

Good morning, who brought their Bibles?

Today we're going to be reading and breaking down Matthew 7:7-12

**OUR BIG IDEA TODAY IS.... MORE OF HIM AND LESS OF ME!**

**In Fact that my sermon title today....**

<sup>7</sup>“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. <sup>8</sup>For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. <sup>9</sup>Or what person is there among you who, when his son asks for a loaf of bread, will give him a stone? <sup>10</sup>Or if he asks for a fish, he will not give him a snake, will he? <sup>11</sup>So if

you, *despite* being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!

<sup>12</sup>“In everything, therefore, treat people the same way you want them to treat you, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

Let me first ask you a question, Is there a wrong way to pray?

Not as long as your praying with your heart to the Father, Son or the Holy Spirit.

You know over many years I've heard a lot of prayers from a lot of different people.

Strange little thing about me is that I love to hear people pray, I don't know exactly what it is but I love the raw honesty and vulnerability to hear people talk to God. I'm not judging but listening.

I've heard about every type of prayer that there is. From the most meek prayers that are so humble and sweet, to full on demon crushing Satan stomping prayers. I've heard people that talked to God like their best friend and people that sounded like they just swallowed a King James Bible. I love it all however I

think that my favorite is when a small child prays with full confidence in whatever they ask for or are thankful for even down to the little things.

So let me ask you a question.

Which prayers does God hear?

Who has a better chance of being answered the way they want?

Did you happen to notice that when Jesus was instructing us on how to pray that He didn't begin with something extremely "fancy" **Matthew 6:9 Starts with "Pray then, in this way: Our father, who is in heaven, Hallowed be your name.**

**In the original Greek the words translate to "Father of us, the one in the heavens"**

First of all notice that Jesus didn't say **My** Father who is in heaven He said **Our** Father.

Second could Jesus have started with something along the lines of God, King of Kings, Creator of the Universe, Alpha and Omega, or any number of names that God has been named?

Why do you think that Jesus went with Father (Abba) (Daddy)?

Jesus starts the prayer with relationship, with heart, with a child talking to his/her Father. (kid talking to his Dad)

Jesus, in our text today says:

**Matthew 7:7 "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find (it); knock, and it will be opened to you..."**

Notice the boldened, highlighted, underlined word?

What is (IT) ? Glad you asked. We will get to that in a few minutes, the (IT) is super exciting.

Then Jesus says:

Matthew 7:9 “What person is there among you who, when his son asks for a loaf of bread, will give him a stone?”

Then the Grand slam

Matthew 7:11 “So if you, despite being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!”

This whole passage is Jesus telling us again that our Abba (Daddy), Our Father, Our God LOVES Us.

1. Jesus starts by giving us three commands. **ASK, SEEK, KNOCK.**

It's interesting that these three words in Greek mean **keep on asking, keep on seeking, and keep on knocking.**

Does that mean to keep asking seeking and knocking because He is very busy? Or because He doesn't always hear us on the first go around?

OF COURSE NOT....Were to keep asking seeking and knocking because He wants relationship with us. **MORE OF HIM AND LESS OF ME!**

My kids ask me for stuff all the time. The number one request from the bank of Mom and Dad is guess what...?

I'm hungry, and then five minutes after a snack I'm hungry again.

Or I'm cold, I'm hot, I need clothes, etc... (voice)

Why do you think the reason is that they ask Deb and I for these things?

Because they know without a doubt that we love them.

One big difference is that God loves US more than we ever could or ever understand. This is what Jesus has been teaching us throughout this whole Sermon on the Mount!

Remember when I said that we were going to unpack what (IT) meant?

Matthew 7:7 “Ask, and **it** will be given to you; seek, and you will find(**it**); knock, and **it** will be opened to you...”

**Please turn to Luke 11:9** “So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. <sup>10</sup> “For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks, it will be opened. <sup>11</sup> “Now which one of you fathers will his son ask for a fish, and instead of a fish, he will give him a snake? <sup>12</sup> “Or he will even ask for an egg, *and his father* will give him a scorpion? So if you, *despite* being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the **Holy Spirit** to those who ask Him?”

LUKE HAS THE SAME three definite commands in this passage ASK-SEEK-and KNOCK but tells us of the Father’s love to want to give us His Holy Spirit

## **SO WHAT ARE *WE* SUPPOSED TO ASK FOR?**

### **MORE OF HIM AND LESS OF ME!**

Our Father wants to give us Him, His presence through His indwelling Holy Spirit. Trust that there is no better gift or answer to prayer than **MORE OF HIM AND LESS OF ME!**

In other words when your kid asks you for candy and they beg and plead over and over again are you as a responsible parent/grandparent going to give them candy for their sole sustenance, for breakfast, lunch, and dinner? NO, But that’s what they *really* want right?

But you know what they need. You are going to give them nutrition fruits, veggies, protein, etc.

Now you may be saying to yourself Sam I’m not asking for candy, I’m not asking for a Lamborghini, I’m not asking for anything that I could see as a thing that God wouldn’t be good with. I’m asking for good health, I’m asking to pay my

bills, I'm asking for things for the people that I love. So what's the deal? You can surely ask God for anything your heart desires, but Jesus is simply teaching us what He already taught us.....we should be asking God for what HE WANTS for us.....We learned this when Jesus taught us the Lord's prayer...**THY WILL BE DONE.....in other words God....** **MORE OF YOU AND LESS OF ME!**

Our father hears us and knows what we want, but He knows us better than we know ourselves. He knows every minute of our lives from start to finish. He knows what we need not only in the short term but also what will sustain and grow us. He wants to bless and help us, help us to be successful maybe not what we see as success, but what He knows success to be. Doesn't that just absolutely blow your mind, I have a hard time even beginning to understand that the Maker of the Universe, The One who laid the foundations of the earth, the One who has storerooms to hold back the snow and rain knows every single hair on your head, every tear that falls from your eyes, and everyone of your victories. If we have this mindset we can trust and have faith that in whatever we ask He will answer our prayers in what ever fashion it might be whether it be a YES, NO, or WAIT but it will be for our benefit and for His glory. Our ask should be to seek His will, to have MORE of His Holy Spirit, to be more effective for God, to be more loving, more understanding, more patient, more kind, more joy, more peace, more gentle, more Godly goodness and more self-control. Don't you love it when the Holy Spirit takes over? If I'm in charge I make a mess out of things ( understatement of the century).

### **Which brings us to His second command. Seek**

Where in scripture have we heard Jesus instructing us to seek?

Matthew 6:33 But **seek first** His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be provided to you.

Colossians 3:1-2 Therefore, if you have been raised with Christ, **keep seeking the things that are above**, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. **Set your minds on the things that are above, not on the things that are on earth.**

Jesus takes this passage to another level now with instructing us to seek Him, His kingdom, His righteousness, the things that are above.

Seeking these things have now become an active pursuit, a verb, seeking requires effort, heart and a desire to be more Christ like.

**Another question to rattle your brains.** If you're asking in the way that Jesus tells us to ask for the Holy Spirit to guide us and mold us to be Christ -centered then is it possible to seek without asking? The Holy Spirit is the one who enables us to seek Him in the way that we should.

What's your passion? What do/did you do for work?

Were you good at it?

How did you get good at it?

How do we seek? Prayer ( not hollow) , reading your Bible (studying, researching) get to know Him, Worship (let loose, cry, dance).

Hebrews 11:6 **And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for the one who comes to God must believe that He exists, and that He provides to be One who rewards those who seek Him.**

In order to truly seek God we have to have faith that **only the Holy Spirit** can give to us.

**And then for the third command which is knock**

It's easy to ask right? Then as we've learned with the Holy Spirit we can seek but many of us stop there for whatever reason. Maybe we don't get the answer we want right away or maybe we feel like we've already done our due diligence in our mind, that should be good enough right? Remember at the very

beginning of Jesus teaching us on the Sermon on the Mount. **Matthew 5:3**  
**Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

Maybe the door didn't immediately open because God is building our patience, or growing our faith, or preparing us for the answer.

We are to continue to Knock and humbly come before Him. The Father wants to hear our heart He wants us to have constant relationship with Him. We are not going to wear Him out or bother Him. We are already at the door, we've asked, we've sought and then even if it feels like we've knocked over and over it's not about our instant gratification it's about relationship.

When I pray for protection over my family I know that God is good and that He will protect them. I have faith in that, but it's not a one and done with me. I continue to thank Him for them, I continue to ask for blessings over them, I continue to ask for protection because they are important to me and even though God already knows that He wants to hear it.

When our kids (or myself) asks for a Christmas present Debbie pays attention because everything that happens to be bright and shiny in the catalog or on an ad is now the thing that they (we) want most but she as wonderful as she is, pays attention all year, and hears and writes down the things that they have asked for over and over with longing and hoping, and those little excited faces because she knows that that is what they actually want, because they keep knocking on mom's door.

**Did you know that Jesus knocks on our door. In Revelation chapter three**

the apostle John wrote to church of Laodicea from the exact words that Jesus instructed him to write. In this passage Jesus is addressing the church being luke warm, neither hot or cold. The church had become rich and complacent. They knew Jesus but they were stagnant.

And then in verse Revelation 3:19 Jesus says “those whom I love, I rebuke and discipline; therefore, be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock; **if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come into him and will dine with him, and he with Me. The one who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat with My Father on His throne.**

Jesus knocks on our heart because He loves us and desperately wants us to have relationship with Him, and to ask for His will and guidance, Jesus wants to give us gifts, He wants to say the words “well done good and faithful servant”. There is no one in this world that wants you to succeed more than your Heavenly Father. He is always rooting for you, He is always in your corner.

Matthew 7:12 says “in everything, therefore, treat people the same way you want them to treat you, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

Does it feel like Jesus just changed subjects here?

We were just talking about prayer and now were talking about how to treat others.

Jesus is teaching us about what happens when we truly understand God’s love and when we abide in Him and walk according to His purpose.

### **MORE OF HIM AND LESS OF ME!**

When I understand that God is patient with me, when He has grace with me, when He forgives me and when He listens to me. It makes me want to be patient, forgiving, and to have grace with others it helps me to want to listen and help and love even more.

It’s a good thing that Jesus said to treat the sweet and kind people the way that we want to be treated huh? That’s a load off! Lets read that again...treat everybody the way that you want to be treated, even if it’s someone that you don’t like or someone that’s rude or mean to you. So lets tie this in, Can you in your own power treat that blankety blank person that ruined your day with the same lovingkindness, with the respect, with the patience that you want to be

treated with, without asking for the Holy Spirit, Seeking Jesus, or Knocking on the Father's door?

Why would we want to treat anyone any differently than we would want to be treated? If I ask for these things but am unwilling to give out what I ask for then wouldn't that make me a pretty big hypocrite?

### **So how do we wrap this up? We started off talking about prayer right?**

Here is my challenge to you instead of praying things like God please change this or that in my life. Please change my situation, instead pray Lord please change **me** and guide **me**, help me to be the person that you called me to be in this life and in this situation.

Wouldn't that change everything?

Our homes.

Our marriages.

Our friendships.

Our church.

Our community.

I'm going to leave you with a wonderful little story about Mae.

As I was working on this sermon Mae followed me down the hallway to come into our room where I was working. I told her I'm sorry but I have to work now and so you'll have to go downstairs.

About five minutes later I heard knock knock

I said who is it and on the other side I heard Mae's voice "dad I love you"

I told her that I loved her too and she went back downstairs.

About five minutes later knock knock

Guess who? Mae “Dad I’m hungry can I have a snack”?

Haha yes dear

About seven minutes later knock knock

I knew who it was so I just said “open the door”. She came in, didn’t say a word, when she crawled up onto my lap and then said Dad I just want to be with you.

Well my work didn’t matter anymore. She did.

The point is sometimes we ask, seek, or knock for all kinds of things and for all kinds of reasons. God always hears us, He always opens the door. And His hearts desire is that we ASK SEEK AND KNOCK so that we can have...

**MORE OF HIM AND LESS OF ME!**