortable for young men and women who dare to be different.' He left Wheaton but the lost was his, not theirs.

"Fundamentalist colleges and universities are having an increasingly difficult time holding the line. Campus codes

are circumvented by off campus clubs. Southern Baptists, Seventh-day Adventist, and others of fundamental persuasion tend to preserve a Christ-like atmosphere in and out of the classroom to a mounting pressure."

Everybody can find some place to get what he wants. I have watched it here on this campus. You would think that a man who came to this campus and had a desire to get a smoke wouldn't be able to find a cigarette anywhere here. But don't fool yourself. You can't find one. I wouldn't know where to go to find one. But the fellow who is after a cigarette is very likely to find one. Why? Because of the thing we are studying.

Of course, it all depends on how bad people want something. I remember the sign of the former generation, I would walk a mile for a Camel. People have walked a good many more miles than one to get a cigarette.

A friend of mine was up in a Wyoming blizzard and heard a knock at his door. A neighbor was standing there asking for some tobacco. He had run out and was out in the blizzard trying to get some. My friend didn't have any. At the risk of his life the man went on to another neighbor. He had to have it. He got it.

The Bible is full of both sad and glad examples of how this thing works. Take Jacob and Esau. Esau wanted a mess of lintels. He got them to satisfy his stomach. To satisfy his appetite and passions was worth more to him than all the talk about a spiritual blessing. But Jacob wanted the blessing. He wanted it so bad he was willing to cheat to get it.

For years God had Jacob on a program to learn not to cheat. He had to learn that to get the blessing. All those experiences were to teach him to get rid of the things that would keep him from getting the blessings.

That night by the brook Jabbok he wrestled with the angel. As the morning dawned he seemed to know who it was he was contending with. He said, I will not let Thee go. He wanted that blessing. He got it.

Friends, if you want it as bad as Jacob wanted it, you will have it. And if you want that mess of pottage as bad as Esau wanted it, you will get it. What you want more than anything else is the thing you will get in this life and the life to come. And don't let anyone tell you that someone or something can keep you from it. Oh, no. God Himself, as the King upon His throne, has challenged you, What is your request? It shall be granted. What is your petition? It shall be done even to half the kingdom.

A generation ago a young man was about to be crowned as king, but he fell in love with another man's wife. She divorced her husband, and on the eve of his coronation he abdicated the throne that he might marry her. Some applauded him, but some weep to see a man break the law of God and the position of his people because of human infatuation. But he got what he wanted. He would rather have that divorced woman than have the crown of the world's greatest empire.

Elder Luther Warren wrote me a letter about that time. He said, "How sad that today when the coronation of heaven's royalty is so near that so many are abdicating the throne."

What is your request? Half the kingdom? The whole kingdom? You can have it. You men are to be kings and you women are to be queens through all eternity, unless you abdicate. God won't force it on you. You can be a queen. Like Solome you can ask for the head of the prophet. You will get what you ask for. Like a sow you can find a hog wallow to rest in. Like the drunkard you can find the stuff that dethrones reason. But if you want something better and higher you can have it. The choice is yours.

It is not a matter of circumstance or surroundings. It is not a matter of heredity or environment or pressure. You, and you alone, hold the key. What is your request? It will be granted. What is your petition? It shall be done. What a challenge, but what a glorious opportunity.

Sometimes it takes a lifetime to find out what you want. Sometimes it take a good part of a lifetime to get you ready to enjoy it.

Think of Moses. By faith he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing to suffer the affliction of the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Yes, Moses was asked, What do you want? Do you want the throne? It is yours. Moses said, I don't want the throne. I want to deliver those slaves. Did he get what he wanted? Thank the Lord.

But look what it cost him. I cost him the flight to Midian. It cost him forty years as a shepherd. He had to learn to work. All the pride was taken out of him. All the ambition of this world was taken out of him. But finally, after forty years, the Lord came to him and said, Moses, you remember what you wanted forty years ago. You are going to have it. I am ready now because you are ready. Let's go. The time has come. And thank God, two million slaves marched out of bondage, through the Red Sea, and across Jordan into the promised land.

Moses got his wish. Was it worth it? Yes, it was worth it. As he stood on Mount Nebo and surveyed the promise land, and in prophetic vision saw the future on until the final reward, Moses was abundantly satisfied with the choice he had made. He got everything he asked for.

God delights to give you what you want. But if it is worth anything it is going to cost something. How much are you willing to pay? Heaven has paid everything that you might have a destiny worthy of the God who offers it to you. If you want to walk with the kings, and if you want to walk with Moses and the other heroes of faith, that is a long, hard, upward struggle.

I was reading about a boy who had a gift for music, and wanted to learn to play the piano. He heard of a great master at the piano. He thought, Oh, if I could only study with that man. And he finally had the opportunity. He started to take lessons from this great master. But when the boy would hit the wrong key on the

piano the master stood there with a ruler and hit him on the knuckles. He hit so hard that it brought tears, but he kept coming back. I wonder why. Was he a fool? What was the matter with him? He wanted to learn. The ambition of his soul was to play the piano like the master, so he put up with the hitting of the knuckles.

One of the great sorrows of my life is to see how people study to keep away from correction or criticism. I see men and women as well as boys and girls right next to help, but are careful not to get it. They don't want to get their feelings hurt. Their knuckles don't get hit, and their feelings don't get hurt, neither do they learn to play. Oh, they may learn to finger along, but they never learn to be masters.

The greatest Master of the ages learned obedience through the things which He suffered. You will never learn it any other way, my friends. If you want to learn, press close to the people who may rap you on the knuckles if they have something worthwhile to share with you.

Someone says, But Brother Frazee, do you think that teacher should have rapped that boy on the knuckles?

That isn't my subject. But I share this picture with you. If all the people around you are so kind and nice and easy that they never hurt your knuckles or feelings, God will move you to some place where something will happen that will wake you up. If God sees you really mean business and want to learn something, and sees the thing you have chosen is a worthwhile thing, He will see that the trials and difficulties and corrections come to you.

Nebuchadnezzar was called God's servant. He wasn't the nicest man that ever lived. But God used him to develop some characters in people. God help us to want something bad enough to be willing to be spend and be spent to get what we want.

I read something interesting I must share. This was in Korea. One of our missionaries over there was visiting with the other workers. He said:

"I was talking to a young man not long ago who was successful in raising up a church and put up a building. I asked him how he did it.

"His answer was simple as he looked down at the ground and looked up again and said with a smile, 'I gave all I had to the Lord, and He gave me all this.' He waved his hand toward a nice church he had built.

"Then I asked him where he got the money to build the church with.

"He said, 'I didn't get any money.'

"With some surprise I asked him then how he got the church?

"He said, 'Our church group raised all the money for the materials except for the roof and the doors.'

"Then I asked him where he got his roof.

"He answered, 'I took the roof off my house and put it on the church.'

"I asked him if he and his family lived in a house without a roof?

"He said, 'We found a tent and pulled it over our house. It leaks quite a bit, but we put pans around when it rains, and we get along. We have a church now, and that is the important thing.'"

Was that man a fool? It is according to what you want. That man got what he wanted. He wanted a church and he got it. It cost him something.

There are a lot of people who would like to go to heaven if they could have all the things in this world and heaven too. There are a lot of people who think they would like to walk through gates of pearl and on golden streets if they could wallow with the hog in this world. They don't understand that the people who cultivate hog wallowing will never appreciate the golden streets. They don't understand that people who enjoy the rock and roll and all the other music of this earth would not enjoy the music of heaven. So with all the other contrasts. You will have what you want, but you can't dance with Solome and get what Esther got. You will get one or the other. What is your petition? It will be granted.

When our Lord was in Gethsemane Satan said there was nothing Jesus could do about it. But then Jesus saw you. He wanted you more than he wanted to go back to His Father. I can't explain that. I can't comprehend it. But that is why He died. Are you worth it? That's how valuable He thinks you are. It is too bad to take something that valuable and put it out with the pigs. It would be too bad to take something that valuable and use it to get a great position to be honored in this world. Jesus saw something in you so valuable that the thing He wanted more than anything in this universe was you. That is why He went ahead and drank the cup. He got what He wanted. It is written:

"He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied" Isaiah 53:11.

Jesus said, If I am to have glory, My people must share it with Me. I will go down in death so they can come with Me and share this life. Is Jesus going to get what He wants? Yes, but it cost Him everything.

The disappointments and trials that come in the daily life is that someone is forever getting in your way. Don't think if you come here to Wildwood that is all going to stop. No. You have to have some more of it. The whole purpose of all that is to

find out what you really want and how bad you want it. If you fade and faint out, when the bidding goes to three dollars you will never get what you are bidding for.

Do you want to follow Jesus? If I am working for Jesus, my job isn't to come around and say, Never mind, it is going to get easier. Just as soon as we get these problems solved, then things are going to get together and be easy. No friends. I tell you it is going to get harder. Where there is one trial there is going to be twenty in the road ahead. But what is all that for? Couldn't God stop it? Why doesn't He? Because you need to find out what you really want. And if you really want it, you are going to go on and on with Jesus because He guarantees He is going to let you have it.

The only thing you are going to get is the thing you want above everything else. And why shouldn't you get the thing you want more than anything else? What else would satisfy you?

James and John came to Jesus and said, Master, we want You to give us whatever we ask. Jesus said, What is that? They said, We would like to sit on one side and the other in Your kingdom. He saw down deep in their hearts that they wanted to be near their Lord. So instead of rebuking them He showed them how to get what they really wanted. He said, You need to drink of the cup I am going to take. You need to suffer the suffering I am going through. They said, All right.

That is what happened. James became the first to suffer martyrdom. He was the first one to drink the cup of suffering and death His Lord had taken. John was the longest to live in toil and suffering and sacrifice. Finally out on the Isle of Patmos Jesus came to him and told him he could actually sit with Him on His throne.

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne" Revelation 3:21.

What does it mean? It means that God is in the business of giving people what they want, if they want it bad enough and are willing to pay the price. What do you want more than anything else?

I remember once that I had a prayer band with a little child. I thought it would be a good thing to teach her about united prayer. We read the text:

"Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven" Matthew 18:19.

I said to the little girl, "Let's kneel down and unite in prayer. What would you like more than anything else."

She said, "I would like a doggy."

And she got it. That is all it took to satisfy her. It would take a lot more than that to satisfy me.

What do you want? A book? A violin? An apple pie? A degree? An automobile? A bank account? Worldly recognition? Do you want to be someone in the church or in the world? It is amazing how you can get what you want if you want it bad enough and are willing to pay the price.

The king said to Esther, "What is thy request? it shall be even given thee to the half of the kingdom." But remember that it cost.

I am so glad that the cost and value go together. Not that you can buy heaven. Oh, no. Christ has bought that with the sacrifice of His blood. But He has invited us to share with Him in some small way the abandonment of all things that we may set our heart on the one goal that is worth achieving—to do the thing we were born for.

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