

# We Ask But We Don't Receive— Setbacks

**“It is what we do with those setbacks that determine whether or not we’ll become fruitful or fruitless.” (page 9)**

By B. D. Tate

## Asking And Not Receiving!

**One of the most frustrating experiences for us as born again Christians is asking but not receiving.** “What if it doesn’t happen?” or “What if I lay hands on someone but they don’t get healed?” We have all experienced the disillusionment of expecting and not receiving. Especially when we see promises in scripture like these:

Mr 11:24 “Therefore I say to you, **whatever things you ask** when you pray, believe that you receive *them*, and you will have *them*.

Lu 11:9 “**So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you;** seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

Joh 16:24 “Until now you have asked nothing in My name. **Ask, and you will receive**, that your joy may be full.

After reading such passages and believing them then when we do not receive we can become disillusioned. Many so called biblical explanations are given to account for the discrepancy and if we embrace them, we will spend a lifetime in vagueness and powerlessness. Some of us have tasted the power of God before but become baffled when results are mixed. As we remain faithful to what we do know ***answers for the things we don't know will come***. Unfortunately, we can

grow impatient then disgruntled and lose enthusiasm for the pure sense of God's word and in this place there is neither joy nor victory that overcomes. Listen to these verses:

Lu 9:62 But Jesus said to him, "No one, **having put his hand to the plow, and looking back**, is fit for the kingdom of God."

Hebrews 10:35 **Therefore do not cast away your confidence**, which has great reward.

36 For **you have need of endurance**, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise:

37 "For yet a little while, *And* He who is coming will come and will not tarry.

38 Now the just shall live by faith; **But if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him.**"

Re 2:26 "**And he who overcomes**, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations--

These verses and others speak to the need to persevere, press on, stay the course, overcome, and do not draw back. We are going to face opposition from the enemy, from our own doubts, unbelief and fears, from carnal Christianity, from traditions within the church, and when we fail to receive these attacks will only be heightened. If we cave and give in we will find ourselves on the broad and wide road of "**Vague Christianity**" that roughly lives powerless, double minded and unclear maintenance lives. Smith Wigglesworth put it this way:

**The man that stops gets nothing.** Oh, don't stop at Jericho; don't stop at Jordan; **don't stop anywhere when God would have you move on into all of His fullness that He has for you.** (Smith pg. 123 Ever Increasing Faith)

**May God help you never to stop persevering till you get what you want.** Let your aspiration be large and your faith rise **until you are wholly on fire for God's best.** (Smith pg. 123 EIF)

There isn't one person who has started to apply grace and faith in healing or any other promise of scripture **who hasn't had setbacks.** It seems that many when they start have received the truth with gladness and with a pure childlike faith went forward sometimes with trepidation; yet God's power manifested. Like beginners luck which is a saying for those who try something with no history, no baggage, and no fearful expectations; the first time they hit the mark, make the shot, and succeed in the task. Of course afterward they experience failure just like everyone else and must decide to apply the principles or fundamentals of whatever it is they are after. If it is shooting a basketball, they may have made their very first shot but then fail. They will be like everyone else and have to practice and learn better techniques to become more proficient at shooting. ***God wants us to grow up in our faith and become skillful*** with the many dynamics of healing the sick, casting out demons, and bringing deliverance to others.

Not everyone we have witnessed to about the saving grace of Jesus has responded. There are many reasons why someone isn't ready to receive and become born again. We don't throw away the gospel truth because we don't know why someone refused to accept Christ. We know God's will on the matter but each person must decide and respond for him or herself. Likewise, there are many biblical reasons why when we ask we didn't receive. We know it is God's will on the matter but each person must sift through their own issues of

doubt, unbelief, fear, or **lack of established grace in their heart** (Page eleven expands on what this means).

Andrew Wommack related his story of this very thing. He'd had marvelous success at a meeting in another state where he had the privilege of raising someone from the dead. His faith was pumped; he knew and experienced great confidence because of it. At the very next service he noticed a quadriplegic man in a wheel chair in the front. As he was preaching that night he said that he could hardly wait to end his message so he could heal this man. When it was over he had the man brought up on the stage and then he grabbed the man's hands and commanded in the name of Jesus for him to rise up and walk! He pulled the man out of the wheel chair and this man rose swung past Andrew and fell flat on his face! The entire crowd gasped in horror. **Andrew was shocked and because of the crowd reaction became dislocated and embarrassed in his faith.** He put the man back in his wheel chair and sent him away without being healed. Now this was certainly an opportunity for Andrew to have become disillusioned and back away from healing anyone in the future. He said he struggled for two years wanting to know the answer. Some would argue that Andrew didn't have enough faith but he knew he did, he'd just raised someone from the dead! Some might argue that God's sovereignty means that we will never know when healing will come, but Andrew knew God's will is always to heal because in the atonement Jesus Christ already did heal everyone as He has saved everyone.

He said he was reading about Smith Wigglesworth's story when the answer came to him. Smith Wigglesworth always began his meetings by demonstrating the power of God

to heal. He would say the first one up on the stage will be healed. There were two ladies who were waiting for this to bring their older woman friend, who was suffering from a large tumor in her stomach, onto the stage first. She looked pregnant but being elderly this was not the case. They managed to get her up on the stage first but they had to stand by her side and hold her up she was so weak. Smith looked at the women and said to those who were holding her, "Let her go!" The women let the old lady go and she fell face forward on her tumor. The women and the crowd were shocked and gasped in horror. Smith told them to pick her up. Then he told them again, "Let her go!" The women did as told and the old lady fell down on her face and tumor again. The crowd gasped louder than the first time. Smith told the ladies to pick her up again. They did but when Smith told them to let her go the third time, they refused. Then a man from the audience yelled out, "You beast! Let that woman alone!" Smith responded to the man, "You sir, mind your own business, I know mine." Then he turned to the women and shouted, "Let her go!" The women let her go and the old lady started to fall as before but then caught herself and suddenly the tumor fell out of her dress onto the stage and she walked off healed. Andrew realized something after reading of this account. He said, "I realized then that I had the same faith as Smith did but he didn't have any unbelief. **He was not moved by what others thought as he had been.**" With this insight he discovered that he didn't have a faith problem he had an unbelief problem and began to address it.

This story should help all of us realize that grace and faith in regards to healing is a process of growth and maturity in overcoming the many aspects of doubt, unbelief, fear, worry, the enemy, and natural hindrances, etc...Someone might say

but that gets complicated and puts a lot of pressure on us to prepare, to overcome, and to fight the good fight of faith. There is truth to this, we have a very important part to play; I like the way Andrew put this:

This is the way our answers to prayer come. **God moves in the spirit world and gives us our answer by faith and we convert it into a physical reality through our actions.** That is not to say that we are the one who produced the answer by our own power. **It is God who works the miracles, but they do come through us. Without Him, we can do nothing, but He has made us joint heirs together with Christ so that He does nothing without us.** Ephesians 3:20 says, "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, ACCORDING TO THE POWER THAT WORKETH IN US" (emphasis mine). **We have a part to play in receiving from God. Ignorance of this has been our greatest problem.**

I also like reminding us that as we precede, progress, and overcome we may not have arrived where we are having perfect success but we have left and are not where we use to be. Before grace and faith in regards to healing my personal success in praying for others must have been as low as one percent, now, after investing, meditating, praying, and speaking with this understanding my personal success in receiving must be over forty to fifty percent! Each of us has to engage in this battle to overcome our setbacks, disappointments, and lack of understanding to receive the prize. Is it worth it? I'll say it is and more remember this verse:

Hebrews 10:35 **Therefore do not cast away your confidence,** which has great reward.

The following is taken from the Booklet, "Finding Our Place in God."

## We Have The Greatest Job!

Think about this for a moment. This calling is so vitally important that Jesus said, **“Unless you people see signs and wonders you will in no wise believe** (John 4:48).” And because the people are NOT seeing signs and wonders through His representatives, they do not believe! **Anyone can make a claim to truth but only Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit operating through a believer can back it up! This is our calling to have the word confirmed! It is our position, placement, job, career, and fulfillment in this life...it is a major part of the Great Commission.**

### We Are Missing It!

We are in a war and in a time of war a country mobilizes all of its people and resources to focus on winning that war. Likewise, God has a job for us to do in this world to provide for what we need; **but more important He has a job for us to do that overcomes this world in Christ’s name!** We need to stop pursuing worldly things, watching worldly things, being filled with and entertained by worldly things as if we are missing out on something. **The truth is we are missing out on the greatest revival the world (and maybe all of time) will ever see that is the harvesting of souls for Jesus.**

**We are God’s laborers (sons and daughters);** this is our position. We are supposed to be filled with the Holy Spirit and be available daily for work.

### Would You Trade?

Let me ask you, if you healed a dying person of sickness and disease, if you freed one person of demonic oppression or possession, if you opened one person's blind eyes, or healed someone who was deaf, mute, or paralyzed, in Jesus' name, **would there be anything in this life you would trade for that?** Would you trade healing someone for a better paying job? Would you trade raising the dead for a championship? Would you trade opening blind eyes or ears for a better house, clothes, and vacations? I think in truth some of us might and **ALL OF US HAVE BEEN** that's why the church is so weak. We have spent our energy, time, and resources chasing after those things that are temporal and absolutely ignoring, neglecting **the fact that God has committed His ability, power, authority, to us.**

### **This Is Our Job!**

What I am saying is that our job is to be filled with God's Spirit, broken from the world's influences of cares, riches, lusts, and our self rule **and walk in the power of Christ to minister reconciliation to those around us.** We know we are supposed to save the lost, to witness, etc...but what we haven't known is that we were suppose to heal the sick, raise the dead, cast out demons in his name and then witness the saving grace of Jesus. If we focus, pay attention, **learn our position, place and authority** as a child of God and exercise the power of healing and delivering as we have been commissioned to do, do you think witnessing, and sharing Jesus would be easier? **Do you think that God's game plan of working the same works Christ worked through us would succeed in convincing, convicting, and converting sinners?** I do.

**We are the laborers!** This is our place...

## Doesn't It Make Sense?

Doesn't it make sense that something so vital and so important an aspect of the gospel might require more than a little effort? If this is God's intended way of validating and proving His Word in people's lives doesn't it make sense that the enemy would fight against it in us?

The only thing the enemy can do to stop us is to dissuade, to bring doubt and unbelief into the arena, to bring persecution, to bring in "nay sayers," to bring in pseudo Christian arguments and excuses **all in an effort to get us to quit**. This is because if we persevere and stay the course and become mature in our faith and skill we will be a threat ***in the same way that Jesus was***, the apostles were, and many men and women who overcame their disillusionment to win.

## There Are Some Major Themes To Always Keep In Mind!

There are major themes that should help us stay on the path such as realizing that God wants us to grow up in our faith and mature in our understanding so that we are not childish in working the works of Christ (John 14:12).

- 1) **We must press on and keep faithful** to the things we do know and understand in spite of the things we don't. In time God does answer us and direct our hearts to know exactly what hindered us from receiving. We can't let go, give up or give in that is exactly what the enemy of our souls would want us to do. We are all going to be challenged to let it go but we must stand in the truth and move forward

especially now that we have tasted and experienced God's power in healing.

- 2) **Everyone experiences setbacks**, defeat, or failure because we are not perfect in our efforts as Jesus was while on the earth. **It is what we do with those setbacks that determine whether or not we'll become fruitful or fruitless.** Our walk with God is not a straight line upwards but a graph of ups and downs, plateaus, and ups again. The overall experience progressing upward with our ups going higher and our downs not as low.
- 3) **We must fight war with war.** We must see that the Spiritual war we are in is fierce, lives are at stake, death, disease, the curse are not going to take a break or go on vacation. We must engage in this war with the same commitment. If we want to win we must fight war with war so to speak. Often our efforts are more in line with a police action or hobby, or weekend warrior mentality. We will get results but according to our effort—focus. Many want the same results as those who engaged in the war with an all out effort of war while actually only half committed to the fray. Jesus was totally involved, the apostles were fully committed; many of the healing ministers I've studied were completely focused such as Smith Wigglesworth, T.L. Osborn, F. F. Bosworth, E. W. Kenyon, and John G. Lake, etc.
- 4) **Many of their ministry's writings include the perspective of successes and failures.** For example John G. Lake wrote that if ten people were to come to the altar for healing, three of four would receive immediate results, three or so would

experience relief and recovery towards complete healing, while the rest would be unsuccessful. In other accounts many describe the phenomenon of some receiving their healing only to lose it over the next days or weeks as symptoms return and they didn't hold onto it. Like someone getting saved at a meeting but not following up with it eventually turning back to the old ways, losing confidence in their salvation, and maybe walking completely away attributing it to feelings or religious influences.

- 5) **There must come a time of self evaluation to determine what our heart actually does embrace.** We can't walk in someone else's revelation, or someone else's confidence ***we must know God's Word for ourselves.*** How do we really know in our heart and are genuinely convinced? When are we walking by emotions, or just head knowledge about God's promises? When is it real to us and ***we are established in grace?*** When do we know the battle is already won and stand to overcome and when do we realize we need to use medical treatment? We can fool ourselves wanting to experience grace and faith ***but not be established.*** This is a Spirit thing that is wrapped in being convinced without doubt, having the knowing that we know kind of faith, and being assured that this is the time to stand. Faith knows; doubts don't...one way is to overcome in the little things and having success grow in greater things...another is to locate our heart by the words that we speak, the questions we ask, whether or not we speak faith and supernatural solutions or natural ones.
- 6) ***We must be established in grace!*** Our hearts are like a garden and we are responsible to keep it. Seed,

time, and harvest are fundamental rules of growth for every person and what we believe now comes from what we've allowed to grow in our heart. We become established in grace when we plant God's word in our heart. **God's word is planted when we are CONVINCED.** When we are convinced we are not shaken, moved, or wavering in what grace is. We have enough faith when we are convinced. God's word is incorruptible seed and will produce the harvest we long for it to produce if we do not un-plant it! When we turn on God, doubt the promise, accept another answer instead of the plain sense of God's word we are un-planting the good seed. We must stay faithful that when we don't receive it, that ***it isn't that God didn't*** (heal or restore)! We have a receiving problem. When grace is established in our hearts without doubt we will receive! It will produce peace, knowing, love, joy, patience, power, and the manifestation. **Consider that our salvation in being born again is established in our heart!** We know that we know, we are unmoved, unshakeable, and firmly rooted and no one or thing will change our minds. **When the promises of God are just as certain, just as deeply established and rooted, we will be fruitful and manifesting the power of God in demonstration of the Spirit.** Amen.

Heb 13:9 Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines. For *it is* good that the heart be **established by grace...**

2Pe 1:12 For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are **established in the present truth.**

7) **We must keep before us by way of reminder the principles and promises involved in grace and**

**faith in healing.** We tend to forget, get complacent, revert back to old ways of thinking, get comfortable with where we are, and when we do we slip back into the old nature again. As long as we are walking in the Spirit we are no longer under the law (Ga 5:18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law).

Peter said there is a ministry of remembrance as we progress through the dynamics of grace and faith in healing or any other promise of God (II Pet. 3:1). We keep each other on track, pressing forward, and staying the course. For we know that Satan is seeking to sift all of us from the truth in this matter, but Christ has prayed for us that our faith fail us not, and when we have returned, strengthen the brethren (Luke 22:31).

## **A Scripture Passage About *Not* Receiving**

This passage in James addresses believers who don't receive. The answers **may not be what we'd like to hear**; yet, we need to hear the truth so that we can locate ourselves and move towards the solution.

### **James 4:3-10**

3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend *it* on your pleasures.

4 Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

5 Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, "The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously"?

6 But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

7 Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse *your* hands, *you* sinners; and purify *your* hearts, *you* double-minded.

**9 Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and *your* joy to gloom.**

10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.

(Vs. 3) **We ask amiss!**

James' teaching is **quite blunt**. James tells us that we ask and don't receive because we ask amiss. This means we asked wrong, or incorrectly, or we have muddled it, confused it, or mixed it up.

(Vs. 4) Then he explains what some of those wrong or incorrect ways are:

- 1) To spend our answers *on ourselves*—for selfish reasons and pleasures
- 2) *Adultery*, which is to focus our heart on another, another kingdom, another's word, another's truth...maybe even our own agendas.
- 3) *Friendship with the World*, which is to love this life, the pleasure of this life, to be material minded, covetous, to fear what others think, say, or believe...these things make us an enemy of God...so if we are asking for things that promote this position God will not answer...nor will His grace manifest on our behalf.
- 4) (Vs. 5) *The Spirit yearns jealousy* to manifest according to the Will and purpose of God, to deliver, heal, cast out, restore, and destroy the works of the flesh...to destroy the works of the devil.
- 5) (Vs. 6) *God resists the proud*, those who would see him or herself as the reason, source, as better than, superior,

someone who has earned, worked for, who thinks they have a superior faith and purpose...

(Vs. 6) **We've been given God's grace!**

God gives grace to the humble...this isn't referring to resignation, whatever will be will be, a weakness, or anyone seeking to loath themselves, think of self as nothing...but refers to our purpose of being created for God's glory, use, and His pleasure not our own. True Humility is assertive, positive, authoritative, knowing where the truth is, walking in the power and might of God.

Humility also embraces what God thinks about us, what God has done in Christ on our behalf, becomes obedient even to the point of death, becomes convinced of God's Word and will, knows we are the temple of the Holy Spirit, God's vessel for use, given His grace, name, power, love, authority to destroy the works of the devil...

(Vs 7) **Submit to God!**

Submit to God, seek first God's Kingdom, be sold out for God's purposes, be in line with God's will and word; come under God's desire, goals, and dreams, have the same mind as Christ, deny selfish ambitions, be a servant, obey God's Word, stay true to God's Spirit...

(Vs 7) **Resist the Devil!**

Overcome the wicked ones, do not give in, give up, or cave into worldly things, symptoms, or circumstances...do not lose hope, return to doubts and unbelief, be strong and of good courage, be convinced and stay faithful, **stand in God's peace** despite what we see or feel, walk by faith in God's already provided grace. We must rebuke the contrary symptoms or circumstances, and speak to the mountain of resistance in

Jesus' name. We must speak life and health to our bodies and those we are ministering to...

(Vs. 8) **Draw Near to God!**

Draw near to God and He will draw near to us. It is up to us to draw near to God; God is already ready. He can't make it happen we must open up to Him. Godliness is not predestined by God for some and not others as in playing favorites, God shows no favoritism; so the amount of godliness that gets manifest in my life is depending, waiting upon my investment of focus, time, priority, desire...even so, I am not the producer, manufacturer, or source of growth, I can only provide for it...**God is waiting on us to open up and dwell**, abide, and satisfy God's yearning Spirit to walk and work in and through us...

(Vs 8) **Cleanse *your* hands, *you* sinners; and purify *your* hearts, *you* double-minded.**

Cleanse is to repent, turn from selfish pleasures, worldly entertainments; we are in a spiritual war and we need to fight like we are in a war—all out effort. Purify your hearts you double minded. Turn from not being single minded about the things of God. Purify means to discern and separate traditions of men, half truths, integrated doubts that are presented like the gospel, receive revelation knowledge that comes from a deep personal encounter and relationship with God. Remove the double mindedness of not knowing God's will...

(Vs 9) **Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and *your* joy to gloom.**

**This Is The Key...**

Lament is to be sorrowful, regret, be in grief because our present condition is contrary to the love and nature of God. Mourn as if dying to self, be willing to give it all to God; let the Spirit of God break us of our willfulness, selfishness, and/or self centeredness. Weep because we are grieving (not walking in grace) the Holy Spirit of God within us. Weep because it hurts when we are fully exposed as falling short and unable to save ourselves or heal our heart. Weep because we want God's will done; but we can't get there. Weep because we want it with all our heart.

**Let your laughter be turned to mourning and joy to gloom** because in our flesh and carnal being we may see what needs to be done; how much we are not believing God, how much we are captive by our sin, the world, lusts, greed, passions, and although it is revealed to us ***we just continue to enjoy this life as we have it.*** We forget God's grace, grow callous to it, put it behind us, and stay in our present state and make the best of it.

**God didn't show it (our naturalism) to us to stay there or so that we would have a pity party. He showed it to us, our lack, and our missing it; so that we would believe we've given our lives to Him. As we focus on Jesus in us, seeing Him as He is, the Spirit heals, restores, empowers, and changes our heart towards Him (II Cor. 3:18).** It only happens when we come with all that we are, God will not accept less, nor override a heart we believe we've partially taken back. Lament, mourn and weep because that reflects our recognition of us allowing our sin nature to dominate again.

**Our spirit is right with God and fully committed; the battle is over our heart. When we believe the right things and look to God to trust, believe, and rest in His grace—our heart changes automatically. We need however, to overcome our sin nature by pressing into the things of**

**God. We cultivate God's life in us. We focus on it but it is God's Spirit that yields the increase and change.**

James the apostle must have known this powerful truth that we must be broken from our self centered ways (continue to overcome naturalism) but it begins with being made aware of the problem. We know we are responsible to be useful, fruitful, and filled with God's Spirit to do what Jesus did; however, we are powerless to accomplish this in our carnal condition. **Therefore, we must encounter the living God in miraculous ways to have Him convert our heart and establish grace in it.** This is the baptism of fire and the cup of Christ's suffering we are to enter into...**without it we remain aware but unchanged** (Matt. 20:22).

(Vs. 10) **Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.**

We humble ourselves because we see how far short we are living and what He has done for us is missing in the reality of our life. We groan, mourn, weep, because we must acknowledge that we died to self and that is all that we have. We humble ourselves realizing that our life as it is does not produce the fruit of godliness that pleases Him. As we humble ourselves to His almighty power and grace He heals our heart, changes it towards His will and way; **And He will lift us up!** He will manifest and glorify Himself in and through us because we will be in a different place from our heart—established in grace! **We will be believing, believers!**