

**July 25, 2010**  
**Have You Found What You Are Seeking?**  
Matt 7:7-11  
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**Synopsis:**

We end our series of sermons today on Bible texts from *The Good and Beautiful God* book by circling back to chapter 1.

Title: *What are you seeking?*

Going to use slides today from my study leave in Italy.  
Will tell you what is in each slide.

**SLIDE:**

Francis returning from battle dejected before his vision

I'm going to go way out on a limb here, but it is a Jesus limb!

I think we are way too meek in our asking, seeking, and knocking. Our desires are too timid. God the Father wants us to push it with him, to ask, seek, and knock until our deepest desires are fulfilled, which, I believe, coincide with the Kingdom of God.

I.

**God the Giver**

Matt 7:11 How much more will your Father in heaven give good things

SLIDE: A gelato shop in Assisi

Do you believe the Father of Jesus Christ is good towards you?

-how you answer this question will determine your prayer life

False narratives

1. God *hates* me! Wants to punish me because I am bad.  
family of origin stuff  
I identify with this at times

2. God *doesn't care* about me, lives way up there  
     God is spiritual, world process, isn't personal  
     E.g. government
3. God is *preoccupied* with more important things  
     God is busy with Mother Teresa, Pope, World Vision, etc.

READ Jesus' story about Father: 7:9-11

- Who is the best parent you ever knew?
- Who is the best grandparent you ever knew?
- Who is the best teacher you ever knew?
- Who is the best mentor, boss, friend you ever knew?

*\*a fortiori* argument, from weaker to stronger

What would you do if you believed that the Father of Jesus Christ, God Almighty was like this?

Sit with this for a few moments  
 This is what the Bible and GBG teach

II.

**We the Askers**

Matt 7:7 Ask . . . Search . . . Knock

SLIDE: Catherine of Siena, deep prayer, vision holding Jesus

If God is better than the best parent, grandparent, teacher, friend, then what do we do?

READ Matt 7:7-8 NOTICE

- three imperatives = present in Greek = do it!
- three participles = present in Greek = continuously
- repeated twice = six times now = keep it up!

False narratives:

1. Don't ask for *stupid* stuff!
- \*God doesn't care about your job, money, friends, fears
- plenty of ministers, commentators will tell you this
  - Jesus doesn't say what to ask for

2. Always ask for *spiritual* stuff

\*Prayer, Mission, Saving the Lost, World Peace

- plenty of ministers, commentators will tell you this
- Jesus doesn't say what to ask for

3. Don't ask *repeatedly*!

\*God gets it the first time

Didn't Jesus say don't heap up prayers like the heathen?

- plenty of ministers and commentators will tell you this
- Jesus says keep asking, seeking, knocking
- Elsewhere he tells the story of the importunate widow (keeps bothering the judge until he relents)

READ Matt 7:7-8 NOTICE

1. Imperatives/participles = do it continuously!
2. Repeated twice = keep it up!

Our problem is we don't ask, seek, and knock enough!

Medieval People: Study in Italy

1. Learned that life is a journey towards God

Augustine "hearts are restless until they find rest in you" Bonaventure  
"Soul's Journey Toward God"

Dante "Divine Comedy" = journey

\*Medieval people conceived of life is a journey towards God, a seeking which ends with God.

START a JOURNEY!

- begin a relationship with a good God
- have to start somewhere

2. Learned that our desires, no matter what, lead to God

Augustine "hearts restless" keeps seeking until it finds rest  
Francis meditated upon nature

"Brother Sun, Sister Moon" led him to God  
Bonaventure begins with senses as vestiges of God

“In relation to our position in creation, the universe itself is a ladder by which we can ascend into God.”

\*GO AFTER YOUR DESIRES, EVEN CRASS ONES

-what do you really love?

-start here

-this isn't a license for hedonism

Francis started with creation

Bonaventure with our senses

Dante was led by Virgil, a pagan poet

-if you truly ask, seek, and knock God will guide you

Our problem is that our desires are too timid

Our problem is that we are too meek

Our problem is that we don't ask, seek, and knock

What do you really want?

Start there and tell God

### III.

#### **Goodness the Result**

Matt 7:11 Good things to those who ask him

SLIDE: Brehm Center for Worship leaders/professors in front of Orvieto Cathedral

God has *good* in mind for you = true narrative

Next fall we will look at the second book, *Good and Beautiful Life*

-how to practice the good life God has for us

Here's the truth:

1. God has sent his son to die and rise for us
2. We now have new life we can live into
3. We begin by practicing that life now (last week's steps)

1. If you believe that God is good toward you
2. If you believe Jesus says keep asking, seeking, knocking

3. Trust a good God to give you good things

**TRUST GOD WHERE YOU ARE RIGHT NOW**

What is going on right now?

Rest and know that God has good for you