

How Much More

Sermon on the Mount Series – Part 17

Scripture text – Matthew 7:7-11

Introduction

- The challenge of this passage:
 - 1) Avoid taking Jesus' words _____
 - 2) Avoid not taking Jesus' words _____

Section 1: Not Taking It Too Far

- An extraordinary statement:
 - 1) Made by the _____ of _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) Seemingly _____
- Some interpret verses 7&8 as saying prayer is a kind of _____
_____ for getting whatever we want.
- This is called _____ and it's very prominent in the modern evangelical church. It is also _____.
- 3 qualifications regarding prayer:
 - 1) We need to be living a life of _____ (I John 3:22)
 - 2) We need to have the right _____ (James 4:3)
 - 3) We must always be _____ to the will of God (I John 5:14)
- Jesus' instruction to *ask-see-knock* is primarily an encouragement to _____ in prayer.
- Some scholars even suggest the 3 verbs (ask-see-knock) indicate a progression of _____ . God wants us to be _____ in our requests.
- Philip Yancey: What won't a single sincere request suffice?
 - Because God's interests go beyond satisfying us in the _____. What he is most interested in is our _____ satisfaction, which comes through an ever-deepening _____ with him.
 - What persistent prayer does is keep bringing us & God _____.

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Section 2: Not Taking It Far Enough

- Big idea: When it comes to our needs & desires, we are to anchor our confidence in God's supreme _____ as our perfect _____.
- To understand this, Jesus tells us to look at _____ parents. Of course, there are exceptions, but most earthly parents enjoy doing _____ to their children.
- _____ our heavenly Father!
- The LORD is _____ (Psalm 34:8). This means that all God is & does is worthy of _____.
- James Packer (*Knowing God*): "If you want to judge how well a person understands Christianity, find out how much he makes of having God as his _____."
- There is no universal _____ of God. Only those who have come to him through _____ can call him "Father."
- As your Father, God not only loves you, he's _____ about you.

Discussion Questions:

1. What "big thing" am I asking of God? What are my expectations regarding this?
2. What does it mean to have God as my Father?

Who's Who in Today's Message:

- Philip Yancey (1949-): Award-winning Christian author. His classic is *What's So Amazing About Grace?*
- JI Packer (1926-): One of the most influential evangelical theologians of the past 50 years. His classic is *Knowing God*. I highly recommend every Christian read this book.
- Max Lucado (1955-): Popular Christian author and pastor of Oak Hills Church in San Antonio.

Definition of Prosperity Theology:

In prosperity theology, also known as the "Word of Faith movement," the believer is told to use God, whereas the truth of biblical Christianity is just the opposite – God is pleased to use the believer. Prosperity theology sees the Holy Spirit as a power to be put to use for whatever the believer wills. However, the Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit is a Person who enables the believe to do God's will. (source: gotquestions.org)

Prosperity theology is very popular in American Christianity, especially in the charismatic wing of evangelical Christianity, as well as in many so-called mega-churches.