

# Jesus – King of the Jews #16

## Counsel in the Sermon

Matt 7:7-13

### Introduction:

1. In this third of three chapters in Matthew on the Sermon on the Mount, Christ continues to give counsel on some very practical subjects.
2. Christ did a lot of instructing about prayer and we do well to study these instructions on prayer
3. The recording of the sermon helps make the Bible a very relevant book.
4. The Bible is more up to date than today's newspaper.

### I. The Counsel About Prayer – vs 7-11

- In the last chapter, some valuable instruction was given about prayer.
- In this chapter more wise counsel is given about the matter of prayer.

#### A. The Command for Prayer – vs 7

*7 Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:*

- In giving counsel about prayer, Christ gives a command to pray in a threefold way—ask, seek, knock.
1. Proof of the command - "Ask... seek... knock."
    - a) *These three words are grammatically in the imperative mood which indicates a command.*
  2. Priority from the command
    - a) *Being a command, prayer takes on a very high priority—as high as God's command.*
    - b) *Prayer is not to be an optional experience in life but is commanded to be an important part of our lives.*
  3. Privilege of the command
    - a) *To ask, seek, knock where God is involved is a great privilege*
    - b) *If we could see the president of the US or a king, it would be a great privilege*
    - c) *But to be able to go to God with our prayers and petitions*  
**Heb 4:16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.**
    - d) *How we should value our spiritual privileges*
      - (1) The greatest privileges in life are spiritual privileges
      - (2) The lost value front row seats at a sporting event or some other form of entertainment
      - (3) Let us value our spiritual privileges

**BYZ Matthew 7:7** Αἰτεῖτε καὶ δοθήσεται ὑμῖν ζητεῖτε καὶ εὕρησεται κρούετε καὶ ἀνοιγήσεται ὑμῖν·  
**Αἰτεῖτε** imper pres act 2pp from αἰτέω ask, request; require, demand - an inferior asking from a superior  
**δοθήσεται** ind fut pass 3ps from δίδωμι  
**ζητεῖτε** imper pres act 2pp from ζητέω seek, search or look for; try, attempt, strive for  
**κρούετε** imper pres act 2pp from κρούω knock at a door

#### B. The Character of Prayer

- Through the counsel of prayer are at least six characteristics that should be in our praying.
1. Pray humbly - "Ask"
    - a) *The word "ask" is the word used when an inferior asks a superior.*
    - b) *Thus the asking here indicates the humbleness that should be in our praying.*
      - (1) We humbly recognize the superiority of the One we are coming to
      - (2) The ostentatious praying of the religious leaders of Christ's day did not fit this mold
      - (3) They were putting on a performance for men
    - c) *erotao - suggests that the petitioner is on a footing of equality or familiarity with the person whom he requests.*
      - (1) Erotao was used of a king in making request from another king.
      - (2) When Jesus prayed to His Father, this is the word that he used for He was on equal terms or footing with God the Father.
    - d) *Aiteo - the petition of one who is lesser in position than the one to whom the petition is made.*
      - (1) It was used to describe the case of men in asking something from God, a child from a parent, a subject from a king, or a beggar from a passer by.
      - (2) Jesus never used this word when praying to God the Father.

2. Pray earnestly - "Seek"
  - a) *This word means to look earnestly for something.*
  - b) *Earnestness is vital to good praying.*
  - c) *Involves asking but adds action*
  - d) *Later Scripture says, "The... effectual fervent prayer... availeth much" ([James 5:16](#)).*
3. Pray believingly - "Knock"
  - a) *One knocks at a door that is closed.*
  - b) *Praying when the door of our circumstances seems closed shows faith.*
  - c) *We pray because God has commanded us to pray*
  - d) *We pray because God has the power to answer prayer*
  - e) *By faith, we knock when the door appears shut*
4. Pray reverently - "Knock"
  - a) *The word "knock" means to rap.*
  - b) *There are two words for "knock" in the Greek.*
  - c) *One refers to unceremonious pounding, the other to polite knocking.*
  - d) *It is the second word meaning that is in this text for prayer. When we pray, we must show reverence to God.*
5. Pray persistently - "Ask... seek... knock."
  - a) *These words are in the present tense and mean to keep on asking, keep on seeking, and keep on knocking.*
  - b) *To do this requires persistency in our prayer life.*
6. Pray rightfully - "Bread... fish" – vs 9-10
 

9 Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? 10 Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?

  - a) *In the illustrations about prayer, Christ speaks of requests for common things, not luxuries.*
  - b) *Bread and fish were essentials.*
  - c) *We must pray rightly to have good results. "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts" ([James 4:3](#)).*
  - d) *We should pray for the necessary, not the unnecessary.*

8 πᾶς γὰρ ὁ αἰτῶν λαμβάνει καὶ ὁ ζητῶν εὐρίσκει καὶ τῷ κρούοντι ἀνοιγήσεται 9 ἢ τίς ἐστὶν ἐξ ὑμῶν ἄνθρωπος ὃν ἐὰν αἰτήσῃ ὁ υἱὸς αὐτοῦ ἄρτον μὴ λίθον ἐπιδώσει αὐτῷ  
 ἐπιδώσει ind fut act 3ps from ἐπιδίδωμι  
 give, hand; deliver (letters); give way (to wind) or give up (Ac 27.15)

BYZ **Matthew 7:10** καὶ ἐὰν ἰχθὺν αἰτήσῃ, μὴ ὄφιν ἐπιδώσει αὐτῷ

### C. The Consequences of Prayer – vs 8

*"Everyone that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened"*

1. The consequences of prayer are most encouraging.
2. That which is emphasized in this counsel on prayer is that the consequences are exactly what God promised.
3. The problem in prayer is not God failing to do His part in regards to the promises, but the problem is the failure of man to do his part in regards to the praying.
4. As a young woman, Frances Havergal, author of the hymns, *Take My Life and Let It Be* and *Like a River Glorious*, had a very quick temper. It was the kind that would easily explode. After she would blow up, she would be mortified and confess her failure to the Lord only to lose her temper, again and again. One day after a particularly bad explosion, she threw herself down by her bed and wept. She prayed, "Lord, must it always be so? Will I always have this temper to keep me humble before you?" While she was on her knees, the Lord injected a verse of Scripture in her mind: *"The Egyptians whom you have seen today you will see no more forever."* God spoke these words to Moses when the Egyptians pursued the Israelites to take them back into bondage. Havergal related the verse to her temper and the way in which Satan wanted to use it to pull her into failure, bondage, and defeat. She saw that God could take her temper away. She asked, "Lord, could it be forever?" It seemed to her that the words came back from the Lord, "Yes. No more, forever." Her sister said that from that day Frances Havergal never again lost her temper. She believed God, and the Lord gave her total victory in her life.

#### D. The Confidence for Prayer

9 Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? 10 Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? 11 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

- An important encouragement to our praying is the confidence we can have in God when we pray.
  - Three reasons for this confidence are given by Christ in this counsel on prayer in the Sermon on the Mount.
1. Sincerity of God - *"What man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?"*
    - a) *These rhetorical questions emphasize that God is sincere and will not trick the praying person by giving that person something different than for what he was asking.*
  2. Superiority of God - *"How much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?"*
    - a) *If fathers, who are evil (in the sense that all men are depraved), can give good things to their children who ask them, how much better will God perform.*
    - b) *He is superior in that He is sinless and His love and wisdom are infinitely greater.*
  3. Sanctity of God - *"Give good things"*
    - a) *God will not give us evil things. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (James 1:17).*
    - b) *God's gifts will not corrupt or pollute us.*
    - c) *In 1962 a 14-year-old by the name of Robert White wrote to President John F. Kennedy's personal secretary requesting the President's autograph. Within a few weeks Evelyn Lincoln honored the boy's request by sending him a facsimile signature in the mail. That began a relationship of correspondence that lasted 33 years. Impressed with White's passion for presidential history, Mrs. Lincoln gave him thousands of documents and mementos. She saved whatever could be saved including even the doodles JFK drew during meetings. Today, Robert White, now 51, boasts the largest private collection of Kennedy memorabilia, over 50,000 items. Receiving things from the Lord begins with the courage and confidence to ask Him for things.*

**Matt 7:11** εἰ οὖν ὑμεῖς ποιηροὶ ὄντες οἴδατε δόματα ἀγαθὰ διδόναι τοῖς τέκνοις ὑμῶν πόσω μᾶλλον ὁ πατὴρ ὑμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς δώσει ἀγαθὰ τοῖς αἰτοῦσιν αὐτόν πόσω pronoun correlative/interrogative dns from πόσος, η, ον how much, how many ( πόσω μᾶλλον how much more);

#### II. The Counsel About Principle – vs 12

- The principle in our text here in this counsel has often been called "The Golden Rule."
- It is a grand principle that Christ gave in the Sermon on the Mount.
- This is to be practiced because we are Christians, not to make us Christians

#### A. The Specifics of the Principle – vs 12

*"Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them"*

- Three important specifics of the conduct mandated by this principle can be seen in the text.
1. Essence of the conduct - *"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."*
    - a) *This principle embodies and summarizes the second table of the ten commandments.*
    - b) *This second table has to do with our relationship with man.*
    - c) *It is summed up as "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Matthew 22:39).*

**BYZ Matthew 7:12** Πάντα οὖν ὅσα ἂν θέλητε ἵνα ποιῶσιν ὑμῖν οἱ ἄνθρωποι οὕτως καὶ ὑμεῖς ποιεῖτε αὐτοῖς· οὗτος γάρ ἐστιν ὁ νόμος καὶ οἱ προφῆται

2. Equity of the conduct - *"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."*
  - a) *The equity in this principle is that you are to treat others as you want them to treat you (it is not treat others as they treat you).*
  - b) *This puts everyone on equal terms in our conduct one to another.*
  - c) *There is nothing unfair or unjust about this principle.*
  - d) *This equity will not allow for hypocrisy—you will not be as some who are resolute about their own rights but have no regard for the rights of others.*
3. Extent of the conduct - *"Whatsoever."*
  - a) *The principle includes every act and every person.*
  - b) *It applies to all—the king as well as to the subjects.*
  - c) *In 1999, Kevin Stephan of Lancaster, New York, was a bat boy for his younger brother's little-league baseball team. During one game, a player who was warming up accidentally hit Kevin in the chest with a bat. Kevin fell to the ground, unconscious. His heart stopped beating. "All I remember," Kevin says, "is that, all of a sudden, I got hit in the chest with something, and I turned around and passed out." Fortunately, a nurse whose son played on the team was able to revive him. Kevin and his family later learned that the nurse, Penny Brown, was supposed to be at work that night but had been given the day off at the last minute. The story doesn't stop there, however. Seven years later, in January of 2006, Penny Brown was eating at the Hillview Restaurant in Depew, New York, when she began to choke on her food. "The food wasn't going anywhere, and I totally couldn't breathe," said Penny. "It was very frightening." Patrons began screaming for someone to help. One of the restaurant employees, a volunteer firefighter, ran out from the back. He wrapped his arms around the victim, applied the Heimlich maneuver, and saved the woman's life. When the emergency was over, the patron and employee recognized each other. The person who saved Penny's life was 17-year-old Kevin Stephan, the same boy whom Penny had saved seven years earlier.*

## **B. The Support for the Principle – vs 12**

*"For this is the law and the prophets".*

- The *"law and the prophets"* was a name given in the earthly days of Christ for the Old Testament Scriptures.
  - Thus the support for this "golden rule" principle is the Scriptures.
1. Scope of the support - *"Law and prophets."*
    - a) *This term includes all the Scriptures.*
    - b) *The "Law" referred to the books of Moses of the OT and the "prophets" referred to the rest of the OT.*
    - c) *Since the "law and the prophets" referred to the entire OT Scripture, the scope of the support for this principle included all the Scriptures—indeed great support.*
  2. Superiority of the support - *"Law and the prophets."*
    - a) *No support is better than the Scriptures, for that is the support of God.*
    - b) *Too often men base their creed and conduct on what other men say and not on what God says through His Holy Word.*
    - c) *But the support of the Word of God is the best support in every age.*
  3. Seniority of the support - *"Law and prophets."*
    - a) *This principle has the oldest support of all.*
    - b) *No support has more antiquity than the Scriptures.*
    - c) *Many ancients have spoken this principle (such as Hillel, Philo, Socrates, Confucius), but Scripture predates these men.*
    - d) *Christ was not teaching something that originated with the ancients but with the Word of God.*

### III. The Counsel About Paths – vs 13-14

- The counsel is like the counsel found in the OT which says, "Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I set before you the way of life, and the way of death" ([Jeremiah 21:8](#)).
- With God there are only two paths. One is life; one is death.
- One is good; one is bad. One leads to heaven; one leads to hell.
- The world wants many paths in the matter of character.
- Christ describes both paths and thus shows what a great contrast they are to each other.

#### A. The Good Path – vs 13-14

*13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:  
14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*

- There is a fourfold description here of the good path.
1. Commending of the path - "Enter ye in at the strait gate"
    - a) The commending of the path is in the fact that God commanded man to walk on it.
    - b) Living the right kind of life, receiving Christ as Savior, is not optional but is a command of God.
  2. Character of the path - "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way"
    - a) The word translated "strait" (often confused as "straight") means "pent up, narrow, difficult to be entered" (Barnes).
    - b) It is not only the gate that is difficult, but the "way" is difficult, too, for it is "narrow."
    - c) The Christian life is not easy on the earth.
  3. Crowd on the path - "Few there be that find it"
    - a) The right way is definitely not the popular way.
    - b) If you live a godly life, you will often walk the path of life alone.
  4. Consequences of the path - "Which leadeth unto life".
    - a) It is the conclusion or end of the path that is important.
    - b) And the good path, though it is difficult to enter and to travel on, ends in tremendous blessing—eternal life.

#### B. The Bad Path – vs 13

*"Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat"*

- Four things are said about the bad path.
1. Condemnation of the path
    - a) The condemnation is implied and strong.
    - b) God does not have to say, "Thou shalt not."
    - c) The description itself is strongly condemnatory.
  2. Character of the path - "Wide... broad."
    - a) The word "wide" for the gate makes it easy to get on this path. There are no difficult restrictions.
    - b) "Broad" makes it easy to travel on the path.
    - c) You can be a staggering drunk and still stay on the path it is so broad.
    - d) This shows the deceitfulness of sin. It looks so wonderful but it is so woeful instead.
  3. Crowd on the path - "Many there be which go in thereat."
    - a) This is the popular path.
    - b) If you want to run with the crowd, this is your path.
    - c) The ungodly way is the way most folks walk.
  4. Consequences of the path - "Leadeth to destruction."
    - a) The end of something is what is the most important, as we noted in regards to the good path.
    - b) The bad path may be a most enjoyable trip but the end is eternity in hell, spoken of here as "destruction."

**Matthew 7:13** Εἰσελθετε διὰ τῆς στενῆς πύλης· ὅτι πλατεία ἡ πύλη καὶ εὐρύχωρος ἡ ὁδὸς ἡ ἀπάγουσα εἰς τὴν ἀπώλειαν καὶ πολλοὶ εἰσὶν οἱ εἰσερχόμενοι δι' αὐτῆς· στενὸς narrow; metaphorically, of the strict requirements relating to the entrance and path to eternal life narrow, strict, exacting (MT 7.13) - only used here in the NT - we get stenography from this word (narrow writing) πλατὺς broad, wide (MT 7.13); the feminine πλατεία, with ὁδός to be supplied, serves as a substantive broad way, open street, wide road (MT 6.5), in contrast to ῥύμη (alley) εὐρύχωρος wide, roomy ἀπάγουσα ptc pres act nfs ἀπάγω lead away by force; lead; bring before; lead astray (1 Cor 12.2); put to death (Ac 12.19); intrans. lead (of a road) ἀπώλεια f destruction, utter ruin; hell (ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀ. one bound to be lost or one destined for hell Jn 17.12; 2 Th 2.3)

**BYZ Matthew 7:14** τί στενὴ ἡ πύλη καὶ τεθλιμμένη ἡ ὁδὸς ἡ ἀπάγουσα εἰς τὴν ζωὴν καὶ ὀλίγοι εἰσὶν οἱ εὐρίσκοντες αὐτήν τεθλιμμένη ptc perf pass nfs from θλίβω press hard, crush (of a crowd); pass. experience trouble or difficulty; pf. pass. ptc. narrow (Mt 7.14); strictly press, rub together; hence compress, make narrow; (1) metaphorically and passive τεθλιμμένη ἡ ὁδὸς ἡ ἀπάγουσα εἰς τὴν ζωὴν literally restricted is the road that leads to life, i.e. in order to receive eternal life, one must live as God requires (MT 7.14); (2) press or crowd against, throng (MK 3.9); (3) figuratively afflict, oppress, cause trouble to (2Th 1.6); passive experience hardship, be afflicted (2C 1.6)