

# SERMON ON THE MOUNT

## Taking a Look at Matthew Chapter Seven

The Sermon of the Mount (Matthew chapters 5-7) is ONE, unified teaching. Dallas Willard says “The aim of the sermon is to help people come to hopeful and realistic terms with their lives here on earth by clarifying, in concrete terms, the nature of the kingdom into which they are now invited by Jesus call”.

### Matthew 7:1-11 “Attributes of Christian Love”

Jesus illustrates Christian love with three attributes:

- 1) Should not judge (condemn or blame) those around us (verses 1-5)
- 2) Not force “wonderful things” upon people – teaching should be given in accordance with the spiritual capacity of the learner (verse 6)
- 3) Should just ask what we want from people – and from God (verses 7-11)

*"Nothing is Impossible with God!!"*

### ***FAITH & PRAYER: OUR ACCESS TO GOD'S POWER***

If we have been spiritually born-again, God is our Heavenly Father and we are his dearly loved children (Jn 1:12, 3:16; Rm 8:14-17; Gal 3:26, 4:4-7; Eph 1:3-5, 2:4; I Jn 3:1-2, 16). We have the privilege of bringing our requests to our Father (Phil 4:6-7; Heb 4:14-16). Here are some great Biblical truths relating to our privilege of praying for what we desire:

- 1) Jesus said "the thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full" (Jn 10:10). Satan wants to destroy your life, BUT God wants you to have a full and spiritually fruitful life. The good news is that God is far stronger than Satan! (I Jn 4:4; Jn 12:31-32; Col 2:15; Heb 2:14-15).
- 2) We miss out on some blessings/miracles because of our lack of faith in God (Mt 13:58). [Faith = "being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see" Heb 11:1].

- 3) We miss out on some blessings/miracles because we do not ask (James 4:2).
- 4) We need to have faith in God, and ask Him for miracles and blessings (Mt 7:7-11, 21:22; Mk 11:22-24; Jn 14:12-14, 15:16, 16:23-24).
- 5) We need to remember: ***NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR GOD!!***  
(Mt 19:23-26; Mk 10:27; Lk 18:27; Lk 1:26-37)
- 6) We need to pray persistently and not give up! (Lk 11:5-10, 18:1-8).
- 7) To summarize: Don't give up on any "impossible" situation, but keep praying, have faith in God, and remember that nothing is impossible for God!

**Our Prayer Requests Can Make a Difference in What God Does or Does Not Do**

Examples:

- 1) Moses reasoned with God to change His plan to destroy the Israelites (Ex 32:9-14).
- 2) Hezekiah earnestly asked God to extend his life – and God changed His mind and gave Hezekiah another 15 years (2 Kings 20:1-6).
- 3) Elijah prayed earnestly that it would not rain for 3.5 years, and it did not. He then prayed for rain and it rained (James 5:16-18; I Kings 17:1, 18:1, 41-46).
- 4) God canceled His planned judgements against Israel in response to Amos appeal (Amos 7:1-6).
- 5) God modified His planned criteria for saving Sodom and Gomorrah in response to Abraham's appeal (Gen 18:20-32).
- 6) God's planned judgement against the evil Ahab was postponed in response to Ahab's earnest and humble response (I Kings 21:17-29).

## ***KEYS TO ANSWERED PRAYER***

Sometimes we miss out on good things because we do not ask God (James 4:2). But what if we don't get everything we ask for?

Jesus said that if we ask anything in His name, He will do it (John 14:13-14, 16:23). Does the bible give some conditions to the promise of Jesus? Yes -- our prayers may not be answered because:

- 1) Our request is outside the will of God (I John 5:14-15).
- 2) We have wrong motives (e.g. selfishness) (James 4:3).
- 3) We have unconfessed and cherished sin in our life (Ps 32:1-5, 66:18; Is 59:2).
- 4) We are not abiding in Christ and His words (John 15:7; Ps 37:4); we are not delighting ourselves in the Lord (Ps 37:4).
- 5) We are not bearing spiritual fruit (John 15:16).
- 6) We do not keep His commands and so what pleases Him (I John 3:21-22).
- 7) We have an unforgiving spirit (Mk 11:25).
- 8) We lack faith and belief (James 1:6; Mt 21:21-22; Mk 11:22-24).
- 9) We lack persistence (Luke 11:5-20, 18:1-8) and intensity (James 5:16-18).
- 10) A husband's prayer can be hindered due to lack of respect for his wife (I Peter 3:7).

### **What kind of answers may God give?**

- 1) *The answer is sometimes an immediate "yes"* (example: Peter walked on water to go to Jesus but began to sink and prayed "Lord save me" which Jesus did immediately -- Mt 14:22-31).

- 2) *The answer is sometimes delayed* (example: Jesus did not raise Lazarus from the dead until four days later -- John 11:1-44).
- 3) *The answer is sometimes "no"* (when God answers with a "no", the answer is accompanied with peace - Phil 4:6-7 - and grace - 2 Cor 12:7-10).
- 4) *The answer is sometimes different from what you expect* (example: you pray for character growth and God sends suffering. Why? Because "suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character" Rom 5:3-4).

### **Matthew 7:12 "The Golden Rule"**

Matthew 7:12 "So **in everything, do** to others **what you would have them do to you**, for this sums up the Law and the prophets". (fyi – shorter version found in Luke 6:31).

The Golden Rule is **inclusive** ("in everything"), **proactive and action oriented** ("do"), **positive** ("do to others what you would have them do to you"), and it's **personal** ("you").

### **Matthew 7:13-14 "Narrow vs. Wide Roads"**

Going with the crowd and the easy route often leads to destruction.

### **Matthew 7:15-23 "A Tree and It's Fruit"**

- People's outward actions reveal their inward character
- Knowing God and doing properly motivated works are what counts; "religious" works apart from God have no real eternal value

**LIVING BY THE WORD: GOD’S ROAD MAP TO SUCCESS!**

God has given us an “instruction manual” to guide us and help us be successful in this life and the eternal life to come. He wants us to live a spiritually and relationally abundant life here on earth (John 10:10) and positively impact the world around us (Matthew 28:18-20)! The Bible has also been referred to as God’s love letter to mankind (John 3:16), and through it we can find God and the meaning of life and history.

There are two crucial and irreplaceable keys to success when handling God’s word:

1) **L**\_\_\_\_\_ it

**AND**

2) **A**\_\_\_\_\_ it (Just do it!)

There are two errors to avoid: Not learning God’s word **OR** Learning but not applying (knowledge without application is basically worthless; “to know and not apply shows we really don’t know”).

**WHY SHOULD WE LEARN & APPLY GOD’S WORD (THE BIBLE)?**

1) **The Bible is W**\_\_\_\_\_!

- God’s Word is authoritative and eternal and abides forever (Psalms 119:89; I Peter 1:25)
- The Bible is inspired by God (II Timothy 3:16; II Peter 1:20-21; I Cor 2:13)
- God’s word teaches, rebukes, corrects, trains and equips us for good works (II Timothy 3:16-17)

II Timothy 3:16-17 (NIV) “**All** Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly **equipped for every good work**”.

- God’s Word is living, active, piercing and discerning (Hebrews 4:12)

- God’s Word gets results, it does not return empty (Is 55:11)
- The Bible is Tried, Tested, Upright and the Truth (Psalms 18:30, 33:4; Proverbs 30:5; John 17:17)

2) **God T\_\_\_\_\_ us to!**

- We are exhorted to let the Word of God dwell richly within us (Colossians 3:16)
- God tells us to meditate on the Word and do all that it says (Joshua 1:8; Psalms 1)
- Told to be a doer, not just a hearer of the Word (James 1:22-25)

3) **We receive B\_\_\_\_\_ and B\_\_\_\_\_! The church and the people around us are also blessed as we learn and apply God’s Word.**

- a) By learning and doing His Word we can stand up to the storms of life (loss of jobs, poor health, financial worries, death of a loved one, temptations to do wrong, etc):

Examples:

Struggle with worry? *Practice Philippians 4:6-7*

Having a problem with temptation? *Claim I Corinthians 10:13*

Concerned about making ends meet? *Meditate on Matthew 6:25-33*

Sad about death of a Christian loved one? *Take comfort from 2 Cor 5:6-8*

Facing a challenge too big for you to handle? *Focus on Philippians 4:13*

- b) We are blessed by Jesus:

Luke 11:27-28 “As Jesus was saying these things, a woman in the crowd called out, “Blessed is the mother who gave you birth and nursed you.” He replied, “**Blessed** rather are those who **hear** the Word of God **and obey** it.”

- c) We develop a special relationship with Jesus:

Luke 8:19-21 “Now Jesus’ mothers and brothers came to see Him, but they were not able to get near Him because of the crowd. Some one told him, “Your mother and brothers are standing

outside, wanting to see you.” He replied, “My mother and brothers are those who **hear** God’s Word **and put it into practice.**”

d) We give evidence that we really love Jesus:

John 14: 15-24 “**If you love me, you will obey what I command** ... Whoever has my commands **and** obeys them, he is the one who loves me ... **If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching.** My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. He who does not love me will not obey my teaching ...”.

e) We will be successful in what we do:

**READ Joshua 1:1-9 (also refer to Psalms 1)**

f) Some benefits from Psalms 119:

- Avoid being shamed (verses 6, 31, 80)
- Keep our way pure and get victory over sin (9, 11)
- Receive guidance/advice/direction (24, 105)
- Preserves our life (38, 93)
- Strengthens us (28)
- Keeps us from being deceived and from stumbling (29, 165)
- Sets our heart free/gives us freedom (32)
- Source of delight, peace and comfort (35,52, 165)
- Source of wisdom, insight & understanding (98-100, 104)
- Sustains us (175)

**CAUTIONS:**

We need to handle God’s Word accurately (II Timothy 2:15) and should not ADD (i.e. Legalism) or SUBTRACT (Liberalism) from God’s Word (Duet 4:2, 12:32; Rev 22:18-19; Mat 5:18-19). Teachers of God’s Word have a special accountability before God (James 3:1; Hebrews 13:17).

We also should focus on the Major teachings and not get obsessed with Minor teachings. Lets avoid being a modern day Pharisee; the most important teachings according to Jesus are the Great Commands – “Love God and Love People (Matthew 22:34-40) ” and Great Commission – “Make Disciples” (Matthew 28:18-20).

### **How do I start a personal Bible study habit?**

- 1) Make a decision (commitment)
- 2) Make a plan
  - a) Time (start of day, noon hour, after dinner, before bedtime, etc.)
  - b) Place (favorite recliner, chair in bedroom, den, etc.)
  - c) Reading plan (One Year Bible, One year reading schedule, read through New Testament, pick a book of the Bible like John, James, Psalms or Proverbs)
- 3) Just do it! Focus on what you can learn and put into practice. Application is the key!

### **RESOURCE HELPS FOR SERIOUS STUDY:**

**Study Bible**, based on a respected translation (e.g., NIV, NASB, King James, New King James, etc).

**Bible Commentary**

**Bible Concordance** (e.g. Strings)

**Bible Dictionary** (e.g. Vines)

**Bible Handbook** (e.g. Eerdmans)

**Atlas/maps**

*Books:*

“Living by the Book” by Howard & William Hendricks

“How to Read the Bible for All It’s Worth” by Gordon D. Fee and Douglas Stuart

*PSALMS 19:7 – 11*

**The law of the Lord is perfect,  
reviving the soul.**

**The statues of the Lord are trustworthy,  
making wise the simple.**

**The precepts of the Lord are right,  
giving joy to the heart.**



**The commandments of the Lord are radiant,  
giving light to the eyes.**

**The fear of the Lord is pure,  
enduring forever.**

**The ordinances of the Lord are sure,  
and altogether righteous.**

**They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold;  
they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the comb.**

**By them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.**

**Matthew 7:28-29 Post Sermon**

Jesus teaching is amazing, authoritative and divine – not the teaching of a mere human!