

God Answers Prayer

(Matthew 7:7-8)

Introduction:

1. In His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus taught at length about prayer.
 - a. He taught His followers not to pray like:
 - 1) the hypocrites (Matthew 6:5-6)
 - 2) the heathens (Matthew 6:7-8).
 - b. (Matthew 6:9-13) He gave His model prayer.
 - c. (Matthew 7:7-8) He assured His followers that "God answers prayer."
2. We have several reasons for studying this subject today.
 - a. One reason is today is recognized as Father's Day -- Jesus used the father-child relationship to illustrate the fact that God answers prayer.
 - b. We will consider another reason later.

Discussion:

- I. (Matthew 7:7-8) JESUS TAUGHT THAT GOD ANSWERS PRAYER
 - A. In dealing with this subject, Jesus also revealed our responsibilities in approaching God (vs.7).
 1. We are to "ask" [to make a request, as illustrated in Philippians 4:6b].
 2. We are to "seek" [to search diligently, as illustrated in Matthew 13:45-46].
 3. We are to "knock" [to knock persistently, as illustrated in Acts 12:13-16].
 - B. If we ask, seek, and knock, Jesus said that God will give us what we ask, He will cause us to find what we seek, and He will open to us.
 - C. Jesus emphasized the lesson He was teaching by repeating it in vs.8.
 - D. Some people object to the Lord's teaching because God did not grant their requests.
 1. We must keep in mind that God did not grant the requests made by:
 - a. Jesus (Matthew 26:39, 42, 44)
 - b. Paul (2 Corinthians 12:7-9).
 2. We must also keep in mind that there are other conditions for prayer.
 - a. We must ask believing (Matthew 21:22).
 - b. We must ask in Jesus' name (John 16:23).
 - c. We must not pray with selfish motives (James 4:3).
 - d. We must be obedient to God (1 John 3:22).
 - e. We must ask according to God's will (1 John 5:14-15).
 - E. As we study the Lord's teaching in Matthew 7:7-8, we must apply the other teachings presented in the Bible concerning prayer.

- II. (Matthew 7:9-11) JESUS USED THE FATHER-CHILD RELATIONSHIP TO ILLUSTRATE THE FACT THAT GOD ANSWERS PRAYER
 - A. (vs.9-10) Jesus based His reasoning on the way a father responds to requests made by his child.
 - 1. (vs.9) If a child asks his father for bread, how will the father respond?
 - 2. (vs.10) If a child asks his father for a fish, how will the father respond?
 - 3. By the way, does a father always give his child everything he wants?
 - B. (vs.11) Jesus used His reasoning to show that God will give that which is good to His children who make requests of Him (see James 1:17).
 - C. One reason why we are studying the fact that God answers prayer is because Jesus used the father-child relationship to illustrate His point.
- III. THERE IS ANOTHER REASON FOR STUDYING THESE VERSES
 - A. We included these verses in our lesson last Father's Day, and we followed up with a series of lessons on asking, seeking, and knocking for a meeting place.
 - B. God has granted our request, and we praise Him for doing so.
 - C. The time has arrived for us to ask, seek, and knock for opportunities to reach people with the Gospel so we can grow and meet our financial obligations.
 - D. I believe God wants us here, but He wants us to fulfill our purpose -- win souls.
 - E. Let us adopt the request made by Paul in Colossians 4:2-4.

Conclusion:

- 1. One of the keys to church growth is found in Acts 2:47.
- 2. For people to be saved the Gospel must be taught (Mark 16:15-16).
- 3. Have you complied with the terms of salvation that the Lord has given?