



Course 4, Session 5 Student Notes: Ask for the Decision

The Last Two Feet of an Honest Sale

Big Idea: Serving someone includes inviting them to decide. A clear, honest ask is a gift, not a pressure.

How to use these notes. These are yours to study on your own, before or after the session. Read each section slowly. Under every principle there is a **Notes** space to write what stands out to you, and a **Reflect** question to answer honestly in writing. Keep your Bible nearby. Take about 30 minutes, and end in prayer. Bring your notes and questions to the group.

Open in Prayer

Before you begin, pray this simple prayer, or your own: "Father, You are a God who invites us to ask. Give me the courage to serve all the way to a clear invitation, and to trust You with the answer. Take away my fear of the ask, and settle my heart. In Jesus' name, Amen."

The Scripture for This Session

Read these slowly, out loud if you can:

- **Nehemiah 2:4**, "Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make request? So I prayed to the God of heaven. And I said unto the king."
- **Esther 7:3**, "Let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request."
- **James 4:2**, "ye have not, because ye ask not."
- **Matthew 7:7**, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

Reflect: Before this session, be honest, do you tend to serve people right up to a decision and then never actually ask? Where has that happened?

The Big Picture

Here is a scene almost everyone has lived. A man spends an hour helping a friend think through a decision. He listens, he asks good questions, he tells the truth, he genuinely serves. And then, right at the end, when the

moment comes to say, “So, do you want to move forward?”, he suddenly gets shy. He mumbles, “Well, no pressure, just let me know whenever, no rush at all.” And the friend says, “Yeah, sounds good, I will think about it,” and nothing ever happens. All that service, and no invitation to decide.

This session is about the last two feet of the conversation, the honest ask that so many good people skip. For four sessions we have been building an honest seller, someone who serves instead of pressures, who persuades in the open, who listens before pitching, and who tells the truth even when it costs the sale. But none of that finishes on its own. You can do all four perfectly and still leave a person standing at the edge of a good decision with no one to invite them across. Serving includes the ask. The ask is not the moment honesty ends and pressure begins. Done right, the ask is the most respectful thing you can do, because it hands the person a real choice. Read the four truths below, write your notes, and answer the reflections.

Principle 1: Asking Is Part of the Serving, Not a Violation of It.

We are wonderful at the serving. We get shy at the asking. So the conversation just sort of dissolves. “Let me know if you are interested.” “No pressure at all.” “Take your time.” The person nods, drifts off, and the good thing you could have done for them never happens, because nobody ever invited them to say yes.

See this clearly: asking for the decision is part of the serving. If your offer genuinely helps this person, and you have told them the truth about it, then the most loving thing you can do next is give them a clear moment to choose. Not to trap them. Not to corner them. To invite them. When you refuse to ask, you are not being humble or gentle. You are actually withholding the one thing that lets them act on what would help them. James 4:2 says something that ought to unsettle every shy seller, “ye have not, because ye ask not.” A lot of good you could do goes undone in this world for the simple reason that nobody had the courage to ask.

Reflect: What is the decision you most often serve people right up to, but fail to actually ask for?

Notes:

Principle 2: Pray, Then Ask, Like Nehemiah.

Here is the pattern, and it comes from a man who pulled off one of the boldest asks in the Bible. Nehemiah is a cupbearer to a pagan king, and he wants permission and resources to go rebuild the ruined walls of Jerusalem. This is an enormous request from a servant to an emperor. The king, seeing his sadness, asks him, “For what dost thou make request?” And watch the two moves he makes, because they are the whole model.

First move: “So I prayed to the God of heaven.” A silent arrow prayer, shot up in a half second while the king waits. Second move: “And I said unto the king.” Then he asks. Nehemiah does not treat the ask as a purely human transaction. He brings God into the very moment of the request. Before you invite someone to decide, shoot up your own quick prayer, “Lord, help me serve them well and give me the words,” and then ask. This

one breath prayer settles the nerves and reminds you that the outcome belongs to God, not to your charm or your closing skill.

Reflect: Which half of Nehemiah's verse do you tend to skip, the praying or the asking? What is the one breath prayer you could pray in the pause?

Notes:

Principle 3: Ask Plainly and Specifically. Cut the Fog.

A clear ask names the actual decision. "Would you like to move forward?" "Are you ready to get started?" "Should I go ahead and set this up for you?" It is one sentence, it is specific, and it ends. Nehemiah did not ask vaguely for "help." He asked, item by item, for permission to go, for a timeline, for letters of safe passage, and even for the timber to build the gates. The person he asked knew exactly what they were being asked to grant.

What kills the ask is the nervous fog we tack on afterward, the "but no pressure, whenever, no rush, only if you want to, I totally understand if not." That trailing fog is not kindness, it is our own fear talking, and it quietly tells the person that even we do not believe they should decide. Esther, standing before a king who held her life in his hands, did not fog it up. When he asked what she wanted, she said it straight, "Let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request." She named it. If Esther could name the hardest ask imaginable to a king, you can name yours to a customer.

Reflect: Where do you get vague or foggy right at the moment of the ask? Write the plain, specific sentence you could say instead.

Notes:

Principle 4: Then Get Quiet. Silence Is Room, Not Pressure.

After you ask, get quiet. This feels almost impossible for nervous sellers, but silence after an honest ask is not pressure. It is room. It is respect. When you ask and then immediately start talking again to fill the space, "or, you know, we could wait, or maybe you want to think about it," you are actually snatching the decision back out of their hands before they can make it.

Ask, and then let the silence do its holy work. Let them think. Let them answer. The most powerful thing you can do after a clear ask is close your mouth and trust God with what comes out of theirs. Remember, you are not manufacturing a yes. Even Jesus asked, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" and then He waited for the man to answer. An honest ask followed by honest silence is one of the most respectful moments in all of

selling, because it says: I have served you, I have told you the truth, and now the choice is fully and freely yours. Consider how the company Slack grew in its early years. It let teams use the product free for as long as they wanted, and only invited them to pay when they had clearly outgrown the free limits and were getting real value. The ask was clear and tied to the customer’s own experience, so people did not feel cornered, they felt served.

Reflect: When have you talked over the silence after an ask, and what did it cost? What would it look like to stay quiet and let someone decide?

Notes:

The Story: Nehemiah’s Ask (Nehemiah 2:4 to 8)

Read the whole passage slowly. Nehemiah is a Jewish exile serving as cupbearer to Artaxerxes, king of Persia, roughly the most powerful man on earth. He has heard that Jerusalem lies in ruins, its walls broken and its gates burned, and it has broken his heart. Now he is serving wine to the king, and the king notices his sadness and asks what is wrong. Into that opening comes one of the boldest, most beautifully structured asks in Scripture.

First, see the prayer inside the pause. Between the king’s question and Nehemiah’s answer there is a silent prayer, instant, in the half second before he speaks. Second, see the clarity. He asks to be sent, he names the destination, he names the purpose, no fog and no hinting. Third, see the specificity. He asks for a timeline, for letters of safe passage, and for timber for the gates, the wall, and his own house, item by item. Fourth, see who he credits. The text says, “the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me.” He did the human work of a clear, bold ask, and he trusted the outcome to the Lord. That is the whole posture: pray, ask plainly, and leave the answer in God’s hands.

Reflect: Nehemiah did the bold human work of asking and then credited the yes to God. How do you hold both, asking with courage and trusting God with the answer?

Notes:

Put It Into Practice

1. Write your honest ask. Write the exact one sentence ask you will use in your next real sales conversation. It must name the actual decision and be specific. Cut every trailing word of fog.

My honest, one sentence ask, naming the actual decision:

The specific next step I am inviting them to say yes to:

My one breath prayer to pray in the pause before I ask:

2. This week's assignment. In one real conversation, after you have served and told the truth, pray your one breath prayer, make your clear one sentence ask, and then stay quiet and let the person answer. Do not rescue the silence. Do not tack on the fog. Write one sentence about what the ask felt like and what the silence did.

What making a clear ask, followed by real silence, did to the conversation:

Go Deeper (Optional)

- **Read:** *SPIN Selling* by Neil Rackham.
 - **Listen:** the *B.O.S.S. Moves Podcast* by Dr. Myron Golden.
 - **Consider:** *The Psychology of Selling* by Brian Tracy, who observes that most salespeople do all the hard work of building rapport and then simply never ask for the order. Take his practical courage to ask, and set it inside Nehemiah's posture of pray, ask, and trust.
 - **Study:** Nehemiah 2:1 to 8; Esther 7:1 to 4; Matthew 7:7 to 11; James 4:2; Philippians 4:6.
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Close in Prayer

"Father, thank You that You are a God who says ask, and it shall be given. Thank You for Nehemiah, who prayed in the pause and then asked with courage. Make me a person like that. Take away my fear of the ask, the fear of rejection, the fear of seeming pushy, and give me the servant's confidence to invite people plainly to a good decision. Teach me to pray first, to ask clearly, to stay quiet, and to trust You with every answer. And whatever the person decides, let me honor their freedom the way You honor mine. In Jesus' name, Amen."

Crown Revenue Academy · A ministry of Crown Revenue · "So I prayed to the God of heaven. And I said unto the king." Nehemiah 2:4