

Lesson 15: Prayerful Persistence and the Golden Rule

Matthew 7:7-12

I. PRAYER IS HUMBLE.

A. Acknowledge Need. Beggars or children assume a lesser role of dependency.

B. Acknowledge God. God is the one I depend upon for help, protection and provision.

C. Acknowledge Questions. (Dan 2:19-23; Jam 1:5) I don't know.

II. PRAYER IS ACTIVE. God's omniscience is not an excuse to not pray or not act!

A. Asking is Active. (James 4:2b)

1. Ask for Provision. "Give us this day our daily bread."

2. Ask for the Work of His Spirit in Your Life. All the subjects Jesus has just covered in the Sermon on the Mount, He clearly expects us to pray about.

B. Seeking Is Active. Contentment does not mean stagnation. There is a holy discontent, a righteous restlessness.

1. Seek God. (Jer 29:12-13) Seek a deeper relationship with Him—for *Himself*, not just what He can *give* you.

2. Seek Understanding. (Prov 2:3-6) Of a person, situation, spiritual truth

3. Seek Guidance. (Isa 8:19-20) Don't just go your own way according to your own wisdom. Refusing to ask is *pride*.

C. **Knocking Is Active.** Confident because we know who's there and sure of our reception

1. **Boldly Approach.** (Heb 2:18, 4:15-16) Drop by God's house and knock on the door any time!
2. **Make Noise.** (Mk 10:46-52) Don't be timid. You're not a nuisance to Him!

III. **PRAYER IS PERSISTENT** (present imperative verbs) *Keep on* asking, seeking, knocking!

A. **It keeps on Pursuing.**

1. **Pursue the Answer.** He may give you something better, but He will never give you something worse or inferior!
2. **Pursue the Relationship.** Our asking and His giving is relationship-building.

B. **It doesn't Give Up.** (Gen 32:26) Sometimes the answer takes time or effort on our part. Sometimes God tests our resolve or redirects our prayer.

IV. **PRAYER IS ANSWERED** (9-11) Not an arbitrary spiritual exercise but necessary and effective

A. **With Good Things** (9-10; Ps 103:5; James 1:17) God is the one who gives good and perfect gifts that satisfy our desires, renew our youth and don't bring regret.

B. **By a Good Father** (11) He's rich, generous, knows what you need, loves to give good gifts and He loves you!