

## CouplesInBloom.com – God’s Guard

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Wonderful ‘how-to’ information from God: “And whatever we ask, we **receive** from Him, because we **keep** His commandments and **do** those things that are pleasing in His sight.” ⇒ 1 John 3:22. That word **keep** literally means to **guard from loss or injury**. Such specific information is great to know, and the next two verses give more details:

- ✓ 1 John 3:23 ⇒ (live by) faith (*a verb*) in Jesus, and love one another as Jesus defined.
- ✓ 1 John 3:24 ⇒ **guard God**’s injunctions (*literally*: commandments to join Him). This is how God’s Holy Spirit lives in us *and* how we live in God’s Holy Spirit, *and* how we know for sure that all this is indeed true. Thank you Jesus for letting us know about this vital and life-changing news! We realize and appreciate the benefits God offers us here:
  - ✓ We can *actually* learn what God wants... by **keeping** / owning it.
  - ✓ We can *actually* **do** what God wants... once we learn it.
  - ✓ We can *actually* **receive** whatever we ask from God... once we do what we learned.

Jesus taught us to **ask God in different ways** in different situations. Matthew 6:9-13 ⇒ is what is known as the **Lord’s prayer**. In it, Jesus models a general approach to God (i.e. our Father), addresses multiple topics, and uses brief sentences. John 17 ⇒ is what is known as the **Jesus’ high priestly prayer**. In it, Jesus models an intimate approach to God (i.e. Father), addresses only one topic, and uses exhaustive paragraphs. The heart of this latter prayer is often referred to as ‘praying through’, as we intimately remain in God’s presence *until* the Holy Spirit brings peaceful closure that bears witness to our own spirit.

This 2-way communication is *central* to Jesus’ “keep-do-receive” process of intimacy. To approach asking God with mere intellect is Gnosticism, and such requesters find they do *not receive* whatever they ask. The entire Bible flows with God’s request for intimate relationship with His beloved creatures He made in His own image: mankind. That image includes a free will, but He incentivized His call with many benefits... all undeserved. At the same time, He guards His call against insincerity by seeing who returns His intimacy.

When reciprocated (the do part of “keep-do-receive”), God’s Holy Spirit has a temple to dwell in... namely: us. Then called the bride of Christ (filled with God), we are one with God and actually receive whatever we ask from God. Beautiful; absolutely beautiful.

So going full circle on this simple process of intimacy: we see that receiving from God has everything to do with intimacy with God... which is God’s #1 goal, and becomes our #1 goal once we realize anything we could ask for pales next to Who He is. Asking and receiving remain as blessings which He loves to give and we love to enjoy. We also grow into maturity and love to give gifts *back* to Him... which He loves to receive from us.

For all this, we **guard God**’s injunctions... *literally*: we **keep** His commandments to join Him with every aspect of our life. **God guards us** in response (our hearts and minds) by giving us supernatural peace that exceeds everything that exists! ⇒ Philippians 4:7.

So we throw away the lie “**keep His commandments**” is a negative burden *because we now know* that it means to “**guard God’s love**” for us from loss or injury... **gladly!**♥