



### **Part 43: Jesus and Seeking God**

Matthew 7:7-12

The power to live the way of Jesus is with Jesus  
in a posture of humility and faith (asking).

#### I. A Holy Entrapment

Q: What does Jesus require of us?

We've been making our way through the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5-7, and we are nearing the end. We have seen some very challenging teachings from Jesus ... how we reflect the very character and ways of God: "salt & light" in the words of Jesus (Matthew 5:13-16).

Jesus has challenged us on the way we handle our anger, lust, speech, revenge, enemies, integrity, prayer, fasting, money, worry and a critical spirit.

Jesus has made it clear that his way is God's will for His people (Matthew 5:17; 7:12). It is the way for human flourishing (John 10:10).

As we head towards home in his Sermon, we see a sober mindedness in Matthew 7. There is a wide and narrow way, there are false teachers in/outside the church, obedience is important, our wisdom or folly is reflected in whether we try to put into practice Jesus' teachings.

In the words of a famous Elvis song – "I'm caught in a trap." This feels like a "holy entrapment." Jesus has lured us in only to hem us into something that seems humanly impossible. What are we to do?

This is what Jesus' teaching is about in Matthew 7:7-12.

## II. Jesus Call to Humility and Faith

### A. Jesus' Life Principle (Matthew 7:7-8; John 15:5)

"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened." Matthew 7:7-8

This is an expression of the way Jesus lived his earthly life: in a posture of humility and faith. He wants us to live in the same posture of humility and faith. Jesus knows well that we will be undone by our attempts to live his way in our own power. It will lead to exhaustion, bitterness, and resignation.

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit.; apart from me you can do nothing." John 15:5

### B. Jesus' Assurance (Matt. 7:9-11)

"Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who asks him!" Matthew 7:9-11

Jesus grounds his life principle in the character of our Heavenly Father. In Luke Jesus connects the Father's "good gifts" with the gift of the Holy Spirit.

"If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" Luke 11:13

Here we see Jesus going after our two great challenges in living as his disciple:

- Is it worth it? Is God really good?
- How can we do this without help?

### C. Our Great Need (Matthew 7:11)

"If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who asks him!" Matthew 7:9-11

There may be nothing Jesus says that could challenge and offend our modern sensibilities more than the fact that he says we are "evil." It is a cardinal rule of modern,

secular culture that people are born inherently good. Any moral or character deficiencies are attributed to one's environment.

Jesus and the writers of Scripture, however, present us with a very different view of humanity. On the one hand, we are beautiful creatures made in God's image giving us inherent value and dignity. On the other hand, we are flawed by sin to our very core (Jeremiah 17:9; Matthew 9:12-13; Romans 7:18).

Because we inherited our sin nature from Adam, we are corrupt and polluted in all aspects of our lives – our minds, wills, emotions, and bodies are all affected by sin. It's like a computer virus has affected all aspects of our system (the doctrine of total or radical depravity).

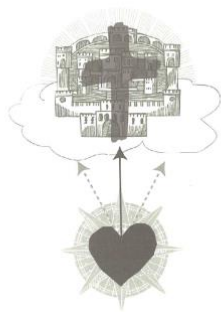
"Evil is like a root cancer that extends in all directions within the organism to leave its devastating effects." – Roger Nicole, *Our Sovereign God*

"The moral ability lost in original sin is therefore not the ability to be outwardly 'moral,' but the ability to incline oneself to the things of God." – R.C. Sproul, *What is Reformed Theology?*

"We will never desire the real God enough to choose Him. The real God, as revealed in Jesus Christ, threatens our hearts, because we rightly recognize we would lose control of our lives and wrongly believe this will end our joy." – Tim Keller

Left to ourselves, apart from God saving grace in King Jesus, we will not seek God. We will question His good intentions for us – the same temptation in the garden (Genesis 3:1f).

We need the Holy Spirit to open our eyes, unstop our ears, turn our hearts towards Jesus to entrust ourselves to Him as Savior and Lord. Once we have turned to Jesus in repentance and faith, we keep turning in humility and faith the rest of our lives for the power of the Holy Spirit.



"Breathe in me, Holy Spirit, that my thoughts may be holy. Act in me, Holy Spirit, that my work too, may be holy. Draw my heart, Holy Spirit, that I love what is holy. Strengthen me, Holy Spirit, to defend all that is holy. Guard me, Holy Spirit, that I always may be holy. Amen." – Augustine

### III. Jesus' Easy Yoke (Matthew 11:28-30)

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Matthew 11:28-30