



Go for God!

The Gospel According To MATTHEW

Chapter 7:7-14

“LET’S HAVE FAITH, FRIENDS, & A FUTURE!”

> (v7-11) LET’S HAVE FAITH!

- Three keys to answered prayer:

#1 - ASK and RECEIVE! - John 15:7-8 - *If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.*

- James 1:5-8 - *If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.*

#2 - SEEK and FIND! – Jeremiah 29:13-14 - *And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.*

Matthew 6:33 - *But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*

1 John 5:14-15 - *Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him. (The “will of God” is found in the “Word of God.”)*

#3 - KNOCK and the door of OPPORTUNITY will open! - *Knocking is putting faith into action* - Hebrews 11:6 - *But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*

> R. Albert Mohler Jr in his book *The Prayer That Turns the World Upside Down: The Lord's Prayer as a Manifesto for Revolution* writes, “Here are ten biblical instructions concerning prayer that imply conditions to prayer:

1) Pray to the Heavenly Father (see Matthew 6:9). This condition to prayer might seem obvious, but it’s important. We don’t pray to false gods, to ourselves, to angels, to Buddha, or to the Virgin Mary. We pray to the God of the Bible, who revealed Himself in Jesus Christ and whose Spirit indwells us. Coming to Him as our “Father” implies that we are first His children—made so by faith in Christ (see John 1:12).

2) Pray for good things (see Matthew 7:11). We don’t always understand or recognize what is good, but God knows, and He is eager to give His children what is best for them. Paul prayed three times to be healed of an affliction, and each time God said, “No.” Why would a loving God refuse to heal Paul? Because God had something better for him, namely, a life lived by grace. Paul stopped praying for healing and began to rejoice in his weakness (2 Corinthians 12:7–10).

3) Pray for needful things (see Philippians 4:19). Placing a priority on God’s kingdom is one of the conditions to prayer (Matthew 6:33). The promise is that God will supply all our *needs*, not all our *wants*. There is a difference.

4) Pray from a righteous heart (see James 5:16). The Bible speaks of having a clean conscience as a condition to answered prayer (Hebrews 10:22). It is important that we keep our sins confessed to the Lord. “If I regard wickedness in my heart, The Lord will not hear” (Psalm 66:18, NAS).

5) Pray from a grateful heart (see Philippians 4:6). Part of prayer is an attitude of thanksgiving.

6) Pray according to the will of God (see 1 John 5:14). An important condition to prayer is that it is prayed within the will of God. Jesus prayed this way all the time, even in Gethsemane: “Not my will, but yours be done” (Luke 22:42). We can pray all we want, with great sincerity and faith, for XYZ, but, if God’s will is ABC, we pray amiss.

7) Pray in the authority of Jesus Christ (see John 16:24). Jesus is the reason we are able to approach the throne of grace (Hebrews 10:19–22), and He is our mediator (1 Timothy 2:5). A condition to prayer is that we pray in His name.

8) Pray persistently (see Luke 18:1). In fact, pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17). One of the conditions to effective prayer is that we don’t give up.

9) Pray unselfishly (see James 4:3). Our motives are important.

10) Pray in faith (see James 1:6). Without faith, it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11:6), who alone can do the impossible (Luke 1:37). Without faith, why pray?

> (v12) LET’S HAVE FRIENDS!

Ponder the practice- Jesus said, “*Whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them.*” This teaching is commonly called the “Golden Rule.” It’s been said “that the one with the most gold rules,” but like the Beatles song years ago “Money Can’t buy Me Love.” There’s a great difference between the teachings of Jesus and others who tried to express a similar life practice.

- For example, Confucius taught, “What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others.”

- The Greek philosopher Epictetus said, “What you avoid suffering yourself, do not afflict on others.”

- The Stoics said, “What you do not want to be done to you, do not do to anyone else.”

- Each saying is protecting against the negative action without emphasis on practicing the positive action. Jesus said, “*Whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them.*” Listen gentlemen, are we doing for our wives what we would want them to do for us? Ladies, vice versa?

- Paul the apostle writes in Romans 13:8-10 - *Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law. For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not bear false witness," "You shall not covet," and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."* Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

- Let’s put on the character of a Christian according to Colossians 3:12-17 - *Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do.*

But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

Always remember that practice makes perfect!

> (v13-14) LET'S HAVE A FUTURE!

- Jesus said, "WIDE is the GATE and BROAD is the WAY that leads to DESTRUCTION and MANY will go in by it!" But the way that leads to LIFE is through a NARROW GATE.

- What or who is this narrow gate? Jesus said in John 14:6 "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

- John 10:9 - I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved,

- Peter said in Acts 4:12 - Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

- Paul wrote in 1 Timothy 2:5-6 - For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all.

- Christ came to save us from our sins, but many will reject His salvation; turn to John Ch. 3.

- Observe the destiny of those who reject Jesus Christ in Revelation 20:11-15 - Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them.

And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life.

And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works.

Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

- Who are those cast into the "lake of fire?" - Revelation 21:8 - But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

- Charles Spurgeon, the prince of preachers said, "There is a real fire in hell, as truly as you have a real body—a fire exactly like that which we have on this earth, except this: it will not consume you though it will torture you. You have seen asbestos lying amid red hot coals, but not consumed. So your body will be prepared by God in such a way that it will burn forever without being consumed. With your nerves laid raw by searing flame, yet never desensitized for all its raging fury, and the acrid smoke of the sulfurous fumes searing your lungs and choking your breath, you will cry out for the mercy of death, but it shall never, never, no never come."

> What comes with this “*narrow gate*” that Jesus offers:

(1) It is a “GATE OF GRACE!” - Rom 5:20-21 - *But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more, so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

(2) It is a “GATE OF FREEDOM!” - Rom 6:22-23 - *But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

(3) It is a “GATE OF TRUTH!” - John 17:3-4 - *And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.*

> This narrow gate opens to “*ETERNAL LIFE!*”

- Finally we'll experience the “*PEARLY GATES*” – Revelation 21:21-27 - *The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all kinds of precious stones: the first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, the fifth sardonyx, the sixth sardius, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst.*

The twelve gates were twelve pearls: each individual gate was of one pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass. But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it.

The Lamb is its light. And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it. Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there).

And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it. But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

> IS YOUR NAME WRITTEN IN THE *LAMB'S BOOK OF LIFE*? IF NOT, LET'S REGISTER YOUR NAME TODAY!