**Evil People Give The Best Gifts**

Matthew 7:7 “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. **8**For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. **9**Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? **10**Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? **11**If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him! (ESV)

These next couple of verses return us to the matter of prayer. Jesus uses the three terms: ask, seek, and knock to express this truth. A lot of people think there is some analogy here There is probably no real allegorical meaning to the individual points of ask, seek and knock. They are simply three different ways we might go about finding an answer to something. Jesus’ whole point here is to be persistent; to keep on praying.

This is a call to persistence. To be persistent is to keep doing something no matter the opposition. Jesus wants us to understand when at first we don’t receive, to pray, pray again.

Jesus uses the example of a person giving their children good gifts. A truth established often in this Sermon on the Mount is that mankind is wicked. We have a sinful nature. We have an inclination towards evil. Yet, even we, having a sinful nature are capable of, and often do, give good things to those who ask—most especially our children. So here we find a comparison. God is our Father—He will not give us bad gifts.

Good parents still have a sinful nature. Good parents don’t intentionally deceive their children, don’t intentionally harm them. Sometimes good parents still make mistakes but ultimately they do what is best for their children. If you asked your parent for food, they’re not going to give you a brick to chow down on. If you ask your parents for a pet dog they’re not going to buy you a tarantula. Right? If they do those things they might not be a good parents. But Jesus’ whole point is that even good parents are sinful, yet they give rightfully to their children. If flawed, messed up, sinful parents here on earth are capable of giving good things to their children how much more capable is God of doing the same?

We have a good Father who gives us what we need. He gives us good things. He does not promise to give us extravagant or over the top things we ask for, but He does promise to meet our needs—to give us good things

James 1:17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change

What this ultimately shows us is that good things come from God because He is God. It’s a common mistake to think that if we pray long enough and hard enough that God will somehow be more likely to answer us due to our persistence. And while Jesus expresses the need of believers to continually pray to God, He also doesn’t want us thinking that the answer to our prayers is always dependent upon us. Our persistence is not why God is faithful; He is faithful because He is God. While sin may prevent us from seeing answers to certain prayers, the ultimate cause of answered prayers is God Himself—the goodness of God.

Do you know that? Do you know that God is good? God is holy, righteous and good. We can trust Him to give us good things and to meet our needs. We need not worry in this life. We have the privilege of being the children of a good God. With these privileges come many benefits. We don’t need to be afraid to call upon His name, to ask for His grace or to seek His face. All we have to do is keep on seeking and we will find Him and our answers.