

SOTM19 – The Law Of Love

SOTM19 Introduction: We are about to examine the following passage:

Mat 7:7-11 Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: (8) For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. (9) Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? (10) Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? (11) If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

Normally this passage is taught from the point of view of petitional prayer. There is nothing wrong with that because if you look up the corresponding teaching in Luke chapter eleven, you will find that it begins by the disciples asking Jesus to teach them to pray. In Luke's account of this teaching, the emphasis is specifically on how to pray to receive "bread for others" who have no bread. Said another way, it is teaching on the prayer of intercession to obtain supernatural "bread" for others. It ends with the Father giving us the Holy Spirit to manifest the "bread."

That same emphasis on intercession for others does not appear (at least on the surface) in Matthew's account. It seems to focus on teaching petitional prayer ... for yourself or for others. If that is the case, then it appears that Jesus seems to be changing the subject repeatedly in Matthew chapter seven. First, He teaches about judging yourself so you can help other people. Then He switches to teaching on petitional prayer, then He switches to the Golden Rule, and then to warnings about false prophets, and so forth.

As I continued to meditate this passage and assimilate the entire New Testament while praying in the Spirit, I finally saw a flow in the SOTM that tied all of the segments in chapter seven together. It also caused Matthew's account in chapter seven to more closely line up with Luke's account in chapter eleven of the same teaching.

Today I am going to teach this lesson from that flow. It does not violate all of the previous teaching from this passage that has been done in the past regarding petitional prayer. Those teachings are valid fruit from this passage. But there is a deeper, underlying flow that ties all of the segments in chapter seven together. This will be new to many. Do not be quick to reject it just because it is different. Be like the men of Berea who, "... received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." Act 17:11

Review:

1. Jesus is teaching the Kingdom of God. **Luke 16:16 The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.**
2. It is prophetic to us who have been born again. This is “**Kingdom Living 101.**”
3. Nobody can live the SOTM in their own strength. The gospel is: The Savior has come on the inside of you and joined with your spirit to make you a new creation, a new species. We are “Strong in the **Lord** and the power of **HIS** might.”
4. The previous lesson about judgment came to several conclusions.
 - a. The world cannot judge the kingdom because it does not know what sin is.
 - b. God judges those outside the church, but the church must judge those within.
 - c. Hypocrites are not qualified to render judgment.
 - d. The teaching is: Judge yourself that you be not judged, first get the beam out of your own eye so you can help your brother get the mote out of his eye.
 - e. This is the message of mortification, allowing the Holy Spirit to help you see everything that is not of Christ in your life. Then you mortify those things by the power of the new man you truly are. As the beams are removed from you, then you can see clearly to help others get free also.

Today’s lesson:

When you read the commentaries on the SOTM, they treat each segment as though Jesus is skipping from subject to subject. Dave would say with humor, “*Poor Jesus, it seems He could not stay on the same subject for more than a verse or two.*” Dave was saying that was not the case. Remember what pastor Dave taught about Jesus? Every sentence is like the stroke of an artist’s brush, each verse building upon the previous until the full image has been revealed. It is the same in this next passage. Jesus is building on what He has already taught in the SOTM.

Mat 7:7-11 **Ask**, and it shall be given you; **seek**, and ye shall find; **knock**, and it shall be opened unto you: (8) For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. (9) Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? (10) Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? (11) If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

Jesus teaches this same lesson in Luke chapter eleven. There Jesus emphasizes the **purpose** of asking, seeking, and knocking is to obtain “**bread for others who have no bread.**” The purpose of the asking, seeking and knocking is to obtain “**help for others.**”

What is the purpose of the preceding segment where Jesus taught about judgment? “Judge yourself and remove the beam from your own eyes so you can help remove the mote from your brother’s eyes.” The end result of righteous judgment is **“help for others.”**

In context, Jesus is teaching about us going to our heavenly Father for the purpose of exposing the beams in our own eyes ... things that we don’t even know we have. Why does Jesus say the beam is in the “eye?” Because those beams blind us to our own character flaws. External things like drinking, smoking, and drug abuse are usually pretty obvious to us and we know that they are wrong and must be purged. But other things like greed, selfish ambition, and jealousy ... we are often blind to those things. Others usually can see it in us, but we are often blind to them ourselves.

The tense of the Greek words ask, seek, and knock are “Ask and keep on asking. Seek and keep on seeking. Knock and keep on knocking.” That is not how Jesus taught us to do petitional prayer. Jesus said, “Believe you receive when you pray.” That doesn’t sound like ask and keep on asking. But when it comes to asking, seeking, and knocking for our Father to reveal hidden “beams” in our lives, that continuous asking, seeking, and knocking makes perfect sense.

Psa 139:23-24 Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: (24) And see if *there be any* wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

Example of “beams that blind.” This happened over thirty years ago so don’t try and figure out who it was. You don’t know him. I don’t mean to be unkind, but I will never forget the short man who weighed over 400 pounds who gave me a pamphlet on how to quit smoking. Bless his darling heart. I think we both had pretty big “beams” at the time. As another example, that same man threatened to sue me because of some damage done to the undercarriage of his car that happened while he was driving on my property. The truth was, he was so heavy, and his car was so old, his own weight had broken down the springs on the driver’s side of the car to the point it was almost dragging the ground anyway. It literally looked lopsided as you viewed it from the front or rear when he was sitting in it. He was totally “blind” to his own “beam” ... gluttony ... to the point he was willing to sue others for damage to his car that was his own fault. **Beams make us blind!**

We are not supposed to be blind children, all having beams blinding our eyes, trying to join our beams together with other people’s beams in some kind of disjointed,

dysfunctional walk. We are to judge ourselves, get free from our own beams first and THEN help our brothers get free also. Jesus said, THEN we could see “clearly,” and we can begin walking as those who can see and are no longer blind. Thank God for Him making us His own children. Thank God for Jesus letting us know that we can ask, seek, and knock at our Father’s door anytime we want to, and He will lovingly receive us. In Luke’s account of this teaching, it concludes with Jesus saying,

Luk 11:13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall *your* heavenly Father **give the Holy Spirit** to them that ask him?

Praying in tongues is such a wonderful gift. We know many things to pray about in our known language. But when it comes to “beams that blind us,” we normally do not know how to pray as we ought. The Holy Spirit is God. There is nothing hid from Him. He makes intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered. Why can’t they be uttered? There are many reasons, but one of the major ones is ... **we are normally blind to our own “beams.”** Luke’s account of Jesus teaching this same message brings out details of the blindness that we don’t see in Matthew’s account:

Luk 6:39-42 And he spake a parable unto them, **Can the blind lead the blind?** shall they not both fall into the ditch? (40) **The disciple is not above his master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his master.** [This is the ministry of the Holy Spirit—to take us from blindness to becoming a disciple who is “as his Master.”] (41) And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother’s eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye? (42) Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, **cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother’s eye.**

The Holy Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God. As He is, so are we in this world. Part of the “help” we receive from the Holy Spirit is that He bears witness with our conscience that darkness is no longer part of us. “WE” mortify the flesh by the power of being a new creature, but the Holy Spirit helps “reveal to us” unrenewed portions of our soul where we still do not think with the mind of Christ.

Example: As you know, for years I continued to smoke as a Christian. I kept thinking there was some “root” that I had to discover that needed to be chopped off before I could stop smoking. Eventually, the Holy Spirit showed me ... that thinking ... the thinking there was some hidden root in me ... **THAT THINKING ITSELF ... WAS THE BEAM!** It was simple deception. I believed false doctrine. The Spirit of Truth finally got it across

to me ... I am a child of God. I have been made free from sin. I saw it was only my FLESH that was addicted to nicotine, and it was my job [my duty, Rom 12:1-2] as a child of God to mortify the flesh, no matter the withdrawal symptoms I had to experience.

I stopped smoking. I never smoked another one. That produced a war with my flesh. I suffered in the flesh through withdrawal symptoms because I would not give in to its demands, and I ceased from sin. BAM! Another stronghold came down ... forever!

That was many years ago, and now that I have walked free long enough to have a track record of true deliverance, I can help you get the mote out of your eye. I couldn't before. I can now, without being a hypocrite. It ALWAYS starts with right thinking, which is based on true doctrine.

Rom 6:17-18 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. (18) Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

It starts with the truth of God's word. In spite of all contrary circumstances, no matter how it seems to you, **the truth is ... you have been made free from sin by the Savior who has come on the inside of you.**

Joh 8:12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: **he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.**

You are born again. You have the light of life within you. Christ in you has made you free from sin.

Joh 8:31-32 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, **If ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed; (32) And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.**

Joh 8:36 **If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.**

God gives good gifts to His children. You are His child, and He delights when you come boldly to the throne of Grace. Ask, seek, and knock. The door will be opened, you will find Him, and when you ask for His wisdom, you will receive it every single time. That's what Jesus promised.

But what if I am so messed up I don't know what to ask? That is one of the beautiful things about the HELPER we have been given. Remember Luke 11 when Jesus taught about us asking, seeking, and knocking. God has answered by giving us the nature of Christ within, and the Holy Spirit to HELP US.

Rom 8:26-27 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. (27) And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what *is* the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to *the will of God*.

He helpeth our what? He helps us with our “infirmities.” Pastor Dave would often say, “*The word ‘infirmities’ refers to our inability to produce results because of the limitations imposed on us by the flesh.*” The new man we have become has power over all of our infirmities, but the Holy Spirit ALSO helps us discern what infirmities are ... especially in the areas of life that we are “blind” to. We often think we are okay, when it is obvious to others, we have a beam stuck in our eye to the point it's a wonder we don't walk straight into walls most of the time.

The Holy Spirit HELPS us see it. Then we can mortify it though the power of the new man we really are. In truth, that is the power of Christ in us. “Be strong in the Lord and in the power of HIS might.” The power of the gospel is ... you are not alone. You are “joined to the Lord” and have become ONE SPIRIT with Him. His strength is your strength. You are a new creature, a new species, and sin has no dominion over you. Not EVER!

This process of mortification and transformation to the image of Christ, what does it result in?

Mat 7:12 Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

“This is the law and the prophets.” Jesus used that same wording in another place:

Mat 22:36-40 Master, which *is* the great commandment in the law? (37) Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. (38) This is the first and great commandment. (39) And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. (40) On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

IT IS THE LAW OF LOVE. Mat 7:12 is the manifestation of the law of love written in our hearts at the new birth. Paul said,

Rom 13:8-10 Owe no man any thing, but **to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.** (9) For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if *there be* any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, **Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.** (10) **Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.**

Jesus is our example in all things. He summed it up this way:

Joh 13:34-35 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. (35) By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

Jesus NEVER once violated the law of love. Even when He spoke strong words of rebuke and correction, it was always for their benefit, and it was from the heart motivation of love. Think how different the world would be if everybody lived by the Golden Rule:

Mat 7:12 Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.

The Progression of Matthew Chapter 7

1. Judge Yourself
2. Mortification
3. Transformation
4. Help Others
5. The Law of Love