

What Happens When You Really Seek God First

Only one flight away from reaching home after a week-long absence, I was waiting at the airport for my plane to arrive at the gate. I don't mind waiting in airports; being by myself gives me a chance to, well, be by myself. I can read or surf the web for a little while without worrying about being interrupted.

But I knew my children were eager for me to be home. They had called me almost every evening during my absence, and that day (as my husband told me through text messaging) they were getting anxious to have me back. So when my plane pulled up to the gate, I took a picture of it, and I texted it to my husband so he could show it to the kids and tell them Mommy's plane was almost ready to bring me home.

I expected to receive a text back from him that said something like, "Yay! They can't wait!" But the text I got instead said, "They want to see a picture of YOU. Take a selfie." So I managed to take a selfie that didn't make me look like I was looking into a fun-house mirror (it's always awkward to get the right angle), and I sent it.

I thought it was sweet that they wanted to see *me*, not just my plane. I understood why. When you miss somebody, you want to see the person herself, not just a picture of a metal tube with wings. When you long for someone, you want her presence, not just a shot of the vehicle that will bring her to you.

It's the same way with God—only sometimes, we don't realize it. Here's what I mean: what we really need, spiritually speaking, is God's presence. We need God Himself. The problem is that we sometimes think that what we really need are the benefits He provides—and His presence, while a nice add-on,

isn't strictly necessary.

We couldn't be more wrong. Yes, we need God's strength, comfort, wisdom, and so on. But they are not commodities God dispenses apart from His presence. They only come to us when we are in His presence.

When you ask God for strength, and He gives it to you, it's because God has shown up in your situation to help you handle it. When you weep for His comfort and receive it, it's because God Himself is there, putting His arms around you. When you need wisdom to know what to do in a particular situation, and suddenly it's there, that's because God Himself is nearby, sharing His thoughts with you.

Never forget that God is a very personal, intimate God who longs for a deep relationship with you. How it must grieve Him when you—or I—desperately beseech Him for things He can do for us, never realizing that what we really need is He Himself. That's what Jesus meant when He told His followers to seek God first, and they would not only have Him, but they would have everything else they needed.

Not only that, but God won't just sort of mail His responses to you while He sits up in heaven somewhere, distant. He's going to deliver them to you personally, which works out great, because what you really want is not merely the gift. You want God to show up, and that's what He's promised to do.

Don't set your sights so low as to ask merely for the gift when you could have the Giver, too.

Matthew 6:33—But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. (ESV)

Jeremiah 29:13-14a—You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you, declares the LORD.

*Adapted from **Megan Breedlove's** blog, Manna for Moms. Megan is the author of Well Done, Good and Faithful Mommy and Manna for Moms: God's Provision for Your Hair-Raising, Miracle-Filled Mothering Adventure (Regal Books.) She is also a blogger and a stay-at-home mom with five children.*