

Learning to Beg

Matthew 7:7-12
Halifax: 12 September 2004

Introduction

When you first look at Matthew 7:7-12, it is difficult to follow the Lord's train of thought.

- But it seems to make a lot of sense if you look at this as the beginning of the conclusion to the entire sermon.
- It is here that He begins to tell us **what to do** with all the things He has said.

We could outline the whole sermon thus far in two parts—

- First, there are the Beatitudes.
 - In these, Jesus tells us that the ones who are blessed in His kingdom are the ones who are broken before God.
 - They are broken because they see themselves as the sinners they are.
 - They are poor in spirit (having nothing in themselves to bring to God)
 - They mourn because of this helpless condition...
 - They are meek, wanting to be governed by God
 - They hunger and thirst for righteousness because they know they need it...
 - They are merciful because they see that they are no better than others
 - They are pure in heart because they are honest with God.
 - They are peacemakers because they delight in peace that God has given to them when they had offended Him...
 - They are persecuted because they remind those who are pretending to be righteous that they are not righteous.
 - These are the ones who are blessed in Christ's kingdom.
 - They are the ones who shine as light in this dark world.
- The second section of Jesus' Sermon has to do with what God truly requires of us...
 - If in the Beatitudes Jesus told us that the blessed ones are those who have given up on themselves...
 - In this second section He shows us what a holy God truly requires of us so that we will give up on ourselves...
 - First, He shows us God's standard for relationships with others and how God's requirements are much more far reaching than the Pharisees taught—
 - that we are to obey from the heart and to love even our enemies...
 - Then, He shows us God's standard for our relationship with Him—

- The standard of sincere giving, praying, and fasting that puts pleasing God ahead of pleasing man...
 - The standard of regarding God above all earthly treasure and finding our joy in Him...
 - The standard of remembering that He alone is the judge and not us when we find fault in others.
- Now I think it is clear that our proper response after hearing all that God requires of us in this second section is that we should be broken before God!
- If you have heard what Jesus said and believed Him,
 - He has stripped you and left you naked before God...
 - You realise that you have nothing to cover yourself with...
 - You are a sinner in the raw,
 - All the coverings and all the pretences are of no use.
 - Everything is opened and naked before His eyes!
 - In a very masterful way,
 - Jesus brings those who hear this sermon to the very condition of blessedness that He presented in the Beatitudes!
 - He makes us poor in spirit, mourning over our sins, meek, hungering and thirsting for righteousness, and so on!
 - He has brought us before the face of the living God and we are found destitute and ruined.
 - That is where you are if you have heard and understood what He has been saying.

But now that Jesus has brought you to this point,

- What is He going to do with you?
 - There you are, ruined and broken before God, poor in spirit, mourning, meek, hungering and thirsting for righteousness...
 - There you are, a sinner before the eyes of the Holy God without righteousness and totally distressed about it!
 - What is Jesus going to do with you now that He has brought you to this point?
 - Well I will tell you what He does!
 - **He teaches you how to beg!**
 - This is the only thing left for you to do at this point!

Brothers and sisters, another name for begging is faith!

- Faith is looking to God for the righteousness that you don't have in yourself!
 - In this sermon, Jesus teaches you to look to God to give you this righteousness!
 - It is early on His ministry, and He does not reveal that this righteousness will come by His own death on the cross...
 - He will explain that later in His ministry,
 - especially after His resurrection when the apostles will go into the world to preach that He is the Saviour of the World who died on the cross for our sins and rose again for our justification...
 - We now know that this is the way that God brings righteousness to beggars...
 - But Jesus' concern at this point in His ministry was that His hearers would realise that they must trust God to do what is required to make them righteous...
 - However God does it, they must look to Him!
 - That is what the entire Old Testament Sacrificial system taught them to do...
 - To look to God to cleanse them from their sin and make them righteous...
 - To look to the promise that He would be their God and make them to be His people...
 - To look to the promise that they would be cleansed by the blood of the covenant that God Himself would provide.

And I want you to consider what follows Matthew 7:7-12...

- Every section that follows is designed to urge disciples to take up and continue this begging...this way of faith...
 - In verse 13-14, He tells them that many people take a way other than begging and are destroyed...
 - In verse 15-20, He speaks of prophets who come and teach people something instead of begging...
 - In verse 21-23, He tells how He will utterly reject those who come to Him that never learned to beg...
 - And in verse 24-29, He explains how only those who beg are built on a foundation that will not be destroyed.

So there is a sense in which we might say that the passage we look at today—

- Matthew 7:7-12—
- is the conclusion of all that Jesus has been saying in this sermon!

- It is here that He tells us what to do with all that He has said...
 - When Jesus has brought you before the face of God and shows you that you are naked and destitute of all righteousness:

I. You must take up begging as your trade.

A. Nobody likes to have to beg, so Jesus urges you to do it!

1. It is natural for us to want to find our own way!

a. We are like the wise steward who said, “I am ashamed to beg.”

- We would rather do almost anything than that!
- And this is especially the case when the thing we must beg for is righteousness!
 - It is one thing to beg for food and clothing when you don’t have that,
 - but what a thing it is to beg for righteousness!
 - To be brought to place where you say,
 - “I am bankrupt morally”
 - “I am a wicked person and I can’t reverse that.”
 - “The only thing left for me to do is to beg.”

b. That is a hard conclusion to come to!

- And you never will come to this conclusion apart from God’s word and Spirit.
 - You must be brought face to face with God and see what you are... a helpless sinner.
 - Until the Holy Spirit does this,
 - you will keep on avoiding the truth about what you are...
 - You will invent a thousand ways to avoid begging...
 - some of you by pretending that you are righteous or can make yourselves righteous...
 - Others by trying desperately to avoid the whole subject—to lose yourself in business or pleasure.

TRANS> But for you who have been shown by Jesus that you can never make yourself righteous,

- Jesus urges you to beg.

2. He urges you with three simple phrases that everyone can understand:
 - a. First He says, “Ask and it will be given to you.”
 - 1) The word “ask” is the word for an inferior coming to make a humble request of a superior.
 - You are coming humbly, with hat in hand, to ask for something you know you don’t deserve.
 - 2) Jesus does not expressly state what we are to ask for...
 - But the context makes it perfectly clear!
 - Way back in chapter 5 and verse 20, He told us that we must have a righteousness that exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees...
 - "For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.
 - Jesus has shown us what that righteousness is, and now He comes and says, “Ask and you will receive.”
 - We need a righteousness that only God can give!
 - The righteousness that the prophets promised God would give.
 - b. Next Jesus says, “Seek and you will find.”
 - 1) This seems to increase the intensity...
 - You ask for something you wish to have; you seek something that you miss and cannot find.
 - If I come to ask my neighbour for something, I simply say “May I have a some nails...”
 - but if I come seeking it from him,
 - I am going to search him out about it...
 - “Didn’t I see you with a bag of nails last week?”
 - “Don’t you have a few that I can use?”
 - You are going to argue with him and urge him about it...
 - You come with a sort of expectation that He has what you want.
 - 2) Once again, Jesus doesn’t say what we are seeking, but surely it is this righteousness of which we are destitute...
 - We may have sought for it in ourselves and perhaps from our religious exercises...

- Maybe we have sought to find it from other people, but we have come up empty...
 - But now we are coming to seek it from God and Jesus says that we will find it here...
- c. Finally, Jesus says, “Knock and it shall be opened to you.”
- 1) This is a further increase in intensity...
 - a) You knock when you feel that you are shut out from something...
 - That it is closed out from you.
 - b) The very action of knocking implies repetition...
 - You knock again and again until you get an answer.
 - 2) This is what you must learn to do as a beggar!
 - a) One of the most important principles of begging is that you must never give up until you have obtained what you are looking for.
 - Jacob is commended when he was in trouble because wrestled with God.
 - He didn’t come in some casual, nonchalant manner, but as a desperate man who would not take “no” for an answer!
 - He said to the Lord,
 - “I will not let you go unless you bless me.”
 - He knew from God’s promise that God had a blessing for Him...
 - He was going to keep on knocking until he got what he came for!
 - He was like the man that went to his friends at night to borrow bread and would not stop until he had obtained what he came for...
 - He kept on knocking until the door was opened.
 - And like the widow that pestered the unjust judge until he gave her justice...
 - She kept on knocking until the door was opened.
 - Jesus commends this kind of attitude for our prayers!
 - He teaches us that we ought always to pray and not to faint!
 - “Knock and it will be opened.”

- b) This is very important for you to understand!
- God sometimes waits to answer you...
1. But He does not wait because He does not **want** to answer you...
 - But He waits because He wants you to truly feel your need...
 - He wants you to understand how desperate you are.
 - You don't really understand His glory and majesty until you understand how desperate your condition is.
 2. He also waits to answer because He wants you to know that the answer came from Him...
 - If He gives it to you after you have prayed casually, you may not even remember that you have prayed!
 - But if you are brought to the point of wrestling with Him like Jacob did, you will never forget!
 - Jacob's hip was out of joint for the rest of His life!
 - This is something Israel was to remember.
 - They did not, therefore, in eating their sacrifices, eat the muscle that shrank, which *is* on the hip socket.
 - God did not answer Him immediately.
 - Consider also what happened at Egypt.
 - Why do you think God made it worse instead of better in Egypt before He delivered His people?
 - As soon as they started to pray, it got worse...
 - It was so that when He delivered them,
 - it would be unmistakably clear to them and to the Egyptians that He had done it!
 - 3) This idea of persistence is very important for a beggar to learn...
 - a) All three of these words "Ask—seek—and knock" are in the present tense which suggests that they are something we are to do continually.
 - not just a one time thing, but an ongoing thing...
 - day after day, week after week, year after year!
 - God does not ordinarily transform us by zapping us,
 - but He works rather nourishes us—

- We grow like an oak tree—
 - You can't tell much difference from one day to the next...
 - But after fifty years have gone by, there is a huge difference!

- b) Too often we fail as beggars at this very point...
 - We pray a little and then we stop—we give up because God did not seem to answer us...
 - Prayer ought to be our greatest concern,
 - but instead we are often very sluggish and lacklustre about it.
 - That is why Jesus urges us to keep going...
 - If we bring out the present tense, he says:
 - “Keep asking, and you will receive...”
 - “Keep seeking and you will find...”
 - “Keep knocking and it will be opened to you.”

- c) You will only do this if you truly see your need...
 - And as you keep doing this, you will see your need all the more.
 - It is the soul that hungers and thirsts for righteousness that keeps coming back.

TRANS> This begging that Jesus calls us to is nothing else but faith!

- The man of works says, “I have done it,” or “I can do it...”
- The man of faith says, “Do it for me or I die.”

B. But let me urge you forward about this asking, seeking, and knocking!

- This is something that you must actually **do!**

- 1. There are many who will “say their prayers” every day...
 - But their prayers are nothing more than an empty ritual!
 - They are happy to go through the motions and mouth off words before God, but they are not really asking, seeking and knocking at the door of heaven!
 - They are just performing a religious ceremony that they hope will put them right with God...
 - They are seeking righteousness
 - not in answer to their prayers,
 - but as a reward for their prayers...

- Do you understand the difference?
 - It is very important that you do!
 - The one person is saying,
 - “God see, I am righteous because I said my prayers.”
 - The other person is saying,
 - “God I am not righteous, but I am praying that you would make me righteous.”
 - The first one is not asking for righteousness, but displaying his righteousness...
 - The second one is pleading with God for righteousness.
2. And now I ask you—You must ask yourself...
- a. Do you come to God as a beggar?
 - Asking, seeking, and knocking in order to receive from Him what you need?
 - Do you actually do this?
 - Do you actually reach out your soul with yearning to Him for these things?
 - b. That is what Jesus is calling you to do...
 - and if you don’t actually do it then the promises here are not yours...
 - it will not be given, you will not find, the door will not be opened to you.
 - You must have faith or the door of salvation will be closed to you forever.

TRANS> And that leads us to next thing you need to learn a beggar...

II. You must learn to believe that God will answer

- A beggar will waste a lot of time if he goes to the wrong people to ask...
 - either to people who cannot help him or people who will not help him.
- It is very important for him to learn where to go for help so he will meet with success in his begging.
 - A person can’t help him if that person does not have what he is looking for...
 - If he asks someone who is broke, he will be receive nothing...

- Neither will he find help if he goes to someone who refuses to help him.
- He will surely come away with empty pockets.

A. Jesus assures you that God will indeed help you if you come to Him!

1. I have already shown you that Jesus uses three words “ask, seek, and knock” to call us to this duty...

- But now I want you to notice that He also repeats the promise that we will be heard after each word...
 - Ask and you will receive,
 - Seek and you will find,
 - Knock and it will be opened to you.
 - Each time He calls you to the duty,
 - He encourages you with the promise of success for your begging.

2. And He doesn't stop there with the encouragement of success!

a. In verse 8, He goes on to repeat all three promises again!

- Matthew 7:8: For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.
- By repeating all three promises again,
 - this makes a total of six times that Jesus promises to us that God will hear us when we ask!
 - He wants you to know that this is a sure thing!

b. And not only that, but you see in verse 8 that He adds the word “Everyone.”

1) That is a universal term...

- There is not a person who comes to God, asking, seeking and knocking, that does not receive!

2) I don't even think it is necessary to say that we must come with faith or that we must come to ask for the right things with the right motives...

- Of course the Bible teaches all this about our prayers...
- But true asking, seeking, and knocking **includes** faith and right motives and all that...
 - We are not talking about a blank check here that anybody can come along and fill out for whatever he wants!
 - We are talking about seeking God for the righteousness that Jesus has been telling us we must have!
 - A righteousness of the heart!

- A righteousness in our religious deeds!
- A righteousness in our relation to material things!
- A righteousness that takes the beam out of our own eye!
- No one comes to God earnestly seeking these things with the wrong motives—
 - seeking to be truly righteous in the sight of God!
 - Wrong motives are impossible if that is your desire!

3) And that is why the promise is unqualified and sure!

- You can't go wrong if you come begging to God for righteousness!
- You will never go away empty!

TRANS> So you see how Jesus encourages us with these promises that God will surely help us if we ask, seek, and knock.

- But even with this six-times-repeated promise, He does not stop!

B. To give us even more assurance, Jesus goes on to explain **why** we can be so sure that God will help us...

- He gives us two reasons...

1. The first reason is because He is willing to help us.

a. In verses 9-11, Jesus lays out the fact that God sustains the relation of a Father to those that ask seek and knock.

1) Jesus doesn't actually say, "He is your Father," but He does something better.

- He simply assumes that God is the Father of those who are asking and seeking and knocking.
- He simply calls Him "Your Father in heaven."

2) But how can Jesus make this assumption?

- God is not the Father of all...
 - Jesus told some of the unbelieving Jews that "You are of your Father the Devil."
 - In John 1:11-12, John tells us that God is only the Father of those who believe in Jesus:
 - John 1:11-12: He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:
 - So how can Jesus make the assumption that God is the Father of those who are hearing Him?

- Well the truth is, He does not make any such assumption...
 - The assumption that Jesus makes is that all those who ask, seek, and knock are God's children and have God as their father.
 - Just as they are the ones who have the promises of verse 8, so here they are the ones who have God as their father.
- 3) So you see that it is just a given that if you are asking, seeking, and knocking, God is indeed your Father.
- None but God's children ever do these things...
 - They are the ones who have been born again into God's family by His Spirit, and that is why they ask, seek, and knock.
 - God is assuredly your Father if you ask and seek and knock.
- b. The good news is that as your Father, God is willing to give you good things.
- 1) The father to child relationship is naturally a very sacrificial relationship.
- Jesus says,
 - "What man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent?"
 - The round loaves or bread in those days looked like stones—
 - and here is the ugly picture of a father pretending to give his hungry son a loaf of bread and giving him a stone to mock him!
 - Such cruelty is virtually unheard of from father to son!
 - Though we are, as Jesus says here, evil...
 - this is something that most fathers would not do to their own sons!
 - Even the monsters of our race would not do such a cruel thing to their own sons...
- 2) Jesus argument is stated in verse 11:
- Matthew 7:11: If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!
 - His question is "how much more!"
 - If you who are evil won't give your sons stones for bread,
 - how could it be that God who is good would not give those who ask Him what He promises?

- It is utterly inconceivable!
 - Here you are God's child,
 - desperate in your sin and misery!
 - asking God for righteousness,
 - seeking after righteousness with hunger,
 - pleading for it with persistence...
 - because He has promised.
 - God has never turned anyone away who does this...
 - As Jesus said, "The One who comes to me, I will in no wise cast out."
 - It is utterly inconceivable that God would give you a stone when you ask Him for the bread of life!
 - He is good and merciful
 - He has promised, and He cannot lie!
 - He has provided for the salvation of His sons in Jesus Christ....
 - Could the God who did that turn us away when we come to Him for righteousness?
 - No dear child of God, you have every reason to come with confidence!
 - His heart is too big to turn you away!
 - You will never be disappointed!
- 3) See how He presents Himself to you as a Father—to all you who ask!
- This is no deception!
 - For the mere asking, the Judge of all the earth who justly sentenced you to eternal death not only grants you a pardon—
 - a pardon that cost Him His own son...
 - But also adopts you into His family as a son...
 - He does it because He longs to share His glorious inheritance with you...
 - He longs for you to live in His house and behold His glory forever.
 - He longs to make you like His Son Jesus, full of all grace and goodness.
- 4) In the world you will often be disappointed...

- There will be those who will give us stones for bread and serpents instead of fish...
 - Our parents will often disappoint us and let us down...
 - But God, who is full of goodness will never give us stones for bread or serpents for fish!
 - It is impossible!

TRANS> And in coming to Him you will find that He is not only a willing father, but also a father who knows how to help us.

2. The second reason you can be sure of His help is because He knows how to help us.
 - a. Sometimes an earthly father may desire to help his son, but he may give him something that is actually harmful.
 - He can give him food that will make him sick without knowing it...
 - b. But God in His perfect wisdom always gives good things to His sons.
 - In Luke 11 where Jesus says almost the same words, He substitutes “the Holy Spirit” for “good things,” and says:
 - “How much more will He give the Holy Spirit to those that ask Him.”
 - This explains what the good things are that He gives to you!
 - The Holy Spirit is sometimes simply referred to as “the promise of the Father” or “the promise to Abraham.”
 - He is the one who transforms us so that we might become like Jesus Christ.
 - He is the one who renews our minds and changes our hearts so that we begin to produce glorious fruits...
 - love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control!
 - These are the good things that the Father delights to give to His children!
 - If we would ask for them, and seek them and knock for them,
 - we would find that our prayers are always answered!
 - God will not give us harmful things, but He will give us good things!
 - We can come with absolute confidence if we come seeking these things from His hand!

TRANS> But remember that you are a beggar!

- There is no other way to get these things than by begging...
 - Jesus teaches you to beg and encourages you that by begging, you will obtain these most excellent things from your Father's hand!
 - Ask and it will be given to you, seek and you will find, knock and it shall be opened to you!
- But my friends, there is one more thing you must learn about begging that is brought out in verse 12...

III. You must learn to behave in a manner appropriate to beggars.

- Jesus says,
 - Matthew 7:12: Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.
- A. At first, it is a little difficult to see the connection to what goes before, but I want you to notice two things...
 1. First, that Jesus connects this verse with what goes before with the word "Therefore."
 - Somehow, this ties in to the begging...
 - We will look at how in just a moment.
 2. Second, that Jesus connects this verse with the whole portion of His sermon from Matthew 5:17 on by adding the words "for this is the Law and the Prophets."
 - a. In 5:17, Jesus began explaining that He did not come to not come to destroy the Law and the Prophets, but to fulfil...
 - In telling us how God expects us to live in the rest of chapter 5, all of chapter 6 and the beginning of chapter 7,
 - Jesus did not pretend that He was presenting anything new...
 - All He was doing was giving the proper interpretation of God's law that had been so wretchedly distorted by the leaders of His generation.
 - b. Now that He has come to His conclusion, He wants to wrap all this up.
 - Everything that He has said regarding God's law can be summed up with the words:
 - "Do to others as you would have them to do you."
 - This is called the golden rule...
 - It is another way of saying that we are to love our neighbours as ourselves...

- You know what a good judge you are of how people ought to be treating you....
 - Jesus is saying that you ought to be just as good at judging how you ought to be treating others.
 - If you would apply the same standard you hold of what ought to be done to you to what ought to be done for others...
 - you will do very well...
 - This is the heart of the matter that is so often lost sight of when we look only at obeying the rules.
 - We will look at this in detail next week...
 - But for now I want to concentrate on how this ties in to begging.
- B. First of all, learn that all beggars of God should keep this golden rule because this is the very thing that a beggar should be seeking from God...
1. What are you asking for if not the grace to love your neighbour?
 - If God gives you the grace to love your neighbour, you ought to love that neighbour!
 - The very thing we ask, seek and knock for is righteousness....
 - God gives this to you when you ask.
 - Therefore, what else should you be doing but living out this righteousness in relation to your neighbour?
 - What else should you be doing but fulfilling the Law and the Prophets?
 2. Jesus is saying to you, “Therefore, if God gives His sons good things, do to others as you would have them do to you...”
 - If you have come to God hungering for righteousness,
 - Let’s see this righteousness in your life!
 - Let’s see you loving your neighbour by virtue of that grace!
 - As Paul says in Colossians 2:6:
 - “As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him.”
 - The grace of God that you have received should not be invisible—
 - It should be seen clearly in the way you treat your neighbour.
 3. Therefore, since God offers you this grace and freely gives this grace, draw upon this resource and love your neighbour!

- C. Secondly, all beggars should observe the golden rule because it only appropriate for a beggar who has been greatly helped to help others.
1. How inappropriate it is for a beggar to come to God in desperation, receive mercy, and then refuse to show mercy to his neighbour in need!
 - If God has helped you when you were desperate and without resources, how can you harden yourself to others?
 - Surely you ought to others you have them to do to you...
 - You wanted God to help you in your need—
 - now don't you think your neighbour would like for you to help him in his need?
 2. God does not look lightly upon beggars who reject fellow beggars...
 - a. Remember the parable Jesus told about the king who forgave his servant's massive debt?
 - And how he responded when that servant refused to forgive the small debt of his fellow servant?
 - He said:
 - Matthew 18:32-35: Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?' And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him. So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses.
 - A beggar has no business rejecting another beggar and treating him with contempt for being a beggar...
 - b. This brings us right back to the principle that Jesus taught in Matthew 7:2:
 - Matthew 7:2: For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you.
 - 1) The Father does not show mercy to you so that you might be hard toward your neighbour.
 - Such behaviour is highly inappropriate for a beggar.
 - It betrays a total lack of understanding for what was done for you.
 - It shows that you have forgotten the grace that was shown to you when you were desperate.
 - 2) Of course what this means is that you never really came to the Father for His grace...

- You went through the motions of one who was asking, seeking and knocking...
- But if you don't love your neighbour, it shows that you never really came to Christ.
- His word has not yet cut to your heart and made you a true beggar because a true beggar will do to others as he would have others do to him.
 - He knows what it is to be a beggar who needs help and he wants to do for others as God has done for him.
 - Like Paul, he sees himself as a debtor to all men because of the grace that has been shown to him.

3) But understand also that this is not about perfection.

- It is about grace!
 - God does not make you perfect in this life,
 - but He calls you to keep asking, keep seeking, keep knocking...
 - and He promises that as you do,
 - you will receive,
 - you will find,
 - that it will be opened to you!
- Jesus is calling you to beg as a was of life...
 - There is a radical inception when you first come to Him and are justified...
 - But then there is an ongoing stretching forth to God for more and more grace!
 - There is a hunger and thirst for righteousness that keeps you a beggar until you go to be with Christ in Heaven.
 - There is that oak-tree-like-growth that continues all through your life.
 - The promise of Christ is that God will keep giving as you keep coming to Him to ask, to seek and to knock.

Conclusion:

Now I want you to step back for a moment and look at this whole Sermon on the Mount!

- How kind your Saviour is!
 - He began by pronouncing His blessing on those who are broken and see their need of salvation...

- Then He explained the Law to us so that we might be broken and see our need of salvation...
- Then He graciously teaches us to be beggars before God,
 - comforting us and assuring us again and again that God will by no means reject us, but give us the salvation we seek!
- And now we know that foundational to these promises...
 - He Himself was living in the shadow of the cross!
 - He Himself was preparing to become the sacrificial victim that would provide for every beggar who comes begging to God!

Let us then come to God to ask, seek and knock that He would give us His grace for righteousness...

Please stand for prayer.

O LORD God of our fathers,

- are You not the God of heaven,
- and do you not rule over all things for the sake of the church
- and in Your hand is there not power and might, so that no one is able to withstand you?

Are you not our God who drove out Satan and brought us into your glorious Kingdom which you have given to Christ and all His seed forever?

- And do we not dwell in your kingdom and have and have access to you through His name?
- Has He not told us that we may come before your throne of grace in His name when trouble overwhelms us to receive grace and mercy in our time of need?
- And that when we cry out to you in our affliction, you will hear and save?

And now, here we stand before you,

- plagued by the sinful and corruption that remains in us...
- grieved by the lack of unity among your people...
- confused by the false teaching that is all around us and that has so much affected us...

Here are these things, threatening to throw us out of your kingdom which you have given to us through Jesus Christ to inherit forever!

- O our God, will you not destroy these enemies of ours?
- For we have no power against this sin and disunity and false teaching that comes against us...
 - nor do we know what to do...
 - but our eyes are upon you!

And so we praise you that day after day, week after week, year after year, you are destroying our enemies before our eyes!

- You are gloriously establishing us in your inheritance and making us like your Son.
 - We have asked, and you have promised to answer
 - We have sought you and you have promised that we will find
 - We have knocked and you have promised that it will opened.

We give you thanks in Jesus' name,

Amen.