

THE RED LETTER LECTURES

NOTES

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Jesus' Teaching on Prayer
Matthew 7:7-14

I. Asking

ASK* and it will be given to you; **SEEK*** and you will find;
KNOCK* and the door will be opened to you. — Mt. 7:7

A. *Ask and it will be given you . . .*

1. An Imperative Command.
2. Continuous action. Lit., "Ask, and keep on asking."
3. Explain linear action verbs.

B. *Seek and you will find . . .*

1. An Imperative Command.
2. Continuous action. Lit., "Seek, and keep on seeking."

C. *Knock and the door will be opened to you.*

1. An Imperative Command.
2. Continuous action. Lit., "Knock, and keep on knocking."

D. Parallelism or three distinct steps in prayer?

1. A parallel segment repeats an idea found in the previous segment. With this technique a kind of paraphrase is involved; line two restates the same thought found in line one, by using equivalent expressions. See *Psm. 51: 2-3*.
2. Most notable in OT Hebrew poetry but many believe its style is also seen in the NT.

Read Boice, pp. 235-52.

Psm. 51:2-3: "Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, / And cleanse me from my sin. / For I acknowledge my transgressions, / And my sin is always before me."

II. Receiving

For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. — Mt. 7:8

A. *everyone who asks receives . . .*

1. Continuous action. Lit., "everyone who continues to ask continues to receive." See *Lk. 18:7-8*

B. *he who seeks finds . . .*

1. Continuous action. Lit., "he who continues to seek continues to find."

C. *to him who knocks, the door will be opened.*

1. Continuous action. Lit., "to him who continually knocks, the door will be continually opened."

"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 ask him! — Mt. 7:9-11

A. *asks for bread . . . give him a stone? Asks for a fish . . . give him a snake?*

1. Rhetorical questions. A rhetorical question is a figure of speech. It is a question asked with an obvious answer.
2. It is used for impact, to make a point.

B. *you then (an earthly father) . . . your Father in heaven . . .*

1. How do you relate to God as your heavenly Father?
2. The Scripture declares God as our *Abba Father*? See *Mt. 14:36; Rom. 8:15-16; Gal. 4:6-7*.
3. *Abba* is an Aramaic word. It is the word framed by the lips of infants, and betokens unreasoning trust.

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Lk. 18:7-8: And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?"

Mk. 14:36: "Abba, Father," he said, "everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will."

Rom. 8:15-16: For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.

Gal. 4:6-7: Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.

Father expresses an intelligent apprehension of the relationship. The two together express the love and intelligent confidence of the child.²¹
See *Lk. 18:17*.

C. *good gifts to those who ask him . . .*

1. Lit., "good things." Things that are good, benevolent, profitable, and useful.
2. Luke calls the "good gifts" — the Holy Spirit.
See *Lk. 11:13*.

III. The Golden Rule

So in everything, **DO*** to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.
— *Mt. 7:12*

A. *in everything, do to others . . .*

1. An Imperative Command.
2. A Law of Reciprocity.
3. This statement by Jesus is a summary statement of the Old Testament Law and Prophets. See *also Lev. 19:18; Mt. 22:36-40*.

IV. Gateway to Eternal Life

ENTER* through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it. — *Mt. 7:13-14*

A. *Enter . . . narrow gate . . .*

1. An Imperative Command.
2. The Kingdom of God is entered by personal determination and separation.²² See *Mt. 11:12*.

B. *road that leads to destruction . . .*

1. Refers to the state after death wherein exclusion from salvation is a realized fact, wherein man,

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²¹ Vines, Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words, p.1

Lk. 18:17: I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.

Lk. 11:13: 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!

Lev. 19:18: Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD.

Mt. 22:36-40: Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law? Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

²² Edersheim, The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, p. 366.

Mt. 11:12: From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it.

instead of becoming what he might have been, is lost and ruined.²³

C. *the road that leads to life . . .*

1. Zoe (*Gk.*). Life in the absolute sense, life as God has it, that which the Father has in Himself, and which He gave to the Incarnate Son to have in Himself.²⁴
2. Man became alienated from this life at the Fall. See *Rom. 3:23, 6:23*.
3. Man becomes a partaker of life once again through faith in Jesus Christ. See *Jn. 3:16*.

V. Imperative Commands in this section of study.

- A. **ASK** and it will be given to you.
- B. **SEEK** and you will find.
- C. **KNOCK** and the door will be opened to you.
- D. **DO** to others what you would have them do to you.
- E. **ENTER** through the narrow gate

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²³ Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary*, p.347

²⁴ Vines, *Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*, p.367

Rom. 3:23: . . . for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God . . .

Rom. 6:23: For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Jn. 3:16: For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.