

## Matthew 7:7-12

### Day 1

Very simply, God wants us to ask him for things, to seek him out and take action. God will give us good things in life if they align to his will. Since God treats us so kindly, we should do the same for others.

### Day 2

Jesus points out that we are innately bad and yet we are capable of giving good and necessary gifts to our kids. If we can do this, there should be no doubt in our minds that God would do the same for us. God will not give us what we don't need (example of stone and serpent).

### Day 3

The verse above this passage (verse 6) describes teaching the news of the kingdom to those who would be receptive of the message. We contrast this with the current passage and see that God wants us to consistently and persistently pursue Him and ask him for things we need.

### Day 4

The idea of asking for bread and fish were two necessary staples in the Jewish diet. Offering a stone or serpent instead were two harmful things, something a parent would never give a child. God, being much more holy, would never give us harmful gifts. God may not give us what we ask but what He does give us is only beneficial and necessary for us.

### Day 5/6

This teachings shows three elements of prayer:

- Ask- we are aware of our needs and who supplies them
- Seek- we are pursuing God's will
- Knock- we are persistent and persevering through prayer.

It also shows us three responses Jesus promises:

- Ask- our needs will be given and met
- Seek- we will find God's will and purpose in our lives
- Knock- the door will be opened and we will receive opportunities.

Luke 15:4-7

Day 1

God joyfully carries us when he pursues and we accept his invitation. Jesus came to call sinners to repentance. This parable given was in response to the leaders' muttering and complaining.

Day 2

Sinner- *hamartolos*- someone devoted to sin

Repent- *metanoeo*- change mind/think differently

Righteous- *dikaios*- upright/right in God's eyes/do right by God

Day 3

The Pharisees couldn't believe Jesus was eating with the outcast of society. The Pharisees were certainly ones that needed to repent and think differently about the world.

Day 4

Eating with someone in this day meant that you accepted and recognized them. This does not mean Jesus accepted their behavior but accepted them as people who could inherit the kingdom. The shepherd theme in the parable was common to most everyone there.

Day 5

The parable of the lost sheep echoes Exekiel 34:11-12, 16 where Israel is the sheep and God is the shepherd. The Pharisees should have been better shepherds to the people of Israel like Jesus was in that moment.

Day 6/7

Tax collectors, many of them Jews, would have been considered "lost sheep" of Israel since they "betrayed" their people by working for the Romans. This parable should make us rejoice for we have been rescued by God through Jesus.

Luke 17:20-21

Day 1

Certainly the kingdom of God was among them in the person of Jesus. The kingdom does not come with a loud procession or pomp display. One cannot point it out as a place.

Day 2

Observation- observe/watch

Among- within/inside

This tells us Jesus said the kingdom is inside people, namely inside himself.

Day 3

After this teaching, Jesus tells his disciples about the day the Son of Man is revealed. Clearly, the revealing of Jesus is connected with the coming of the kingdom of God fully. Unlike the kingdom coming in humble stature as the person of Jesus, his return will be plainly and clearly visible and final.

Day 4

Jews debated what signs would accompany the coming of the kingdom so Jesus' point is they won't see anything they could point to as a sign because the sign is standing right in front of them in Himself.

Day 5/6

The kingdom theme is presented here in how it would come. The religious leader when it would come. Jesus does not answer his question but tells them they won't be able to see it since they didn't recognize Jesus as the Messiah.

## Matthew 13:1-8

### Day 1

#### 4 ways to respond to the gospel

- Hear but don't understand
- Hear, have joy, no faith
- Hear, worry and wealth get in way
- Hear, understands, spreads

### Day 2

Oppression, persecution- cause some to fall away

Deceitfulness of wealth- the kingdom message was generosity and trust. Having lots of wealth can cause us to stumble and be deceived by thinking we don't have enough which is the opposite of Jesus' message.

### Day 3

- Kingdom parables- Jesus is using parables to describe the kingdom. This parable demonstrates that only those who hear and understand the message will understand parables.
- Explanation is given of this parable, something Jesus only does rarely.

### Day 4

The use of farmer imagery would have been familiar and common to the people. Farmer is sowing seed- Jesus and the kingdom message.

### Day 5-6

- The Kingdom of God theme is the central point of the parable. Specifically, it demonstrates how the kingdom is responded to by different people.
- Jesus' words echo Isaiah 55:10-11 which offers hope that God's word will create a harvest of those who listen to it. His word will be accomplished no matter what man may do to foil it.

Matthew 18:1-4

Day 1

The point of this teaching is that we must change and become like little children in the sense of being humble and not wanting to be glorified to enter the kingdom. The ones that are humble become exalted and the ones that exalt themselves will be humbled.

Day 2

Change- turn around. Jesus wants us to turn our value system around to not be like the world's values that are selfish but to be like children that are humble.

Greatest- rank, splendid. Those who are not like children are seeking a position of authority or power. Those in the kingdom do not have this mindset.

Day 3

The disciples ask Jesus who is the greatest in the kingdom expecting one of them to be the answer. Instead Jesus calls a child to them to derail their thinking and get them to stop thinking like the world does. This teaching is also bracketed by the parable of the lost sheep which speaks to God wanting to bring us to Him.

Day 4

Children were the lowest in society by rank and importance and so Jesus uses the lowest in society to show the disciples how humble one must become. We must give up the power and authority we want.

Day 5/6

There is no Old Testament allusion or reference in this specific teaching which makes it striking. It is something the disciple would have never heard. The theme of exaltation appears here as it pertains to the exaltation of the humble in the kingdom of God.

John 3:3-8

Day 1

No one can see the kingdom and no one can enter the kingdom unless they are born again (born of water and Spirit). The focus of being born again is being born of the Spirit.

Day 2

See- perceive with the mind, understand

Born again- born from above, born from beginning

Day 3

Nicodemus claims Jesus is a teacher from God but not a Messiah. Jesus' reply makes it clear that Nicodemus, a teacher, did not understand the kingdom of God and what Jesus was doing.

Day 4

Nicodemus may have come at night out of fear of being seen speaking with Jesus. The concept of being born again was clearly not a part of Nicodemus' theology.

Day 5/6

Ezekiel 36:25-27- water cleanses the heart and the spirit transforms. Jesus may be riffing off of this here.

Mark 12:28-31

Day 1

Jesus is answering a question from a teacher of the law. He wants to know which command is the most important. Rabbi's held there were two categories of commands, heavy and light. Jesus answers the greatest command is actually two of them, both held in the same light and weight.

Day 2

Heart- organ or center of someone

Soul- breath/life

Mind- understanding

Strength- ability/might

Day 3

This teaching comes in a series of confrontations with Pharisees and religious leaders. This particular teacher had answered wisely.

Day 4

Jesus quotes the Shema which was regularly recited by Jews. The question of the greatest command was debated by rabbi's and yet Jesus gives an answer none would have thought of, the greatest command is two.

Day 5/6

V.30 comes from Deuteronomy 6:4-5, v.31 comes from Leviticus 19:18. Love and the kingdom of God are the two themes mentioned here. These two commands represent the two types of laws in the 10 commandments. Commands to love God (commands 1-4) and commands to love each other (5-10).

Matthew 16:24-26

Day 1

“Come after”- means to follow Jesus. To do this, we need to deny ourselves and take up our cross. This means we should not be trying to gain wealth and status and go after our own desires because we will end up losing it all.

Day 2

Deny- forget one's own interests

Lose- destroy.

We must forget our own interests and follow Christ. Otherwise, we will destroy our souls trying to prosper in this life. The only way to follow Jesus' way is to give up our own.

Day 3

Jesus had just told his disciples he was going to die. Peter said there was no way he would die. Jesus then rebukes him. Peter's own desires and agenda got in the way of God's plan. This is why we have to reject our own desires to follow Jesus.

Day 4

Isaiah 52-53- prophecies of Jesus' suffering. Coming in glory is a reference to Daniel 73

Day 5/6

A cross meant death. If we take up our cross willingly, we are putting to death our way of doing things and looking to God for guidance.



John 13:34-35

Day 1

Jesus is our example to love one another. By loving others it will show others who we belong to, namely disciples of Jesus.

Day 2

Love- agapao- God's love. We are to show God's love to one another.

Day 3

In the middle of predicting betrayal and Peter's denial, Jesus tells them to love one another after he has washed his feet. In the coming days, they would not show their love for Jesus but would deny and scatter.

Day 4

In an honor-shame culture, love for one another was not commonly seen or taught. This love in society would shine so bright it would be a mark of a different kind of people.

Day 5/6

Leviticus 19:18 is a foundation for this verse. Jesus was making the command new in the sense that he was giving it new meaning in light of his ministry and death. In between Jesus' prediction of betrayal is this little teaching signifying the profound themes of love and unity.

Luke 10:25-37

### Day 1

Jesus tells the parable of the Good Samaritan in response to a question about who our neighbor is. Jesus uses the hated enemy of the Jews, Samaritans to answer this question. A neighbor is caring and loving to anyone no matter who it is. The man saw, had compassion, cared for, and continued to meet the man's needs, reflecting what Jesus does for us.

### Day 2

Neighbor- friend or someone you are concerned for

Pity- moved in bowels, compassion

- The bowels were thought to house pity/love
- The same word is used when Jesus had compassion on crowds

### Day 3

Jesus had just sent out the 72 into the neighboring towns and villages. Jesus explains by parable who our neighbors are. All are neighbors- even those who hate us or we don't like.

### Day 4

Jews and Samaritans were enemies. This also reflects the Jacob-Esau feud as the former are descendants of the latter respectively. The road to Jericho used in the parable was a rocky road and it was common for robbers to hide and wait along this road. Two coins the man gives the innkeeper was enough for 2 month stay.

### Day 5/6

Deuteronomy 6:5, Leviticus 19:18, 2 Chronicles 28:8-15 all come into play to parallel Jesus' parable here. Redefining God's family and reversing our standards of neighbor is what this parable is all about.

## Matthew 6:9-15

### Day 1

This prayer is usually titled the Lord's prayer but it was a model Jesus gave for disciples to pray. There are two parts, vv.9-10 is praise to God and for his will to be done and vv.11-13 are petitions from us that our needs are met, sins forgiven, and that we do not fail the test when temptation comes.

### Day 2

Hallowed- kept or regarded as holy  
Daily bread- a way to say our basic needs

### Day 3

Jesus is in a teaching about our motives in doing righteous acts. He covers generosity, prayer, and fasting. We should not pray for attention from men. Jesus tells them what they should pray for.

### Day 4

The prayers of rabbai's were often long and meaningless. Jesus shares a prayer that we can easily see how to get to the point. In Rome, Zeus was known as "father" and Jews addressed Yahweh as "heavenly father" or "father in the skies".

### Day 5/6

Ezekiel 36:23, Daniel 4:32, and Proverbs 30:7-9 might have echoes in the prayer. The theme of the kingdom is already at work at this point in the gospel narrative and so the prayer is not that God's kingdom comes first, but since it is already here, may it be made complete and everything made new.