Prayer and Provision
Matthew 7:7-11

Big Idea:
God invites and desires for us to pray. He promises good things if we would but ask Him.

Introduction

5 Discourses in Matthew-Largest of any book on direct teaching from Jesus-Sermon on the Mount the first discourse

Talking about that Jesus is the authority, the Messiah. He’s shifting the locus of authority from a tradition and group to Himself…..I’ve said.

5-Kingdom Principles
6-7 Kingdom Practices

Passage

Matthew 7:7-11

7 “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!

Big Idea

God invites and desires for us to pray. He promises good things if we would but ask Him.

*Prayer to a loving Father is EFFECTIVE!*

Outline

● The Invitation to Prayer (7-8)
● The Goodness and Generosity of our Father (9-11)

The Invitation to Prayer (7-8)

7 “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
Present Imperatives- a continual action…..We are to continue in these things.

1. Posture/Position- Asking. Asking implies dependence. A declaration that we aren’t self-sufficient, that we have need. It requires humility.----God’s promise that He will answer.

   Temptation- To think we’re to busy and have to much to do for prayer! We have to fix things.
   Martin Luther “The world is insane. It tries to get rid of its insanity by the use of wisdom and reason; and it looks for many ways and means, for all sorts of help and advice on how to escape this distress. But the shortest and surest way is to go into a little room (Matt 6:6) or a corner and there to open your heart and to pour it out before God, filled with complaints and sights, but also with confidence and trust that as your faithful heavenly Father He wants to give you His help and advice in this distress.”

2. Pursuit- Seeking. A hunger and desire for!~~God’s promise that we will find Him. A wholehearted quest to know God!

   Mt.6:33 “But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”
   ● Putting God’s plan before our own
   ● Setting a priority on personal holiness and a desire to be sanctified

   Psalm 119:2 Blessed are those who keep his testimonies, who seek him with their whole heart,

   Psalm 105:4 Seek the LORD and his strength; seek his presence continually!

   Psalm 27:8- You have said, “Seek my face.” My heart says to you, “Your face, LORD, do I seek.

3. Persistence-Knocking. A continual coming back to the Lord. ---God’s promise to open the door. A persistence/ commitment to endure in our quest to know God.

   Parable of the Persistent Widow (Lk.18:1-10)
   ● Don’t lose heart
   ● How much more will God give justice
   ● Will He find faith on the earth

   Revelation 3:20- “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.
   ● Knocking associated with intimate relationship
Problem 1- Prayer Unanswered

No, we do not get everything we ask for and we should not and we would not want to. The reason I say we should not is because we would in effect become God if God did everything we asked him to do. We should not be God. God should be God. And the reason I say that we would not want to get everything we asked is because we would then have to bear the burden of infinite wisdom which we do not have. We simply don’t know enough to infallibly decide how every decision will turn out and what the next events in our lives, let alone in history, should be.

What about when He doesn’t say yes to our requests?

Ex.) Cancer-Salvation-Reconciliation-Finances-Healing of loved one

- I don’t have the answer, but I do know our God’s character!

Examples:

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Why Pray if God knows everything?

The Goodness and Generosity of our Father (9-11)-Who we approach in Prayer

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!

Temptation- We think God distant and uncaring, not intimate with our personal lives.

The need for prayer: Why we struggle with our prayer life? Moving more to delight driving our discipline rather than discipline driving our delight.
Do you believe that God loves you? Not the world, not your family, not the church but you? Not the you in the future who’s awesome, but the you who’s sitting here right now?

**God as our Good Father**

He Knows what we need!

St. Augustine—“For what would he not now give to sons when they ask, when he has already granted this very thing, namely, that they might be sons?”

“If we knew everything that God knows we would answer our prayers the same way!”

1 John 3:1-3

See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. 2 Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears[1] we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. 3 And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

**God as our Generous Father**

How much more will our Heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask

….The Holy Spirit…..the Kingdom

Romans 8:31-32

31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?

James 1:16-17

“Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers. 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.

Thou art coming to a King,
Large petitions with thee bring;
For His grace and power are such,
None can ever ask too much.
Prayer to a loving Father is EFFECTIVE!