

**Content**

Jesus is moving in this section of the Sermon on the Mount onto a section which deals with the difficulty of kingdom relationships. Specifically the very thorny issue of judging and he closes the section with the famous words “So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.” This section consists of a (1) prohibition, (2) an explanation and (3) a principle. This actually completes the much larger section that Jesus began back in 5:17 when he said, “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.” We are actually going to take two weeks on this section, where next week I will deal more fully with the issue of judging and relationships. This morning I want to tackle the practical question of how do I actually do this in my life? Is there a key to applying this? And I think there is and I think that is the point of vv. 7-11 on prayer. Our prayer life becomes the key to appropriating the power of the Holy Spirit that God has given us. So this week’s sermon will focus very specifically on our prayer life and we will highlight this under two headings. (1) Knowing Yourself and (2) Knowing God. The first section, knowing yourself will draw from the parable of the persistent widow found in Luke 18:1-8. Do we know ourselves to be desperate and dependent? The second section will focus on the instructions to ask, seek and knock and will compare with the version found in Luke 11:9-13 where the promise is that the Father gives the Holy Spirit to those who ask, seek and knock.

**Gospel Connections**

The gospel connection can focus on the Father’s goodness on giving the Holy Spirit to His elect children. A couple of passages to cross reference are Romans 8:15 and Galatians 4:6. The Galatians passage speaks of two sendings, the sending of the Son (v.4) and the sending of the Spirit (v.6). And the sending of the Spirit is to enable us to cry out Abba Father. We cry out to the Father to give us the Spirit to enable us to relate to others in a God-honoring, Christ-like way.

**Application and Discussion Questions**

1. What did you learn from this sermon? Specifically
  - a. What insights did you learn?
  - b. What questions do you have? Are there any areas you don’t understand?

- c. What areas of your life (be specific) do you sense God wants to change as a result of this passage of Scripture?
2. What are the biggest hindrances to your prayer life? Be specific.
  3. Read Romans 8:15 and Galatians 4:4-6. What do these passages teach us concerning the gift of the Spirit and prayer?
  4. What specific changes can you make to be more intentional and proactive in your prayer life? Again be specific.
  5. How would you summarize verses 1-5? What is the difference between judging and accountability? Think of a time when you have either been judgmental or had a judgmental attitude toward someone. What did that do to you? To the other person?