

Ask, Seek, Knock

Matthew 7.7-11

Main Idea

Main Spiritual Problem: Feeling unfit to follow Jesus

Main Point: In order to follow Jesus, ASK your Father, for He gives good things

Overview

- Pray: (a) to obey Jesus (imperative mood of verbs); (b) in community (2nd plural and pattern of Jesus' disciples; see Ac 1:14, 2:42, 4:23-24).
- ASK = ask, seek, knock
 - Ask: (a) in faith (James 1:5-6, Heb 11:6); (b) in communion with Christ (John 15:7); (c) for God's kingdom (Mat 6:10, James 15:7).
 - Seek = to hunger for something/someone and express such hunger through practical actions. To seek God = To hunger for communion with God (2 Chro 7:14, Isa 55:6, Mat 6:33) and work out such hunger.
 - Knock = express outwardly the intensity of our felt need (Luke 11:5-10)
- Our Father: God or the devil (Jn 8:39-44, Eph 2:1-3)
- Good gifts: (a) fruit of the Spirit (Luke 11:13, Gal 5:22-23); (b) Gifts of the Spirit (1 Cor 12:8-10); (c) unmerited favors from God (James 1:17; see also Jn 3:16 and 1 Cor 15:3-4 for the example of Jesus as substitutionary sacrifice for our sins)

Questions

Discussion Starter: *What are the thoughts of Christians in relation to Judging? What is accurate, what is not?*

1. Read Matthew 7:7-11. What is the main idea of this text? How does it connect to the prior passage(s)?
2. When Jesus says, "Everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened?" does this promise we will always get what we ask for in prayer? Why or why not?
3. What prevents us from asking, seeking, knocking the way Jesus is describing in these verses? Which postures of the heart are not conducive to asking things to God? How does the Gospel speak to those heart attitudes?
4. How fair is it to claim that Mat 7:7-11 commands us to pray in unity with others? How can we pray in unity when one person prays aloud during a worship service?
5. Our covenant says: "We will not [...] neglect to pray for ourselves and others." How is that informed by these verses?
6. How does the Gospel speak to postures of our hearts that impede us to knock in corporate prayer?
7. What do these verses tell us about the character of God the Father?
8. How do we feel when asked whether our spiritual father is God or the devil?
9. What are the good things referenced by Jesus in Mat 7:11?
10. How important is trust in God when God allows evil things to happen to us?
11. How does the Gospel show us that God uses bad things to work out His good purposes in our lives?

Accountability Question: *Invite each person to share one urgent spiritual need (if any) and ask everyone to partner with another member, in order to seek God for that need, this week.*