

Love is a Verb: Asking, Seeking, Knocking (Part 1)

Jeff Rogers / Lamplighter Bible Study

Matthew 7:7-12

Matthew 7:1–5, *“Judge not, that you be not judged. 2 For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you. 3 Why do you see the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? 4 Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when there is the log in your own eye? 5 You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye.*

Matthew 7:6, *“Do not give dogs what is holy, and do not throw your pearls before pigs, lest they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you.*

Matthew 7:7–11, *“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. 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!*

Matthew 7:12 *“So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.*

- **Mark 7:1-13** – Wresting the Scripture & Defiled Hearts
 - The Interrogation (7:1- 5) (Why don’t you keep the traditions of the elders?)
 - The Indictment (7:6-9) (Hypocrites, your heart is far from me)
 - The Illustration (7:10-13) (The “Corban” cop-out or loophole)

I. God’s Promise to the Persistent (Matthew 7:7-8)

A. The Connection (Bridge).

1. The Negative Side (7:1-6)
 - a) Don’t judge in the final sense (vss. 1-2)
 - b) Don’t minister until your heart is clean (vss. 3-5)
 - c) Don’t give pearls to pigs and holy things to unclean animals (vs. 6)
2. The Bridge (Matthew 7:7-11)
3. The Positive Side (Matthew 7:12)

B. God’s promise is a provision of wisdom

1. **James 1:5**, *If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.*
2. We need wisdom due to the nature of the Bible (It contains principles that must be applied and not specific methods for rules for every situation).
3. Discernment & Discrimination are the proper application of wisdom (Matthew 7:5, 6, 12)
4. One commentator says, *“In His Word, God gives enough truth for us to be responsible, but enough mystery for us to be dependent.”*
 - a) If you want wisdom to help your sinning brother (7:3-5), we must ask, seek, knock.
 - b) If you want wisdom to discern false teaching (7:6), we must ask, seek knock.

II. God’s Example of Fathers (Matthew 7:9-11)

A. As our Father, God has imparted His nature to true believers. (Matthew 7:9-10)

1. **Ephesians 5:1–2**, *Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. 2 And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.*
2. Deception or trickery is not employed by a father.
3. Human fathers know how to give good gifts, so look at verse 11

B. **Matthew 7:11, *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!***

1. **James 1:17**, *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.*

III. God's Purpose in the Law (Matthew 7:12)

- A. This teaching is not new
 - 1. **Leviticus 19:18**, *You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord.*
 - 2. **Romans 13:8**, *Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.*
 - 3. **Romans 13:10**, *Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.*
 - 4. **Galatians 5:14**, *For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."*
- B. At issue is our selfishness (Romans 3:12, Psa 14:3) **Isaiah 53:6**, *All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.*
- C. *"How we **treat** others is not to be determined by how we expect them to treat us or by how we think they should treat us, but by how we **want** them **to treat** us. Herein is the heart of the principle, an aspect of the general truth that is not found in similar expressions in other religions and philosophies."*¹
- D. Man's fundamental problem is preoccupation with self (selfishness) (me first)

IV. The Promise in Shoe Leather

- A. The Promise is not a blank check.
 - 1. Like a lot of texts, these verses as stand-alone verses potentially lead to erroneous conclusions.
 - 2. The text must be interpreted considering surrounding texts and the Bible.
- B. The promise is for believers only
 - 1. God is our Father (7:9-11)
 - 2. Christians are our brothers (family) (7:3-5)
- C. The promise is for the obedient only
 - 1. Obedience is implied in verses 7:1-5.
 - 2. **1 John 3:21–22**, *Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God; 22 and whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him.*
- D. The promise is for the right motive only
 - 1. **James 4:3**, *You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.*
 - 2. The "why" of our asking is vital.
- E. The promise is for the submissive
 - 1. **James 1:7–8**, *For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; 8 he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.*
 - 2. Jesus has told us we cannot serve two masters (**Matthew 6.24**)
 - 3. **1 John 5:14**, *And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us.*
- F. The promise is for the persistent (**Luke 11:8**)
 - 1. Ask and Keep Asking...
 - 2. Seek and Keep Seeking...
 - 3. Knock and keep knocking...

¹ MacArthur, John F., Jr. *Matthew*. MacArthur New Testament Commentary. Chicago: Moody Press, 1985. (446)