

Jesus' Sermon on the Mount Sermon Series

Sermon 27

Ask for the Holy Spirit

Matthew 7:7-11 "Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰ "Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? ¹¹ "If you then, 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 is a precious promise. Jesus said the God of the universe will give you what you are asking for and that you will find what you are looking for. What is the context in which Jesus spoke these words? Did He mean that if you want a new car and a new house that if you ask this from God He will surely give it to you? If you look around in the Christian world you will see false teachers on this subject. Some people teach you that God wants to bless you financially. That sounds reasonable. God is good. Then they show this text and they say that if you have enough faith God will give you whatever you want. Then to insure that you have enough faith they ask you to donate money to their ministry. When the people don't get rich, the false teachers simply tell them that they didn't have enough faith. They tell the people to give more money and believe harder. Thus they rob and deceive the people.

If Jesus was not talking about cars and houses, what was He talking about? Remember that in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus is teaching the people about the principles of the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God is first a spiritual kingdom. Jesus was not telling the people that the kingdom of God would defeat the Romans and make them rich. The kingdom of heaven is for the poor in spirit. It is for those who know they are sinners and want to be made whole. It is for those who mourn because of their sins. It is for the meek and humble, not the proud and powerful. But did Jesus say there is no reward for the righteous? There is a reward. The meek shall inherit the earth.

But we are like little children right now and God has not entrusted to us the full riches of the kingdom. Satan would come and easily take it from our hands. We are waiting for Christ's second coming. At that time God's spiritual kingdom on this earth will also be the kingdom of glory. All enemies will be overthrown. Yes, a day of reward is coming. But the reward does not come to those who simply want to be rich. Jesus said,

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.

What is the first thing you should seek for? Righteousness. That is what the kingdom of God is all about. Righteousness is about doing right things for the right motivations. The motivation of love to God and love to man must be the principle behind all of our actions. Otherwise the actions we perform are not good enough for the kingdom of God.

You remember that we are born selfish. How can a selfish person do righteousness? We need to be changed. This change takes place when the Holy Spirit comes into our lives. This is called the new birth. Just as God can bring a colorful flower of the field out of the cold brown earth, so God can bring righteousness out of a selfish person with the new birth. The words of Jesus that we are looking at are recorded differently in the book of Luke. Let's go and look at that verse.

Luke 11:13 "If you then, 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!"

The good gifts that God wants to give us is not primarily cars and houses. The gifts are found in the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit in you that gives you the source of love and righteousness necessary for the kingdom of God. Then you will find rest and happiness for your soul. But those who are seeking riches in this life are never satisfied. They never have enough. There is never a quiet spirit within them. They are not seeking the kingdom of God. They are seeking the kingdom of self.

"Ask, and it will be given to you." God wants us to recognize our spiritual need and ask for help. Those who are spiritually proud do not receive help. Seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. "For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened." Those who are not seeking the righteousness of the kingdom of God will not find it. But do not think that because you are seeking God that this impulse was created by you. It is God who creates this desire in you. You did not do this by yourself. If there is a desire in you to seek God, you are simply responding to the drawing power of God's Holy Spirit. If you yield to this, the Holy Spirit will live inside you and change you.

John 6:44 "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.

No one can come to Christ for salvation unless God draws him. If you feel drawn to Christ and righteousness it is not because you are inherently more spiritual than others. You are simply feeling the drawing power of the Holy Spirit. This is what Jesus promised.

John 14:16-17 "And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever -- ¹⁷ "the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.

Who is this Helper? The Helper is called the Spirit of Truth. Jesus said that the Spirit of Truth was with the disciples of Jesus and would live inside them. Some people say that this verse points to another prophet who would come. But this is not true. A future prophet could not have been with the disciples of Jesus and could not live inside them. Jesus said very plainly who the Helper is.

John 14:26 "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

The Helper is not a future prophet. It is the Holy Spirit. The Father sends the Holy Spirit only in the name of Jesus.

Acts 4:12 "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

God's promise is that if you come to Him with a humble heart desiring the Holy Spirit and the blessings of righteousness, God will surely give them to you. He will not withhold these things. If a child asks for bread from his earthly father will the father give him a stone? No, the father will give good things to the child. So our heavenly father wishes to give us the gift of the Holy Spirit and righteousness. He has promised and when you come in humility asking for this, you will not be disappointed. God will surely bless you.

Perhaps you have come here this morning with fears and worries in your heart. Perhaps there is trouble on every side. What you need in your life is peace.

John 14:27 "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

This peace can be yours. Ask for it. Seek it. Jesus said you will find it. The door will be opened to you.