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Yet you don't have what you want because you don't ask God for it. James 4:2 NLTThis morning, I was praying for my friend. A few weeks ago, her car was stolen and destroyed so much the insurance company considered it totaled. So, she needs a different one. I realized, that I have not asked her what kind of car she would like! What is she believing for? I know what I think she needs, but that may be far from her desire.Many years ago, our family was a one family car. I don't quite remember the make, but it was a blue van. It was very useful for both carrying people and things. But, if Darryl needed it, I was stuck at home. It is not bad to have to coordinate schedules--it keeps the communication open, for sure. But our season of life was changing as our oldest daughter was beginning school and it wasn't convenient to always work around her schedule. So as I was praying, I saw myself driving around in this little red car. I began to thank the Lord for this car.We did not have the funds for an added car, but we did have the need. This was the first major purchase God put on my heart first, before Darryl in our marriage. I went to him, and said, "We need a second car. This is what God has shown me." I think he was a little skeptical--but that was ok. I kept praying. We didn't share it with anyone. A few months went by, and my mom called me and said, "Martha, I want to buy you a car. I can only give you $3,000." I was so shocked! She had never, ever offered me anything like this ever before. What a joy to go car shopping! I kept the picture God gave me in mind. As we told the salesman what we were looking for, I spied a little red VW Rabbit on the lot. I just knew it was the right car. Next to the Red Rabbit, was a green one. We drove both. The salesman tried really hard to put us in the green one, but I just didn't like it. Long story short, we drove off with the Red Rabbit without paying him a dime! My mom had yet to send the funds. He trusted us to come back and pay him. We also negotiated it down to exactly $3,000! How I loved that car, mostly because it was a symbol of God's provision and grace. It became our only car when we lent our van to a missionary family (it was gone for six months!). This blessing gave us the freedom to help meet our friends need before we even knew they needed it!The first part of James, chapter 4, Paul asks why are there quarrels and conflicts among God's people. Don't they come from the evil desires at war within you? You want what you don't have, so you scheme and kill to get it. You are jealous of what others have, but you can't get it, so you fight and wage war to take it away from them. Yet you don't have what you want because you don't ask God for it. James 4: 1-2.NLT.I think most of us are too refined and civilized to physically fight, but how many "conflicts" and "quarrels" have you fought in your own mind about the blessings others may have while you feel left out? The car my friend had stolen, was actually a gift to her from our church several years ago. I am sure, when she was selected, others may have felt disappointed because it wasn't given to them. My friends, we must learn to rejoice with those that rejoice! We must learn to celebrate and trust our God is a God of both. He can bless you and me at the same time.Even if these **are** internal or quiet jealousies, they will grow and cause separation between each other if we don't deal with them. We must confess them to the Lord and allow His perspectives to become our perspectives. Last week I took a vacation with my daughter Elizabeth and her family to Disneyland. We had a wonderful time in the torrential rain!There may be some who read this and become envious, but I hope not. This was a trip they had prayed and believed God for. It was a testimony to their children of God's faithfulness. My grandchildren asked if I could come along! We made memories and it was a very special time. Please rejoice with us. So many times we settle for less, because we don't even think there could be a way for us to do something. When those thoughts descend, you stop dreaming, much less praying. Begin to ask the Lord for His will and plans for you--maybe even outside of spiritual things. This trip stirred my faith to see what one man dreaming could accomplish. Many times getting out of our environment opens up greater vision.While I was on the plane, God began to talk with me. He told me that He had given me the gift of faith, not just to my husband. As I began to think about the amazing things faith had accomplished through our lives, I was humbled. Looking on the horizon facing me--I have thousands of dollars of home repairs (more than when we left!), a new ministry to lead and some health issues to release my faith and see Him move. Boldly asking for provision, wisdom and healing brings peace as well as hope. Do I believe He is able to do all these things? Yes, He is more than enough. He is not only a God of both, He is a God of many facets.Our testimonies lead to more faith and more testimonies if we let them. Of course there are new challenges which must be met with increased faith. Don't stop growing in your faith, my friends. Remember, He is a good God, doing good things in and through our lives--yours included, if we don't get stuck in unbelief or fear. There was a reason God told Joshua several times "be strong and of good courage", it takes both those things to press forward in His ways. I want to remind you--it is worth it. Don't give up.When I see my friend, I am going to ask her what kind of car she is believing for, and then I will join my faith with hers and watch our God show up!Father, teach us how to release our faith in these days. Teach us how to apply Your Word to those difficult situations and to take the time to ask you for things, not just whine because we need them. I thank you for loving us, teaching us and helping us grow in these areas. Forgives us our jealousies, in Jesus' Name, amen. |