

The Goodness of God (Matthew 7:7-12)

THE WAY

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Overview of Matthew 7:7-12

Parable: ask, seek, knock

Exaggerated story: fathers give good gifts - God our Father gives good gifts

Application: God is good and wants to give us good gifts

Golden Rule: "do to others what you would want them to do to you"

Difficulties of this passage

Cursory reading: looks like we will receive anything from God if we ask

Super persistent

Psalm 37:4: "Take delight in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart."

Romans 8: 28: "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him..."

Difficulties of this passage

Seems to point to evidence of God's goodness in the good gifts he gives to us

But what if we are not receiving the good gift we are praying for?

Do we still see God as good?

Address the difficulties

Context within the Sermon on the Mount

Presupposing that the things we are praying for are in alignment with God's Kingdom

NT Wright: "The problem is that we are not eager enough to ask for the right things."

There is more to prayer than our petitions

Prayer forms us



Address the difficulties

Unanswered prayer/goodness of God dependent on answers

Jesus didn't even have all his prayers answered

What are "good gifts"?

Luke 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!"



Address the difficulties

John Stott, two categories of things God gives always gives:

Regardless of being asked (ex: rain, life)

Only when asked, redemption gifts (ex: salvation, forgiveness, peace, increase of faith, etc)



Address the difficulties

Psalm 37:4: "Take delight in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart."



Address the difficulties

We are not necessarily going to receive all the things we ask for

BUT... We will receive the things that God promises we will always receive if we ask of him

And in this, God our Father shows he is very good



Address the difficulties

First takeaway: God is good and he will answer our prayers for his presence, for forgiveness, for salvation and he will always answer with those great gifts, for he is a good father.

Second takeaway: Stop comparing; comparison will only rob our joy; live with gratitude for what it is we have.



The Golden Rule

verse 12: "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets."

Parallel to Matthew 5:17: "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them."



The Golden Rule

Matthew 22:37-40: "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 neighbour as yourself.'" All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

Because God is so good and so generous toward us, our response should be to do the same to others



The Golden Rule

Takeaway: treat any and all people as you would want to be treated... with great love, goodness, and generosity



Takeaways

God is good. He will answer our prayers for his presence, for forgiveness, for salvation and he will always answer them with those great gifts. For he is a good father.

Stop comparing, it will only rob our joy. Live with gratitude for what it is we do have and recognize all of those good things comes from God.

Treat any and all people as you would want to be treated: love, goodness, and generosity

