

LESSON 27 - ASKING, SEEKING, AND KNOCKING *Matthew 7:7-12*

(7:7-8) - These verses speak of the fact that any and every sinner who asks for the salvation that God freely gives to His people, who seek for salvation according to God's will and way, and who knock at door of God's grace in Christ, the Door of salvation, shall be saved. The problem with the natural man is that when he asks for salvation, he asks like many who pray for things selfishly that they may consume it with their own evil lusts - "***Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts***" (***James 4:3***). James was not speaking of salvation, but this is the way that unregenerate people by nature ask for salvation. For example, unregenerate man desires a salvation that gives him room to glory in himself and not in Christ and His cross alone. This is the way Cain sought salvation and blessings from God. All who ask for salvation this evil way will not receive it, but all who ask for it GOD'S WAY IN CHRIST, based on His blood and righteousness alone, shall receive it (***John 6:37***).

The same holds true for the natural man who seeks salvation by his own works and will. It is like seeking for gold in a mine field. He wants salvation, but he wants it and seeks it his own self-righteous way. What he will find in this sinful search is condemnation and death. God sends forth His Holy Spirit to give spiritual life to His people and bring them to seek salvation GOD'S WAY IN CHRIST. It is all by God's grace and power, and it brings sinners to seek and to find salvation in the glorious Person and finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. All who seek salvation God's way in Christ shall find it.

The same holds true for the natural man when he knocks at the door of salvation. He fails to know at the door of God's grace in Christ Who is Himself the Door (the Way) of salvation, justification before God, acceptance with God, access to God, and fellowship with God. Christ said,

John 10 - (1) Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. (2) But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. (3) To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. (4) And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. (5) And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers. (6) This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them. (7) Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. (8) All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. (9) I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

(7:9-11) - Even natural evil people know how to care for their children in the things of this world. It is sad that there are many parents who fail because of the magnitude of their unchecked evil. But, on the whole, we know how to give our children what they need to be healthy and to get along in this world. If this is case, then consider how much wiser, more powerful, and more good God is towards HIS children to given them the greater and better gifts that He gives in salvation and eternal life. He gave His children the greatest gift of all - "***For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life***" (***John 3:16***). It is wrong for people to take these blessings and apply them to all people without exception, because this speaking of God's

children - chosen before the foundation of the world (**Eph. 1:3-5**), justified before God based on the imputed righteousness of Christ (**Rom. 8:31-34**), redeemed by the blood of Christ and adopted into God's family (**Gal. 4:4-5; Eph. 1:5**), regenerated and called by the Holy Spirit under the preaching of the Gospel of God's grace in Christ (**Rom. 1:16-17; 2 Thess. 2:13-14**). God's children are sinners saved by His grace in Christ, blessed with ALL spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ (**Eph. 1:3**), and God says, "**He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?**" (**Rom. 8:32**). They have been given freely the gift of salvation (**Eph. 2:8-10**) which includes the gifts of righteousness and life (**Rom. 5:17**). All of these gifts are given to them in and by the Lord Jesus Christ, the greatest gift of all.

(**7:12**) - This is what many call the "golden rule." It is also written in **Luke 6:31**. Some state it as, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." This certainly is a Biblical principle by which all truth Christians ought to live. Of course, as shown in the phrase, "**For this is the law and the prophets,**" it reveals the perfect standard of righteousness required by God's law as expressed by the Lord Himself in the summation of law -

Mark 12 - (29) And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: (30) And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. (31) And the second is like, namely this, THOU SHALT LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR AS THYSELF. There is none other commandment greater than these.

This is the perfect law of love. And although all true Christians ought to strive to love God perfectly and love our neighbors as ourselves, this "Golden Rule," this perfect standard of righteousness exposes our sinfulness, our depravity, and weakness to work righteousness for ourselves. We all fall short of this perfect law of love. Christ is the only one who fulfilled the "Golden Rule" perfectly, and He is the Lord our Righteousness (**Rom. 10:4**). The Gospel truth of salvation by God's grace in Christ is also taught "**the law and the prophets**" (**Rom. 3:21-25**).

The issue set forth by the Lord here is the salvation of sinners. The gift of God in Christ is salvation, and we who are saved ought to desire that same salvation for our neighbors, even our worst enemies. The Bible says, "**For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved**" (**Rom. 10:13**). Man by nature will not call upon Christ for salvation because he insists on salvation his own way for his own glory (**John 3:19-20; 6:44; 1 Cor. 2:14**). The Bible says, "**And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely**" (**Rev. 22:17**). We have seen that ALL who call and ALL who are willing to receive God's way of salvation by grace in Christ and based on HIS righteousness alone SHALL be saved. The problem is that man by nature is UNWILLING and must be made willing by the grace of God in the power of the Holy Spirit (**John 1:11-13**). Someone said, "Salvation is a gift, but we must receive it." The Bible tells us that salvation is a gift that people by nature do not want and that they must be changed by God to want this salvation. That is what we as believers desire for our neighbors. And though we desire other good things for them, there is nothing better sinners than Christ and salvation by God's grace through His blood and righteousness which brings eternal life and glory.