

Small Group Outline for Week of January 17, 2021
WEFC January 2021 Prayer Message Series
Prayer Message #3: Matthew 7:7-10

My purpose in this series is to encourage each of us personally in our prayer lives, and for us a Church; for us to take one or two steps in grow in our prayer. Jesus wants each of us individually and as a Church to be that House of Prayer. I'm excited about us as a Church growing in prayer.

Read Matthew 6:5-13; Matthew 7:7-11

Point 1: Repetition (vs. 7:7-8)

- Keep on: asking - seeking - knocking
- You will: receive - find - have opened door

A word about Repetitious prayer:

It may sometimes be helpful, at times, to repeat the Lord's Prayer in our prayer times, or use it in our journaling as an outline; and many have over the centuries. This is not babbling as we express our hearts to God, knowing that He hears us. Remember babbling was merely used to get the 'gods' attention. But we have Our Heavenly Father's attention. As we recite this prayer understanding what we are saying, it can help us focus our prayer times.

Let me add this note: there will be times when the words in our prayers don't come (desperation), we don't know what to say, we can then use Scripture to pray through a difficult or silent time. Maybe we are so overwhelmed and distraught, or so very sad, so wounded, hurting so bad; that's a good time to read others prayers, like in the Psalms. That's why I love preaching through the Psalms each summer. The Psalms are the Prayer Book and Hymnal of the Jews. They can help us in our current prayers and present situation.

Point 2: Persistence and Faith (vs. 7:7-8)

- Persistent Widow - Luke 18:1-8

Sharing: what have been some prayer requests that you have persisted to an answer or are still persisting in prayer. Are there some prayers that you have given up on?

Point 3: Heart of the Heavenly Father

When it comes to prayer, how do we picture God?

- An ogre with crossed arms?
- A Father with turned back, until we say enough for Him to turn around?
- A Father too busy for us?
- Is He the great Vending machine up in the sky?

Look how Jesus describes His Father - our Father: (vs. 9-11)

- What would you give if your children ask?
 - Bread or stone
 - Fish or snake
 - Egg or scorpion (Luke 11:11)
- If you are honest, is your view of your Heavenly Father accurate? How have you viewed Him at times that may not have been accurate?

Look over the following verses, how should we see our Heavenly Father?

- Matthew 7:11 *"How much more will your Heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask Him?"*
- James 1:17 *"Whatever is good and perfect is a gift coming down to us from God our Father, who created all the lights in the heavens. He never changes or casts a shifting shadow."*
- Matthew 6:6b *"Then your Father, who sees everything, will reward you."* (Also 6:18b)
- Matthew 6:8 *"...for your Father knows exactly what you need even before you ask Him."*

Let's discuss God's will in answers to prayer. Note the following:

- Going back to persistent widow, justice is given; the right thing. The answers to our requests will be within God's will (Matthew 6:10 *"Your will be done..."*)
- Romans 8:28 *"And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them."*
- Let's talk about Answers to prayer:
 - Sometimes what we want would be a plate full of rocks or a snake or a scorpion
 - 3 times Jesus asked to be released from the cross - what if God answered His prayer?
 - 3 times the Apostle Paul asked to be released from the messenger of Satan - what if God answered his prayer?

Where have you given up in prayer?

Why did we give up in prayer?

Was it right to stop praying about something?

Or should we pick it up again, with a renewed perspective in prayer?

- Will we persist and not give up? Will we submit to His purposes, His will to be done on earth as it is in Heaven? Will we trust Him no matter the delay or the outcome of our prayers?

Weekly Reflection:

1. Read Matthew 6:5-13; 7:7-11
2. Ask, pray, what is one step I can take to grow my praying?

Read together and then pray together:

Isaiah 64:4 (maybe vs. 1-4)

- *For since the world began, no ear has heard and no eye has seen a God like you, who works for those who **wait** for him!*