

Matthew (Quality: Average)

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 01 January 1900

Preacher: Gosden, Frank L (1890-1980)

- [0 : 00] By the help of God, I would direct you to the seventh chapter of Matthew, and the seventh verse.
- Ask, and it shall be given you. Seek, and ye shall find.
- Knock, and it shall be opened unto you. Matthew chapter 7, and the seventh verse.
- As you know, this chapter contains the end of the Sermon on the Mount. Huh?
- Preached by him whose wisdom is infinite. Whose knowledge is infinite concerning all things in the universe, in heaven and in earth.
- [1 : 25] But in this sermon, as perhaps we have observed before, there is a profound simplicity.
- As some modern scholars would rather ornament it.
- But any attempt to ornamentation of these sacred utterances would be sacrilegious.
- The beauty, the depth, the reality of every declaration in that sermon. It should be a pattern to us in preaching.
- It wouldn't satisfy itching ears. But it would those who have been brought to realize their deep need of salvation.
- [2 : 35] So that you see in this text, there are three exhortations.
- Ask, seek, and knock. With a promise annexed to each exhortation. Ask, and it shall be opened unto you.
- But some might say that seeing that the Lord is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think.
- And that he knoweth what we have need of before we ask him. What need is there for prayer? For the need of prayer is not in God.
- He doesn't need prayer. He needs nothing. It is a divine appointment. And it is one of the methods of grace.
- [3 : 57] It is the most important ingredient of divine worship. And it is the most severe exercise of the soul in prayer.
- And those two things, among others, are the reason for the appointment of prayer. You will well remember that wonderful, beautiful chapter in the 36th chapter of Ezekiel.
- Oh, how attractive that has been to some chief of sinners. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you.
- And you shall be clean. From all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I, a new spirit will I put within you.
- And I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh. And will give you a heart of flesh. I will put my spirit in you, cause you to walk in my statutes.
- [5 : 09] And you shall keep my judgments and do them. And ye shall be my people and I will be your God. What do you think of it? If that was made over to you.

If it was, you'd be brought to a condition to need it. But then at the end it says this. I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them.

There's no need for him to be inquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them. And therefore the purpose of prayer is in the first place the glory of God in Christ.

And it is the very life breath of faith. And it also constitutes where there is real prayer.

A communion with an exalted redeemer. Whoever liveth to make intercession for sinners. Therefore there is sweet communion in prayer.

[6 : 21] The communications first from heaven to a praying sinner. And consequently communications from a poor sinner to heaven.

The exercise of real prayer is very severe. And it takes in the exercise of the whole of the inward and external life.

Ask and it shall be hidden you. Seek and ye shall find.

Knock and it shall be opened unto you. A very ordinary kind of statement. But as we said at the outset.

Oh the simplicity of it. You try and add anything to it. My friend you would detract from its beauty.

[7 : 32] Its glory. And if we could feel the penetrating.

The path searching. That there is inside of it. We would not want to attempt to water it. For instance. Let us look at it.

Or rather. May it look at us. Now. The word of God is his oath. He has magnified his word.

Above all his name. And therefore. There is not a promise in the word of God. That will not be fulfilled. And his honor and his oaths take to fulfill the text.

Well now. Let us look at ourselves. If. We are given. For our asking.

[8 : 39] And we find for our speaking. And we have opened to us. For our knocking. How much have you received? How much have you found?

And how much has been opened to you? That's the searching part of it. And we need it my friends. I do.

If you were brought just to consider that. And I sat down this evening. You would have enough to think about all night. If you didn't sleep. Look at it.

Look at yourself. How do you pray? Whatever you received for your asking. Whatever you found for your seeking.

Whatever you had opened to you for your knocking. That may perhaps touch your religion down a bit. And we shall find it to be so from time to time.

[9 : 41] Ask. And it shall be given you. Seek. And ye shall find. Knock. And it shall be opened unto you.

And now the Lord Jesus. He is honor bound. To fulfill that scripture. And that's one reason why we read that chapter.

Men ought always to pray. And not to faint. But prayer is not easy. And perhaps you have known.

I have known. When it has seemed easier to faint. Than to pray. There are so many obstacles against praying.

And the greatest obstacle. Is our carnality. Sin is called by grace. And made a new creature in Christ.

- [10 : 54] He hasn't lost the old creature. A body of sin and death is not eradicated. It's there. And therefore everything that belongs to the old man is there.
- And belief is there. Atheism is in our nature. The lust of the flesh. Pride. Independence of God.
- Rebellion. It's all there. Now except the Holy Spirit mercifully comes. And gives anointing to pray.
- If we are left. And the Lord at times for our teaching leaves us. Then we are in conflict. With all the opposition. From our own nature. The greatest obstacle.
- [11 : 59] Against prayer. Is ourself. Our carnality. We would be independent of God. If we could. But the Lord knows how to make us pray.
- And what a mercy that is. We have different degrees. Of faith in the text. There is the degree of asking.
- And a more. A strong degree. In seeking. And there is the urgency.
- Of knocking. And we should be brought into these. Conditions and circumstances. In our soul. As we are under the influence.
- And discipline. And teaching. Of the Holy Spirit. So that prayer becomes the very life of our souls. Our souls. But there are.
- [12 : 57] A prerequisites. For prayer. One is. We must have the life of God in us.
- Otherwise. If we. Are religious professors. But have no life in our souls. Then. All our religion is dead.
- Our prayers are dead. Our worship's dead. Our preaching's dead. Your hearing's dead. We must have the life of God in our soul. You'll never pray without him.
- Another thing is. That we need. A living faith. And the first act of faith.
- Is to believe that God is. Oh that is so definite. And you'll feel it. How can you pray. If you don't believe that God is.
- [13 : 57] Have you felt it my friends. I. In these my last days. I do feel we want to come. To particulars. Do you believe that God is.
- Not because the scriptures say so. It's a blessing they do. It's a mercy to believe the word of God. But.
- Do you. Do you believe that God is. By divine teaching. That you've been given to. You realize. What you are.
- And what you need. And. That by divine teaching. You've come to the end. Of all perfection. In the flesh. That there's no other source.
- Of salvation. No other source of wisdom. No other source of eternal life. But in him. And you believe it is there. And in your believing.
- [14 : 56] It has this influence. That you come to him. That you receive him. Into your heart. Before he's there. There is such a thing.
- Oh. When will they come unto me. Says a poor sinner. For before you say that. He has come. No natural man can say that.
- Ask. And it shall be. Given you. Well then. The Holy Ghost. Will. Make known.
- In your soul. What you need. Where there's no need. There's no prayer. We may take up these points.
- And make personal application. Have you any need of him? You might think.

- [16 : 03] Well. That's hardly the question to ask. Of a company like this. That's been used to other gospel.
- All their days. I'll ask it again. Have you any need of him? Real need in your soul. Of the Lord. Such a need.
- As that. You can say. Again. With that simplicity. Of the hymn. We should be thankful. For our hymn book. All the fitness.
- We require. Is to feel. Your need of him. And such a need. As that. You would.
- Say. Give me Christ. Christ. Or else I die. One thing or the other. The simplicity. The direct.
- [17 : 00] Of points. That his people are brought to. Give me Christ. Or else I die. One thing or the other. Have you ever been brought there?
- Or have you. A substitute for him? For is there something. To have an asset. As that. Substitute for Christ. Christ. I believe.
- I can say. In my little experience. I have no substitute for him. If he. And the gospel. Can order. I must fall.
- There's nothing else. Now this will make you pray. Faith. Faith.
- Faith. Has eyes. That can see. Eternal and unseen things. That has a spiritual perception.
- [17 : 58] Of the fullness that is in Christ. Which. Is. Made suitable. To the needs. That you've been brought to feel.
- In your soul experience. And they fit. The fullness of Christ. Is not only. All sufficient. But it is suitable.
- And the wisdom. Of God. Has made it suitable. The fullness that is in Christ. Is a special fullness. It isn't the fullness of deity.
- That can never be communicated. To a sinner. But it is a fullness. Of salvation. A fullness that. Constitutes salvation.
- A fullness of all the life. That the church. Should ever need. Of spiritual life. It is a fullness. Of infinite wisdom. It is a fullness.
- [19 : 00] Of grace. Invincible. A saving grace. It is a fullness. Of unsearchable riches. For bankrupt. A suitable kind of riches. And faith sees this.
- And the exhortation here. Is ask. Ask. If you ask. If you ask.
- For that. You've got no need of. You're a hypocrite. But you're a hypocrite.
- To do. You're a hypocrite. You're a hypocrite. And you. And is. the importance of the Spirit's teaching in convict sin, so that that conviction penetrates to your very heart and throughout the whole of your being universally, so that you truly feel that you need salvation to cover you, to fill you.
- You need all of the Lord Jesus is, and you need the benefit of all his finished work, and you see the suitability of every office that he occupied and discharged.
- [20 : 29] You need it all. And you ask, there will be a very important and blessed connection between what you're taught to feel your need of and what face is in him.
- It'll fit. It'll fit. Ask. And it shall be hidden you. Let's lay this down.
- But for a moment, we will consider very solemnly why there's so few answers to prayer.
- We just mentioned at the beginning, ask ourselves the question, how much we receive by asking, and how much we have found by seeking, how much has been opened to us by knocking.

Now, how is it we receive so little, and perhaps nothing? The default is not in God.

[21 : 46] It's in us. Let us consider one or two reasons why we receive so little. Well, James tells us one reason he asks and receive not, because he asks amiss that he may consume it upon your lusts.

It's a very solemn thing to ask amiss. That is, did you ask with the wrong motive?

And then you might ask for things which is to receive great things for yourself. We know not what spirit we are of.

Oh, how we do need the Holy Spirit to teach us how to pray. Another reason, which is very, very solemn to me, that we do not receive it, is that word in the 66th Psalm.

If we regard iniquity in our hearts, the Lord will not hear us. He doesn't say, if there is iniquity in our hearts, he will not hear us, because it's there.

[23 : 15] But if we regard iniquity, countenance it, condone it, roll sin under a tongue as a sweet morsel, you'll never hear us.

Do you think it is silent to some of you because of that? There's another reason why he does not hear immediately.

Because he waits to answer prayer. He's a God of judgment. He would not do for us at all times at least, for those who have been those who have been answered before they have finished speaking.

But in the general rule, the Lord waits to answer prayer. And during that waiting, there is an exercise of soul.

And there's one purpose of not answering immediately. we have that denial for a time with respect to the sorrow Phoenician woman came with about her afflicted daughter.

[24 : 35] the Lord put her and the Lord put her to great trouble and grief. He loved her, you know. He takes this attitude at times with his people.

It needs all instruction. He answers her, not a word. But you see, she possessed this faith, the life of God in her soul.

She had a deep need, she had a case, an urgent pressing case. It kept her to heaven. It is not me to give the children's breath to a dull like you.

Oh, the Lord will never offend a poor burden-coming, trembling sinner. And he could not call her anything worse than she felt herself to be.

Have you ever been there? Have you ever been at the throne of grace under real sense of your depravity and your universal defilement?

[25 : 46] The Lord couldn't call you anything worse than you feel yourself to be. Truth, Lord. Truth, Lord. But faith struggled and played under him.

The dogs ate the crumbs that fall from their master's table. Oh, woman. Oh, this is the victory of faith.

Pray without ceasing. Ask, and it shall be given you. But may we never know that denial that was made to solve.

Oh, very solemn. These things have made me tremble. You remember that when Samuel delayed to come at the appointed time, and the Philistines were invading the land, that saw he forced himself and made a sacrifice and prayed.

But the Lord answered him not, not by dreams, nor by the prophets, neither by urine, nor plumbing. He took no notice of him at all.

[27 : 09] Oh, may we never know that. But he had a substitute. You haven't got a substitute for the Lord.

He had a substitute. He sent for the witch of Endor. Well, now, these exercises are in this text.

Ask. And it shall be given you. Let us try and look at a few things that the living soul asks for.

And the first thing, as I feel it, is to ask for life.

That must be the first thing. Although, it is a thing that nobody ever has prayed for, really.

[28 : 15] If ever you pray for life, it's because you've got it. A dead soul never prays to be born again.

Never. You might say, well, I've prayed for it dozens of times. You've never prayed to be born again until you are.

But still, it is a prayer. Life. Let my soul live. Because if that is answered, everything else comes with it.

Oh, this is the floodgate, the entrance of every spiritual blessing and favor and grace that is contained in salvation.

Life is the inlet. Ask. Ask for life. And it shall be given you.

[29 : 12] It must. And if this life is given you, it is given you through the coming of the Lord Jesus.

I am come that they might have life. We should never receive it, but that he brought it. He brought life and immortality to life through the gospel.

He is the light. He is the life. He's come and brought it. And the Holy Spirit takes of that life and conveys it to a praying sinner.

Ask of life. And the next thing that the sinner will ask for is mercy. The publican prays for that.

all the death of that experience of the publican.

[30 : 14] It's not every professor that attains to the height of the experience of that confessing publican. It's a heightened experience.

God be merciful to me a sinner. Have you ever asked him for it? Have you ever prayed that prayer? If you didn't feel it, if it is a mere formality, if it is just apparent repetition, it is an affront to a majesty of God.

But have you been made such a sinner that there's only one standing ground at the throne of grace, and that is God's mercy.

Mercy. It reaches to the clouds. Mercy that rejoices against judgment. Mercy through the blood of Jesus Christ.

Mercy that is just. Just because the substitute was made sin for the sinner. The justice of mercy and forgiveness which go together is very blessed.

[31 : 42] said, Oh, I have felt it perhaps lately more than ever that pardon is just pardon. It is just because the Lord Jesus has died.

It is just because he was made sin that his people might be made the righteousness of God in him. You will ask for it. You will feel the needy and it shall be given.

For this shall every one that is godly pray unto him in a time when he may be found. Ask and it shall be given you.

You will ask for righteousness. you look at the apostle Paul he had a Pharisee's righteousness so far as the law was concerned he said it was blameless concerning the law he was blameless but the Lord turned that righteousness into filthy rags and killed him he made him suitable for the gospel and he made him a praying man he prayed for righteousness and he saw he was a Pharisee he heard that solemn word except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees shall in no wise enter the kingdom you'll pray for it but this is the sweetness of it my friends you'll see it there I have felt this that this spirit of prayer is the Holy Spirit influence in your heart so that faith looks right out of self and all that self is into Christ and all that he is and asks what's there do you know that?

oh there is such a satisfaction there a satisfying and a suitable fullness in Christ and especially to fix the chief of sinners ask you'll ask for godliness wish you were godly you know what it is the opposite is it was a great testimony that Paul bore toward Timothy oh man of God flee these things and then told him what to pray for to follow after follow after righteousness godliness faith love patience meekness told him what to flee from and what to follow after and we shall be taught there and this makes up for the most part the life of a child of God of going out of self into Christ receiving from his fullness so that we are made partakers of Christ what a fortune the Lord is my portion set my soul and that's in the same thing as much as I say

[35 : 37] I tasted of every other portion I tasted of the portion of prosperity in this world I tasted of all that the world calls good and great but the sweetness has been turned into bitter the life that I lived in the world has turned into death the world has been made a wilderness to me a land of darkness and a shadow of death a dry and thirsty land where there's no water has been made that to me but oh you look out of such a state and condition and look into the perfect law of liberty into all the suitability the saving grace the perfection of the Christ's righteousness and his omnipotent power and there will be that communion with him which brings in the things the Holy Spirit teaches you you will have such a knowledge that what you know will be brought into your heart and you possess it in possessing him ask and it shall be given you seek and you shall find so here we have a seeking soul seek ye me and ye shall live and this seeking is a searching for the one thing needful where he is to be found this takes in prayer because prayer is in everything and where is he to be sought where is he to be found well the first place is the word of God that's what he's written for that's where he reveals himself and so

Jeremiah says concerning the seeking in the word of God thy word was found and I did eat it and thy word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart have you ever found anything in the word of God by seeking you have you had such a vehement need and desire that to find Christ the one thing needful that you sought him in the word of God oh something very sweet in following after him 63rd Psalm my soul followeth hard after thee and this following hard after him is to seek and find oh said Job that I knew where I might find him he knew Job knew that there wasn't the point he wanted to be brought to his very seat to the secret place of the lie he won't be satisfied to stand far off and so we read of those who follow after exactly they might find him so you seek him and his word have you got a scripture chapter or a verse in your experience where you found him

I mean my friends I feel the solemnity of it supposing you say no and in asking only you had to say I've never received it I mean it's solemn isn't it ask and it shall be given you seek and ye shall find you may seek for him under a sense of your need of divine pardon I believe we mentioned it lately but it's a blessing finding of him when you go to him undone as did Isaiah woe is me for I am undone because I am a man of unclean lips and live among a people of unclean lips for mine eyes have seen the king and the lord of hosts and if he meets you as you seek for him may meet you in that word in the Hebrews how much more shall the blood of Christ who through the eternal spirit offered himself without spot to God cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God and when you find him like that you receive him he comes into your heart you take the woman that was a great sinner in the Pharisee's house and the Pharisee thought to himself if that man was a prophet he wouldn't have anything to do with that woman she's a sinner oh but she sought him and found him and she received an answer thy faith hath made thee whole not that grace of faith didn't make her whole but what faith saw in and received from this the atonement of Christ did seek and ye shall find take another seeker and that is the woman either what woman having ten pieces of silver if she lose one piece doth not light a candle and sweep the house and seek diligently till she find it when she hath found it she calleth her friends and her neighbours together saying rejoice with me for I have found the peace that was lost now that is a subsequent seeking when you have lost a sense of his divine favour and blessing in your soul where is the blessedness

I knew when first I saw the Lord where is that so refreshing view of Jesus and his word and you seek him to return return oh holy dove return sweet messenger of rest I hate the sins that made thee mourn and drove thee from my breast but you light a candle not like a farm walk in your own stocks but it is the candle of the gospel and you begin to sweep the house and you search him again to return from the world of God but oh when he comes again then there is a rejoicing as in Solomon's song I found him and would not let him go ask ask and it shall be given you seek and he shall find knock and it shall be opened unto you the chief door which a sinner knocks is the door of mercy but at the same time essentially this is the door at which faith knocks the word of God is what is given for so as you read the word of God do you sometimes under a sense of your deep need and desire open it with that inquiry of

Job oh that I knew where I might find him it is here in between these two covers if I could find him and you knock in prayer as you open the word of God you see my friends if we've got the life of God in the soul we cannot be satisfied apart from him we must be brought into union with him and receive those spiritual blessings that are in Christ Jesus so that it makes up a good deal of a spiritual experience knock and it shall be opened unto you it is the Holy Spirit that opens the truth not mere dint of study and not bringing to bear upon the word of

[46 : 03] God human intelligence that's not the knocking and it is only the Lord that can open the word of God to our understanding what men teach us we can forget and lose what the Lord teaches us remains because everything he does is done forever and I venture to say this that if the Lord has given you by asking and seeking some word then he will open that word to your understanding I just a hymn comes to my mind I think that would open this a little to us oh when you find him you'll be able to sing this hymn now

I have found the ground wherein my anchor hope shall firm remain the wounds of Jesus for my sin before the world's foundation slain whose mercy shall unshaken stay when heaven and earth shall pass away fixed on this ground will I remain though my heart fail and flesh decay this anchor shall my soul sustain when earth foundations melt away mercy's full power I then shall prove love with an everlasting love ask and it shall be given you seek and you shall find knock and it shall be opened unto you análießen pud

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[49 : 57] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[52 : 27] Thank you.

Thank you.