

Piano Chords For What We Ask For By Donnie McClurkin

Piano Chords for "What We Ask For" by Donnie McClurkin: A Comprehensive Guide

Donnie McClurkin's "What We Ask For" is a powerful gospel song that resonates deeply with many. Learning to play its accompanying piano chords can be a rewarding experience, allowing you to both appreciate the music on a deeper level and participate in its worshipful expression. This comprehensive guide explores the piano chords for "What We Ask For," offering insights into different playing styles, techniques, and the emotional impact of the music. We'll cover various aspects, including simplified chord progressions, variations for different skill levels, and the overall feel of the song, helping you understand how to effectively play this moving piece.

Understanding the Song's Structure and Emotional Landscape

Before diving into the specific chords, it's crucial to understand the emotional arc of "What We Ask For." The song is characterized by moments of both intense yearning and quiet reflection. This emotional range is reflected in the musical arrangement, with shifts in tempo, dynamics, and chord progressions. The key to successfully playing the piano accompaniment lies in capturing this nuanced emotional journey. Understanding the lyrics and the overall message – a plea for God's grace and guidance – will further enhance your interpretation. We'll examine how chord choices contribute to these feelings, focusing on the relationship between harmony and emotion.

Basic Piano Chords for "What We Ask For"

The core progression of "What We Ask For" uses relatively simple chords, making it accessible to pianists of various skill levels. The most common chord progression centers around a key like G Major (or possibly a relative minor, E minor depending on the specific arrangement). This typically involves a sequence of G Major (G), C Major (C), D Major (D), and possibly an Em (E minor) to add a touch of melancholy.

- **G Major (G):** This chord often sets a foundation of hope and strength.
- **C Major (C):** This chord provides a sense of resolution and peace.
- **D Major (D):** This chord adds a touch of tension or anticipation, leading to the next chord.

- **E minor (Em):** The addition of an E minor provides a contrasting emotional feel, reflecting vulnerability or introspection within the song's narrative.

Simplified Version for Beginners:

For beginners, focusing on these four chords and learning to smoothly transition between them is a great starting point. Practice playing them slowly and evenly, gradually increasing the tempo as your proficiency improves. Remember to emphasize the bass notes to add depth and stability to the accompaniment.

Advanced Techniques and Variations

More experienced pianists can explore variations and embellishments to add depth and expressiveness to their playing. These might include:

- **7th chords:** Incorporating 7th chords (e.g., G7, C7, D7) adds richness and complexity to the harmonic texture. These alterations create a more sophisticated sound, reflecting the emotional depth of McClurkin's vocals.
- **Passing chords:** Adding passing chords between the main chords can smooth out transitions and enhance the melodic flow.
- **Inversions:** Playing the chords in different inversions can alter the voicing and add further interest to the accompaniment.
- **Arpeggios:** Breaking up the chords into arpeggios can create a more flowing and graceful feel. Arpeggiated chords can add elegance and texture.
- **Key changes:** Some interpretations might incorporate subtle key changes, adding dramatic impact to certain sections of the song.

Finding and Utilizing Sheet Music Resources

While no single definitive sheet music for "What We Ask For" exists in the public domain, numerous resources online might offer simplified arrangements or interpretations suitable for piano. Searching online for "Donnie McClurkin What We Ask For piano chords" or "Donnie McClurkin What We Ask For piano sheet music" will uncover various options. It's important to remember that many of these will be interpretations, so compare several versions to find one that best fits your skill level and personal style.

Conclusion: Unlocking the Musical Heart of "What We Ask For"

Mastering the piano chords for "What We Ask For" is more than just learning a song; it's about understanding and expressing the song's emotional core. By exploring the basic chords, experimenting with variations, and paying attention to the overall musical landscape, you can unlock a deeper appreciation for this powerful gospel anthem. Remember to listen carefully to the original recording, focusing on the phrasing, dynamics, and overall feel to guide your interpretation. The journey of learning this piece is as rewarding as the final performance, offering a chance to connect with the music on a deeply personal level.

FAQ

Q1: Can I play "What We Ask For" if I'm a complete beginner?

A1: Absolutely! The basic chord progression is relatively straightforward. Start with the simplified version outlined above, focusing on mastering the four main chords (G, C, D, Em) before attempting more advanced techniques.

Q2: What style of piano playing best suits this song?

A2: A style that blends gospel traditions with a touch of contemporary feel works well. This might involve a blend of strong, rhythmic chords interspersed with moments of softer, more melodic playing to reflect the lyrical and emotional shifts.

Q3: Where can I find reliable sheet music or chord charts?

A3: Online music retailers, websites dedicated to gospel music, or even YouTube channels focused on gospel piano tutorials might offer interpretations. Always check reviews and compare different versions to find a reliable and appropriate arrangement.

Q4: How important is understanding the lyrics to playing the song effectively?

A4: It's incredibly important! Understanding the meaning and emotions conveyed in the lyrics will greatly enhance your interpretation and allow you to better communicate the song's message through your playing.

Q5: What if I don't have formal piano training?

A5: That's perfectly fine. Many resources, including online tutorials and apps, can help you learn the chords and fingerings. Focus on gradual progress and celebrate your achievements along the way.

Q6: How can I add my own personal style to the song?

A6: Once you're comfortable with the basic chords, experiment with variations. Try different rhythms, add embellishments, or experiment with the dynamics (loudness and softness) to create your unique interpretation.

Q7: Is it okay to simplify the chords further for personal practice?

A7: Absolutely. Simplifying chords to make them more manageable is a great way to learn. You can always add complexity later as your skills improve.

Q8: What software or apps can help me learn these chords?

A8: Several apps and software programs can assist with learning piano chords, including Yousician, Simply Piano, and Flowkey. Many offer interactive lessons and feedback.

Unlocking the Harmonies: A Deep Dive into Piano Chords for Donnie McClurkin's "What We Ask For"

Donnie McClurkin's "What We Ask For" is a moving gospel anthem that connects deeply with listeners. Its lyrical impact is amplified by its rich, layered harmonic structure. For pianists seeking to learn this piece, understanding the underlying chord progressions is crucial. This article will explore the piano chords used in "What We Ask For," providing a detailed analysis that will enable you to perform this beautiful song with confidence.

The song's arrangement isn't precisely defined, allowing for creative interpretation. However, certain essential chord progressions form the bedrock of the piece. We'll deconstruct these progressions, highlighting key changes and nuances that lend to the song's general atmosphere.

I. The Foundation: Major and Minor Chords

The main chords in "What We Ask For" are rooted in comparatively basic major and minor triads. The song frequently employs I-IV-V-vi progressions, a standard gospel and blues progression that creates a robust sense of movement. For example, if we take the key of C major, this would translate to Cmaj7 - Fmaj7 - G7 - Am7. These chords provide a stable harmonic base, enabling the melody to be prominent.

II. Adding Color: Seventh Chords and Suspensions

McClurkin's arrangement adds depth through the application of seventh chords and suspensions. Seventh chords, adding a seventh note to the basic triad, inject a sense of tension and sophistication. Suspensions, where a note is delayed from one chord to the next, produce a brief dissonance that settles into a consonant harmony, adding a fine sense of movement. These techniques are distributed throughout the arrangement, contributing to the emotional power of the music.

III. Modulation and Key Changes

While the song predominantly remains in a particular key, McClurkin effectively uses modulation—shifting to a different key—to create dramatic shifts in feeling. These changes often occur during high-point moments in the song, heightening the lyrical impact. The exact keys and the points of modulation may vary depending on the

specific performance, further showing the song's adaptability.

IV. Rhythmic Considerations

Beyond the chords themselves, the rhythmic execution of the chords plays a vital role. The song includes various rhythmic patterns, ranging from simple quarter notes to more syncopated rhythms. These rhythms play with the underlying harmony to generate anticipation and release, further contributing the emotional experience.

V. Practical Implementation

To effectively perform the piano chords for "What We Ask For," beginners should begin by mastering the basic I-IV-V-vi progressions in a comfortable key. Gradually, incorporate seventh chords and suspensions, focusing on seamless transitions between chords. Listening to different recordings of the song can help in comprehending the rhythmic shifts and nuances. Remember, rehearsal is crucial for mastering this piece.

VI. Conclusion

The piano chords in Donnie McClurkin's "What We Ask For" are a masterful blend of basic harmonies and sophisticated techniques. Understanding the underlying chord progressions, including the use of seventh chords, suspensions, and modulation, is essential for any pianist seeking to render this powerful song. By carefully analyzing and mastering these components, pianists can uncover the full emotional depth of this gospel anthem.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):

- 1. What key is "What We Ask For" typically played in?** While it can be adapted, the song is frequently performed in keys like C major or G major, depending on the vocalist's range.
- 2. Are there sheet music resources available?** While a definitive, officially published sheet music version might be hard to find, many arrangements exist online, varying in complexity and accuracy.
- 3. How can I improve my understanding of the song's harmonic structure?** Active listening, coupled with chord analysis software or applications, and practicing the chord progressions will greatly improve your understanding.
- 4. What are some alternative chord voicings I could use?** Experiment with different inversions of the chords and try using different voicings to suit your style and the overall sound you want to achieve.

This article has aimed to provide a comprehensive analysis of the piano chords found within Donnie McClurkin's "What We Ask For." Through detailed analysis and practical tips, it empowers pianists to engage thoroughly with this moving piece of music.

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