

Matthew 7:7-12 - (The Power and Necessity of Prayer)

- Opening Comments and Prayer

⁷“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ⁸For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. ⁹Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? ¹¹If you then, who are 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!

- If we expect to live a full and vital Christian life,
- We need to remember just how important prayer is.
- Prayer is the most important privilege that we could ever have been given.
- There is tremendous power in prayer.
- Prayer is asking and receiving.
- It is making a request to him in faith, to be asked in His perfect will
- And in His perfect timing.
- Prayer is simply talking with God.
- And when we pray in faith, we believe that our prayers will be answered.
- Prayer is seeking and finding.
- When we don't know the will of God in a particular situation
- We are to pray so that we may seek His will.
- Prayer is knocking and opening,
- And when we know the will of God, we are to knock on the door,
- And continue to knock until the door is opened.
- This is tenacious prayer, it's praying with mountain moving faith.
- But sometimes, I think we take it for granted.
- Maybe it's the ease of accessibility, or perhaps we don't give
- Sufficient thought of whom we are asking to come into our presence.
- (Warren Buffet (Bidding) vs. God, is the CEO of the universe)
- Our opportunities for prayer are constant as there is no set time or place.
- His availability is limitless, His heart is open, and His attention is rapt.
- We are to keep an attitude of prayer in our hearts,

- And our prayers should be without ceasing. **2 Thessalonians 5:16-17**
¹⁶ Rejoice always, ¹⁷ pray without ceasing, ¹⁸ give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

Matthew 9:11 ⁹ Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰ Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? ¹¹ If you then, who are 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!

- As human parents so much want to make their children happy,
- How much more does God want to do even more for you and me?
- **Luke 18:1** tells us that Men ought to pray and not faint.
- **Matthew 26:43**, where Jesus told His disciples in the garden just prior
- To being arrested in the G of G, to pray so that we will not be tempted.
- **1Sam. 12:23** tells us it is a sin not to pray.
- Prayer is the only way that we can receive things from God.
- And there is joy for us when we pray as well,
- As we have direct contact with our heavenly Father, through Jesus.
- **Ps 55:20, Mat 11:30, Phil 4:6** teach us that prayer can deliver us
- From our troubles, because prayer is a channel of power.
- **Rom 10:13-14** tells us that sinners can be saved when they pray in faith.
- And as Jesus modeled the need to be baptized,
- He modeled the need for us to pray as well.
- Sometimes people will ask, if Jesus was God, why did He pray?
- We need to remember that Jesus was 100% man and 100% God,
- And being both God and man, Jesus had two complete natures.
- By taking on human nature, Jesus did not relinquish His divine nature,
- For God cannot stop being God.
- But since he was God manifest in the flesh,
- Jesus prayed from his human nature to his Divine nature.
- Jesus prayed as the Son of God, to the only God in heaven.
- The fact is that Jesus was both fully divine, yet fully human,
- And at that time, by definition “lower than the angels”
- And Scripture tells us that.

- **Philippians 2:6-8 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross!**
- When Jesus took on human form, something amazing occurred.
- Christ “made himself nothing.”
- Jesus felt He needed to pray in order to keep in constant communion
- With His heavenly Father which is a tremendous example for us to follow.
- There are about 30 times in scripture, where it is noted that Jesus prayed.
- For example He prayed at His Baptism. - **Luke 3:21-22** - **“When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.”**
- Again, Jesus prayed because when He took on our human nature,
- He had let go of all His divine powers.
- Jesus was now facing everything He would have to do for the next 3 years.
- He realized that He needed the wisdom and power of the Holy Spirit.
- And although he was righteousness, He would be constantly under attack.
- We see that in scripture, particularly in the Parables, with the Pharisees.
- He prayed so he would always have to have just that right balance,
- Of firmness and patience, so that He could speak the truth in love.
- And it is only by the power of the Holy Spirit, that wisdom can be attained.
- And we remember back in **Matthew 4:1**, that for 40 days
- After being baptized, He went into the wilderness and prayed and fasted.
- Jesus prayed before He preached the word of God. - **Mark 1:35-39** says: **“And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed. And Simon and those who were with him searched for him, and they found him and said to him, “Everyone is looking for you.” And he said to them, “Let us go on to the next towns, that I may preach there also, for that is why I came out.” And he went throughout all Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and casting out demons.**

- There is a great need to seek the wisdom, guidance, and power of The
- Holy Spirit. (Preaching message-Billy Graham crusade prayer warriors)

(Luke 6:12-13) In these days he went out to the mountain to pray, and all night he continued in prayer to God. And when day came, he called his disciples and chose from them twelve, whom he named apostles:

- He prayed before choosing the twelve disciples.
- Church Leadership prays before bringing on new Leaders,
- Leadership prays for the body and looks for guidance on all things.
- Jesus prayed before healing a leper. (Luke 5:16 and Mark 7:32-37)
- He prayed before feeding 4 and 5 thousand people
- Do we pray before we make important decisions,
- Or do we rely on our own wisdom?

John 6:11 says, “Jesus then took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated. So also the fish, as much as they wanted.

- Do we thank Him at our meals at home and in public?
- In Luke 9:28-35 He prayed during His transfiguration.
- Jesus prayed at the return of the seventy he had sent out.
- He prayed at the grave of Lazarus
- He prayed that His Father would glorify Him. **John 11:41-42 -“So they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, “Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this on account of the people standing around, that they may believe that you sent me. He prayed so that His Father would glorify him.**
- He prayed over the little children.
- **Luke 10:21 “In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will.”**
- Are we thankful when God answers our prayer?
- In John 12 Jesus prayed in the temple on Palm Sunday.
- In Matthew 23, He prayed over Jerusalem.

- And He prayed in the upper room before at the last supper. - **Matthew 26:26-28** - **Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.**
- **In John 17**, He prays his High Priest prayer.
- **In Mat. 26:36-46**, He prayed in the garden of Gethsemane
- He prayed with great humility and in great obedience
- Jesus He continually sought the will of God - **"Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will."**
- Sometimes the answer is yes, sometimes it is no, and sometimes it's later.
- But God knows the big picture, and He has a plan for all of us.
- So we are to wait and listen for His answer.
- And then to receive it with thankfulness and with confidence.
- He prayed at Emmaus (**Luke 24:30-31** -³⁰ **When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them.** ³¹ **And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight.**
- He prayed for them at the Ascension (**Luke 24:50-53**) -⁵⁰ **And he led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up his hands he blessed them.** ⁵¹ **While he blessed them, he parted from them and was carried up into heaven.** ⁵² **And they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy,** ⁵³ **and were continually in the temple blessing God.**
- Jesus is always there praying for us.
- **Rom 8:34** - **"Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.**
- He is praying for us right now as we are sitting here
- Jesus prayed because: He wanted to do the will of His Father.
- He sought the wisdom of His Father.
- He prayed to be glorified. - To give thanks. - To receive power.
- He prayed for others. - He prayed for us.
- Are we a praying every day individually? - Are we a praying church?
- Are we praying for the will of God in our lives? –
- Are we seeking to be 100% Christ centered?