

## Matthew 7:7-11 – Kingdom Principles – Part 6

### Scriptures:

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 -  
Rejoice always, 17 pray  
without ceasing, 18 in  
everything give thanks; for  
this is the will of God in  
Christ Jesus for you.

### 7 “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and

G154 – VPAM2P -  
request

G1325 – VFPI3S -

G2212 – VPAM2P  
– try to find, try  
to obtain.

### you will find; knock, and it will be opened to

G2147 – VFAI2P -

G2925 – VPAM2P

G455 – VFPI3S -

you.

just keep dropping coins in and pulling the handle until you get the jackpot.

A text without a context is a pretext. The sermon on the Mount is taken as a singular whole with many parts. No one part can be separated from the rest without damaging the whole.

The principles laid out in the Sermon on the Mount are humanly unattainable. It is only through prayer and the work of the Holy Spirit in us that we can hope to achieve them.

In the previous text Jesus told us not to mess with the speck in our brother's eye until we have dealt with the plank in our own eye. But that is impossible for us to do on our own because our plank is blinding us. Only God can do that restoring work, but God commands us to ask Him to do it before He does for us what we cannot do for ourselves.

This verse is not a magic formula for getting every material desire met in your life. It is an exhortation to be persistent in prayer for these principles to be developed fully in your life.

### Notes:

**Kingdom Principle #14 – Faithful diligence in prayer.**

To be able to live the principles described in the Sermon on the mount we must nurture the attitudes described in the Beatitudes. Prayer finds its fullest and most powerful expression when we have the attitude of the first Beatitude – when we are poor in spirit. We should come to God as helpless beggars, depending on Him for everything.

Jesus uses three different words to express the idea of prayer; ask, seek, and knock.

Prayer is an expression of our faith in God. James said that faith without works is dead. True faith does something. One of the key works of true faith is prayer.

Prayer, in its simplest understanding, is a child of God speaking with their loving Father who is in heaven.

How we pray proves what we believe about God. If we believe God is a big God who can accomplish anything we need Him to, including those things that are humanly impossible. We will pray like that.

‘ask...seek...knock’ are all in the Imperative. That means they are expressed as commands. Praying is not something we ought to do, it is something God has commanded us to do. As with most of God's commands to us, it is commanded for our own good.

They are also in the present tense and active voice. This means we should be doing it as a continuing action (1 Thess. 5:16-18). This is speaking of persistence in prayer.

These three words also include ascending intensity and activity. To ask implies humility before someone who is able to respond to the prayer. To seek involves asking but includes action. Not only are they expressing their need but they are doing something to get the help they need. Knocking includes asking and activity plus perseverance.

There are some who take this verse out of its context and presume upon God's love and grace and suggest that if you do enough good works, like giving to their ministry, and keep praying that God will give you anything you want. God is not a celestial slot machine – you can't

Scriptures:

1 Peter 1:13-16 - Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; 14 as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; 15 but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."

## 8 For everyone who asks receives, and he who

G3956 - all

G2983 – VPAI3S -

## seeks finds, and to him who knocks

G2147 - VPAI3S -

Prayer is not a blank check God gives His people that they can fill in the amount for anything they want. We have no idea how miserable we would be if God actually gave you everything you wanted.

## it will be opened.

G455 – VFP13P -

Notes:

Jesus says that God is ready to answer our prayers.

We find it easy enough to pray when our need is desperate. When someone is sick or injured. We might pray for diligently when our finances are short, or relationships are difficult. The greater our material need, the more likely we are to pray. Material needs come and go. It is our spiritual needs that never end. Unfortunately, we don't feel our spiritual needs like we do the material needs.

These principles are for people to live in Christ's kingdom – they are kingdom principles. Christ's kingdom is spiritual, not material – not yet. The spiritual affects the material, but we must give preeminence to the spiritual. When we are praying about material things, we are praying for things that are temporary. When we pray about spiritual things, we are praying about things that are eternal. The material things will not last, and the spiritual will never end. When we pray for our health and God answers our prayer. That will not keep us from getting old and eventually dying.

God commands us to be holy – how holy? To be as holy as He is (1 Pet. 1:13-16). If there was anything we should be asking, seeking, and knocking for, it ought to be that we would be holy. Everything else that connects you to God and Christ's kingdom is connected to that. Praying for any material thing before praying for God to help you to be more holy is asking amiss.

We can pray and ask God for anything but not everything we pray about is going to move God's heart to action. We should pray for those things we know God desires for us and then we can trust that He will respond and maybe throw in those material things He already knows you need.

We should pray for the things we need. But this is an exhortation to examine your needs. Is spiritual growth high enough on your prayer list?

Not only does this principle exhort us to pray with persistence for the spiritual things we need, it also encourages us to pray with confidence. When we are praying for the things we know God wants to give us, like holiness, we can be confident that he will answer this prayer and help us to be holy through the work of the Holy Spirit.

Scriptures:

<sup>9</sup> Or what man is there among you who, if his

Notes:

Most normal parents would do what they think is best for their children. Sadly, we are living in a time when some parents are doing what their culture says is best for their children.

son asks for bread, will give him a stone?

Scriptures:

<sup>10</sup> Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a

Notes:

serpent?

Scriptures:

Romans 3:10-12 - As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one;

11 There is none who understands;

There is none who seeks after God.

12 They have all turned aside;

They have together become unprofitable;

There is none who does good, no, not one."

Isaiah 49:15 -

Can a woman forget her nursing child,

And not have compassion on the son of her womb?

Surely they may forget, Yet I will not forget you.

Matthew 6:31-33 -

Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'

32 For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

# 11 If you then, being ~~evil~~, know how to give

G4190 – morally corrupt

G1492 – to possess knowledge or information

G1325 -

## good gifts to your children, how much more

G18 -

G1390 -

Notes:

'being evil' – by nature humans are evil. We have a sin nature that is inclined to do what God says is sin (Rom. 3:10-12). Even though this is true, most parents do not neglect the bodily needs of their children. So how much more will a perfectly holy loving God respond to the pleas and cries of His children.

Imagine our earthly fathers at their very best and then multiply that by infinity and you might begin to approach the goodness of God as Father. Isaiah says a mother could forget her nursing child before God forgets His people (Isa. 49:15).

When we stand before God someday, we will not have to explain why we did not do what we could not have done or know what we could not have known. But we will have to give an account regarding our prayer life.

There are a lot of things we can't do or know, but we can all pray.

'how much more' suggests that God is ready to give us so much more than we are asking for.

Luke's gospel substitutes 'the Holy Spirit' for 'good things.' That makes sense because it is the Holy Spirit who gives the good things God wants us to have.

As believers in Jesus, we are a part of Christ's kingdom. Our life goal should be to live in His kingdom in a manner that glorifies God in heaven, blesses people on the earth, and causes faith to grow, ours, other believers, and the lost. To accomplish that we must seek to grow in the spiritual principles Jesus lays out for us in the Sermon on the Mount. But because these principles are spiritual, we must ask, seek, and knock for spiritual help.

To do that, we do two things. First, we ask, seek, and knock persistently. We are to ask and keep on asking, seek and keep on seeking, knock and keep on knocking. We must constantly and passionately ask God for every spiritual blessing. Second, we must ask, seek and knock confidently. Jesus says the Father wants to grant the prayers for those things He desires for us. Pray knowing that God hears and is preparing His response.

## will your <sup>△</sup>Father who is in <sup>Ⓜ</sup>heaven give good

## things to those who ask Him!

G154 -

Here is the key to effective prayer. God will give us anything we ask for that is good for us spiritually. This is where the 'name it and claim it' or 'prosperity theology' ministries are in error. God knows that not all material things are good for us spiritually. It may bless us in the material world, but it may be a curse to our spiritual life. We should praise God that He doesn't give us everything we ask for. God is the only one who knows the spiritual impact of the things we are asking for. Even those things that seem to be good spiritually may not be good for us spiritually. Part of praying in faith is trusting that God knows what we do not.

At the end of chapter six, as Jesus was telling us not to worry about the things we need (Matt. 6:31-33). We should talk to God about the material things we need, like healing, protection, provision, and guidance. But it is more important that we are talking to God about these spiritual principles.

Maybe something like this: Heavenly Father, I know that you know what I need and so, I trust those needs into your powerful loving hands. If I have time at the end of this prayer time, I will share my heart with you about my specific needs. In the meantime, I would like to talk to you about my spiritual needs.

And then you can start praying through these principles as they relate to your spiritual life. Like the last two we looked at; worry and a judgmental spirit. God, you know that I worry about things I cannot control. Please teach me to trust you more. Or, Lord, I tend to judge people's hearts and motives, and I know that it is wrong, because only you truly know those things. Please help me to see people as you see them.

Prayer is a powerful tool in the arsenal of spiritual weapons God has given us to live in Christ's kingdom. But just nay tool or weapon, it must be used properly.

God is good wants to do good to and for us. All we must do is, in faith, ask and keep on asking, seek and keep on seeking, knock and keep on knocking. If you do, Jesus says you will be given, you will find, and it will be opened to you.

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