

# Gifts!

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[ 0 : 00 ] So the focus tonight that we're going to have is in Matthew, the chapter that we read, Matthew chapter 7, so please turn back there. Now, just as we start, I want you to think, when you need something, when you have to go to somebody to ask somebody for something, you do it in different ways, don't you, depending on who it is and what it is that you need.

One of the scenarios that you may have had in your life, or that you can at least sympathise with, when a child goes with his or her parent to school because it's parents evening and the parent is going to get the report and the child is feeling nervous.

When the boyfriend writes with a degree of uncertainty to the girlfriend who is some distance away and they haven't spoken in quite a long time and it feels like the relationship has gone a bit cold.

He writes with a degree of trepidation. Somebody who's wanting to get on the ladder and who wants to buy a house, going for that first visit to the mortgage advisor, not knowing what they can get, not knowing what they can afford, not knowing how they're going to be received, it's all new and they feel very worried.

There are loads of different scenarios where we face uncertainty, where we need something and where we have to go to somebody else and put ourselves in many ways before them and just ask.

[ 1 : 35 ] We don't know how it's going to turn out and we feel very differently in different circumstances. You know when you go to God in prayer, how does it feel for you now, at the moment in your life?

How does it feel for you? What kind of experience do you have? And that comes out of, doesn't it, what we think of the person that we're going to, to ask something of, and also what we're asking for, what kinds of things that we think we can go and ask.

And all of that is bound up very much in our experience of prayer. You go to God, what do you think of God? When you go to God, what kinds of things do you think you can ask of Him?

Now this passage, Jesus teaches us a little about that. He teaches us about who God is, so the way we can go to God, He teaches us about the kinds of things that we can receive from God, which also ties in very much to the way that we can approach God, the kind of confidence that we can have when we go before God.

But it also teaches us, as we move to the very last verse that we read there, about the way that we are to behave ourselves. So as we are people who go to God and who ask and who receive, then we are also to be those who think about the way that we are to give to others who are in need.

[ 2 : 58 ] So these are the kinds of things that we're going to be thinking about tonight. Two main sections, two main points. First of all, the good that we are given from God.

And then secondly, just as we look at verse 12, we're going to think about the good that we give. So those two things tonight. So we're going to start in verse 7. And this speaks Jesus immediately once the people that he's addressing to zero in on the one that they are going to, and to see that the one that they are going to is good and he gives good things to those who ask.

Verse 7. We see this in the kind of language that he uses. Because first of all, he says, ask and it will be given to you. Speak and you'll find knock and it will be open to you.

Now, first of all, just as we're starting, you have to notice this very important thing. I said there are different ways that we can approach people. We can approach people very brashly thinking that we have all the right in the world and we can speak to somebody just exactly how we please.

And we can also think that we're so great and they should give us anything we want. So look at the way that Jesus speaks, starts off this little section, ask, seek, knock.

[ 4 : 16 ] The emphasis there on is oncoming humbly. And with a degree of, you know, we come to God and we recognize that we need from him.

Now isn't that an obvious starting place when we're thinking about prayer? But I think it deserves saying, if you ever come to God feeling like it's just a chore, your prayer is just a chore and you need to get it out of the way.

This is a corrective to that, isn't it? Ask, you're coming to one who can give you. And so you come as the one recognizing that you don't have all the answers, you don't have all the resources and all the things that you need in life.

Ask, seek and knock. We come before God humbly because of who he is and because of who we are. So that's the very first thing in verse seven.

Remember that just as we're starting again, remember the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector, those two ways in which these two men are described as entering into prayer with God, full of pride and contempt and with a sense of the awesomeness of God and the humility that is required coming before a holy God.

[ 5 : 25 ] So that is just an important thing just to point out as we start. Come humbly and come in need. So then he goes on and he emphasizes this wonderful fact that, you know, in case you'd forgotten, in case you didn't know, in case you've needed to be reminded again that the one that you come to in prayer is good.

Ask and it will be given to you. Seek and you will find, knock and it will be opened to you. Very simple, maybe very familiar language to you, but let it sink in deeply to your understanding of the one that you come before in prayer.

The God that you believe in, the God that you speak to is good and he gives you good. And this is the way that Jesus describes it in this kind of this questing, this asking, searching and knocking ask and you will receive.

Now this is really hard for us. I think you may find this hard. If you're somebody who is maybe used to being the boss in life, maybe you manage a lot of people, maybe you're a very competent person, I'm sure you are.

And sometimes it's very hard for us, especially if life is going very well. Do you know that feeling? Things are pretty plain sailing. You have a good bank balance.

[ 6 : 48 ] You have what you need and your friends like you. I don't feel the need to pray so much to God at the moment. And so this whole thing about coming humbly and with a sense of need and dependence to God seems a bit far away.

But this is a reminder to us again, every time we come to our God, we come to one who loves us and who is good, but we come humbly and we become as those who need. Now we're going to come to the question of what it means to ask what we're asking for and we're going to come to that.

But this is the principle of how we approach God just at the start. So he speaks as of God as one who is good and where to come humbly.

He is the one who is good. Now I just want to look again briefly at verse 9 and then verse 11 because he uses this wonderful language also of relationship. Verse 9, which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, so he starts off by using that illustration of the family, but then he comes into verse 11, he speaks about, if you then who are evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your father?

So he carries on the illustration of sonship and he applies it to the way that we are to see God. We don't come to some distant theoretical idea, some powerful deity who's vaguely aware of us, we come to the Father who gave us birth.

[ 8 : 19 ] He knows all of our needs. He knew our desperation that we couldn't save ourselves and he provided the Savior. He's our Father.

And this beautiful language, we just want to highlight that just for a minute. And then of course he uses that illustration in verse 8, he started off by saying ask, seek and knock, verse 8 he carries on to say, everyone who asks receives and to the one who seeks finds, to the one who knocks it will be opened.

So that's a really reassuring language. Again, it maybe seems very obvious, maybe familiar to you, maybe very familiar with this passage. Everyone who comes to God in need receives help from a good Father.

Now I said that it's hard for us sometimes to come in need if we feel like life's good and we're doing well and we feel quite self-sufficient. I also think it's hard for us to come to God and to think that he is a good God and he will give us good things if life is going really badly.

Because if life is going really badly sometimes the temptation is for us to think, well God's forgotten about me. Not many people talk to me nowadays and I've got fed up trying to explain how hard life is for me to my friends because they get a glazed look when I start telling them again.

[ 9 : 44 ] So God wouldn't want to hear. I've told him enough times and then we start to say well I've spoken this to God, I prayed this to God, he hasn't answered so he must not have heard.

And I think the temptation for us to, can be to forget that aspect of the goodness of the Father who knows you and who is able and willing to give you every good gift.

So there's all this assurance from Jesus but I think it's challenging for us. Even this simple and well known promise that Jesus gives us can be hard, can be challenging.

Because our lives are challenging, because our emotions are complex and because our needs often are very great. Let me just mention a couple of things to pull out just to look at from this just for a second.

He mentions in verse 11 something that we should just take note of. He says if you then who are evil know how to give good gifts to your children how much more will your Father. That's Jesus saying here.

[ 10 : 51 ] Some people might find that hugely offensive. If you then who are evil. Well he's making the point. The ordinary people like us with all of our different experiences we're people who get many things wrong.

We're people whose hearts are corrupted by sin. We're people who often treat each other with a degree of disdain or worse. Yet we're people who know how to show love to our children.

A very basic level that most fundamental of human relationship from a parent to a child we know how to love our children. So he's emphasizing this sense of you could say common grace that in the world there does exist this sense of care.

The sense of benevolence from the parent to the child. The draw that you almost cannot block to just care for and provide for and love your child.

But Jesus's point here is to say well then how much more will your heavenly Father do so for you. Don't forget how much more your heavenly Father is able.

[ 12 : 02 ] Remember that we looked a couple of weeks ago at the section on worry. A few passages back in chapter 6 from verse 25 Jesus speaks about not being anxious and he uses the same kind of illustration there.

Remember that he uses the illustrations about the birds of the air and all different kinds of things there. And the point there is to say well if God is able to care for and provide for these birds and the lilies and the different aspects of the natural world that he's describing.

Of course he can provide for you. Of course he's able to give all the things that you need for your life. And so the point that Jesus is saying here is well if you as a heavenly parent who often gets things so wrong, don't you, don't we, how much more is your perfect heavenly Father who knows you utterly and who knows your needs perfectly able and willing to give you good gifts.

And the answer is completely able and completely willing to give you good. And so really Jesus is building up this picture here of one who is good to reinforce our sense that it is good to go to God.

And to help us to go to God in prayer. To help us to go. You know don't forget how challenging this would have been to the religious, the Jewish culture.

[ 13 : 26 ] The way of perceiving God as one who is so close and personal, the Father one, the one who we can go to and say Abba I feel this, I need this, my sin is great.

Go to this good God in prayer. But I want to just now come back to that question that we left hanging really just a few minutes ago. So Jesus starts off by saying ask and it will be given to you, seek and you'll find, knock and it will be open.

Your question you may well have asked is well ask for what? What do I seek? And what am I knocking for? What exactly is it that Jesus is saying we should do here?

Because of course we have a whole range of different things that we could think of right now that you might want to pray for right now, whole range of things, a whole range of feelings and experiences.

So let's just look at that question just for a little. What is good? What is Jesus saying that we should ask for? And what is Jesus saying? This is crucial. What is Jesus saying that God will give?

[ 14 : 25 ] What are these good things that God will give? Well I think really importantly the thing to grasp when we start to get into this whole question is that when we're thinking about what are the good things that we should be asking for from God that He will give us?

The answer is that often we don't know. See there's a problem. We often feel like we should know minute to minute or day by day whatever situation that we come to and we face, but we should be able to discern what we need in our lives.

Then we go to God and if you like make the transaction where we ask for something and He gives us it. But that's a very difficult way of thinking because if you follow that way of thinking often what you'll find is well it didn't work out like that.

I needed something and I asked God and I didn't get it. So my implication maybe God didn't listen or He's not good.

So it's important to think about this question. A few points just to help us understand this. It can't be the case that when Jesus is encouraging us to pray to a good God and ask for good things that means we have a carte blanche to go and say anything that we want and God will give us it.

[ 15 : 40 ] It can't be the case. It doesn't follow. It doesn't make sense. It doesn't follow in the light of other scriptures that we'll turn to in just a second. I think the thing is sometimes and this isn't to demean the way that we can pray at all.

We can approach God or we can be tempted to approach God as the one who will just give us what we want almost as if we can treat God like the proverbial genie in the bottle who will come up every so often and give us good things.

Maybe a very naive way of thinking. Now here's the problem with that. I came across this story. I don't often read stories about genies but I did this week and here's a little excerpt from one.

The genie says in the story to a person who's summoned him, every time I'm summoned from my basket I'm amazed at the wishes you people come up with.

Really don't you people think these things through? Once a fisherman found my basket washed up on the shore. Genie he said, I wish to hook the largest catch ever.

[ 16 : 45 ] Like that turned out well. He never made it to wish two and three. He couldn't handle the size of the fish that he caught. So like I said the point is not to demean the way that we can go to God and ask Him for things.

But the point is to say that we often don't know what is ultimately good for us in any given situation. We don't know the thing that will be of most benefit to us. We can't see.

We don't have the wisdom. We heard a little bit this morning about a bigger wisdom that we are to seek. So there's that aspect too but there's also the aspect when we think more tangibly, more practically maybe, well then what are we talking about here?

What are we to go and ask for? And it has to be more than these good things that we're to go to God and ask for. It has to be more than material things. But we are told to ask for material things aren't we?

Remember that in this sermon of Jesus back in the most famous prayer of all, chapter six verse 11, Jesus teaches us to say give us our daily bread.

[ 17 : 45 ] So He does encourage us to go and ask for what we need. And we saw that like I said a couple of weeks ago when we were talking about anxiety and worry in verse 31, therefore don't be anxious saying what shall we eat or what should we drink or what shall we wear.

But the Gentiles seek after these things and your Heavenly Father knows that you need them all. Again, there's reassurance. God knows the daily needs that we have, the material things, the ordinary things that can stress us out if we don't have them.

He knows that we need them. Go and ask for them. But of course the challenge is to do that proportionately so that we're able to go and ask and not to obsess and not to make these things that be all and end all of our lives.

So material things are important, but again it's more than just material things. So there's more here because Jesus is speaking ultimately when we ask the question, well what ultimately is the good that God is going to give us that He wants to give us, that we can go confidently to Him and ask for knowing that we will get because of course some people in dire circumstances ask for material things and never get them and they starve.

They don't have what they need. But the thing that we can go to God and know that He wants for us is a spiritual living, is in terms of who you are as somebody created in the image of God to know Him, to know His salvation, to know His presence in your life, to know the hope that He's called you to for the future, to know the transformation of your soul and of your life so that you're a new creation, indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

[ 19 : 33 ] All of these things, John Stott puts it like this, these are the things that we, these are the good things. Daily forgiveness, deliverance from evil, peace, the increase of faith, hope and love.

In fact he says the indwelling work of the Holy Spirit as the comprehensive blessing of God for these things we must certainly pray. Now if you're anything like me, isn't it the case that sometimes they're the last things that you pray for?

We say, God I feel so rubbish today, I need these things, X, Y and Z, whatever it might be. Now remember these things are important and they're to be prayed for in proportion.

But these things daily forgiveness, deliverance from evil, it was the last time you prayed for deliverance from evil because you couldn't bear the thought of being dragged back into that old way of sinning again.

The increase of faith, hope and love, these are the great transformative priorities that God has for your life.

[ 20 : 41 ] And that He wants to give you and that He wants to work in your heart by the Holy Spirit so that you are and you go on being, if you like, and knowing the sense of being a new creation.

If you then who are evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in Heaven give good things to those who ask Him. So there is a sense in which we go and we ask for everything that we need, the material things.

You know God delights to give us, God's not kind of miserly and He just wants to see us squirm and have a terrible life. We go and we ask for what we need and He is the one who can give us every good thing.

And you know when He gives you good things in your life then thank Him. We don't have to spurn pleasant things.

Thank Him for these things and appreciate them and share them when you can with other people. But ask yourself the question, what is the good that I am asking God for?

[ 21 : 46 ] Is it that my heart would be daily transformed into the likeness of Jesus Christ? Because you know that's what He wants to give you. That's what He wants to give you.

Now I just want to read a verse from James because what this means is that when we come to understand this it means that sometimes the way that God works in our lives is that He withholds, if you like, material things, things that you may just feel like you need in life because He's at work in your life to draw you to Him for this greater spiritual understanding, this gospel transformation that He is working at in your heart.

And so what we think of is God's ignoring me, He's forgotten about me because He didn't give me whatever it was that I asked for. Maybe the answer is that it's drawing you to Him so that you may know Him better.

In James 1, James writes, Count it pure joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness or perseverance.

Now do you know what's really interesting about that verse? He says to the people He's writing to, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.

[ 23 : 07 ] Again, if you're either like me, you forget that little clause. I often don't know that the trials are to produce steadfastness in me. I think why on earth has God let this happen?

There can be no reason for it. It's an inconvenience, it's unfair and I deserve better. And what God wants you to do is recognize that He's at work in your soul, helping you to understand that the thing you thought you need, you maybe didn't, maybe isn't a priority, you maybe got plenty of others like it, and He'll maybe provide later.

But in the meantime, what He wants you to do is to submit to Him, knowing that He knows your daily needs and that priority for Him, maybe right that moment in your life, is that you would, in submitting and in humbling yourself and in seeking His face, you change the whole thing around so that you change the priority from being about things to about God.

And God becomes the one you ask, seek and knock for if you like. You go after God because He's the one who gives you life.

He has given you life and He gives you life and He sustains you and He gives you joy and peace by His Holy Spirit. So do we know that the testing of our faith, sometimes by it feeling like our prayers aren't being answered, are to help us see the bigger picture, the bigger picture of the desires that God has for us.

[ 24 : 34 ] So this wonderful passage that I think sometimes, if we're honest, can be quite challenging to us because when we read it at face value, we think, well, it's not like that.

Jesus is asking us to see that the one we go to is powerful. He's able to give us all that we need, and He's good. And so we should, and we should want to come before Him.

But that the good He wants to give us is often actually so much more than we're asking for. So much more.

So that is the good that we receive. Now what I want to do is just look at verse 12. Now you may think it's a strange way, the way we've divided up the preaching, that we've included verse 12 here.

Verse 12 in many ways seems like a standalone. You could just take verse 12 on its own and preach on it. I want to just speak about this just for a little minute and then show how these two are tied very closely together.

[ 25 : 32 ] Verse 12, whatever you wish the others would do to you, do also to them. For this is the law and the prophets. The golden rule commonly known as.

And I want to think about this more briefly as we spoke about the good that we receive. I want you to think now about the good that we give. So this is the good that we give to other people.

What does Jesus encourage us to think about here? What does he want us to do? Well, he wants you to think for a minute. Wants you to think, you know, in my life, surrounded by all these people that I'm surrounded by, all my friends are actually all the people that I don't really like, all my neighbors, whoever it is.

What do I want them to do for me? How would I like them to be to me? What kind of treatment would I like to receive at their hands?

Now, because we're selfish, often the answer to that can go waywardly, if you like. And we can like all kinds of bad things sometimes.

[ 26 : 40 ] But what we're being challenged to think about here is that we are to be those who are self-sacrificial, practical and who give deeply spiritual love as we support and care for our neighbor, because ultimately that's how we really want them to treat us.

In the communities that we should live and work in, this is the way that God made people to interact and to coexist, to be those who give deliberately and proactively to the other, who are not selfish, but who are going out of their way to show love and concern.

So Jesus, in this golden rule, whatever you wish the others would do to you, do also to them. It does require a bit of thought, doesn't it? We start to think about, what does that mean?

What exactly is Jesus talking about here? Let me say just for a minute, I think this challenges two things. Challenges lots of things, but I'm going to say two.

I think it challenges the tendency that you may have, I may have, to only love people that we identify with. Is that a challenge for you?

[ 27 : 57 ] Is that something that you find difficult? You only really love or go out of your way to care for people that you identify with, or that you think of the same, or that you like, or have the same interests, whatever.

I read an interesting story this week. I read an article in the paper about Jesse Hughes. You maybe don't know Jesse Hughes. He's the front man of the band that we're playing in the Bataclan Theatre in Paris when the terrorist attack hit a little while ago when 90 some people were killed.

Now of course there was huge, and rightly so, there was huge public sympathy for him, for the band, for the people in the audience, and for the whole situation, the whole way that people identified with the Parisians and everything that went on there.

What was interesting and somewhat disquieting this week was that he was interviewed not that long ago because he went back to play in the Bataclan Theatre with his band.

He was interviewed, and it turns out that he actually holds some pretty strange views. He holds some views that a lot of people find incompatible with the way that they think.

[ 29 : 08 ] For example, and these aren't the most extreme cases, but he's somebody who's a member of the National Rifle Association, he believes that everybody should have the right to carry guns because that's the best way that we'd be able to defend ourselves.

He is a supporter of Donald Trump and a whole load of different things. Now the point of the report that I was reading is this.

The reporter was describing the way that the online reaction to his interview was so horrified and was so full of angst because people were saying, well, I didn't know he was like that.

I supported him. We were at one with him. He was a victim of this horrible terrorist atrocity, and there was a real sense of unity as we reached out to all the people in Paris and this guy in his band, but he's come out with these views, but they don't accord with who I am as a progressive Western liberal.

I find that very challenging. I don't know if I can support this guy anymore. But the writer simply concluded, for many internet liberals, the news that Jesse is not one of them has hit desperately hard.

[ 30 : 16 ] See, there's that tension that people have. Here's somebody who I really got behind and I supported for very good reasons, but now they've expressed views that I find personally repulsive.

I don't know if I can love that person. I don't even know if I can sympathize with that person anymore. But here's the question. How do you love the unlovely?

How do you do that? How do you identify with somebody who is not you and who, in fact, is very different from you? In fact, how do you identify with and lavish love on somebody who you actually find quite distasteful, that you have very different views with and who you maybe disapprove wholly in the way that they lived their lives?

How do you do that? You do that knowing, as a Christian, knowing that they are made in the image of God as you are.

See, that's the way that the gospel changes the way that we think about people. We don't think of them on this kind of flat level where we just look at everybody around us and we size each other up. I compare myself to you and you compare yourself to this person.

[ 31 : 27 ] And we sort of work out amongst ourselves a pecking order, who's worthy and who's not worthy. What kind of, what horrible system that is to exist in.

We remember that people are made in the image of God and they are those who need to be redeemed by God. And that is the starting point that we have. But we also remember this. We remember that we were loved while we were yet very unlovely.

You know, before there was any merit in us, before there was any goodness, any righteousness, any element that we had reached the mark that ticked the box that won the prize, if you like, in heaven, God reached out by sending his son in the likeness of a man.



And he died on the cross for you while you are still very unlovely. Now, it's remembering that over and over and over again and allowing that to produce the correct humility and awareness of the grace of God in you that allows you then to go and love the unlovely.

Because it stops you feeling superior. Stops you thinking, well, I'm better than other people. It stops you thinking, well, they're too bad to bother about and they're past redemption because I've decided.

[ 32 : 56 ] Because actually you come to see yourself in the true light of the Gospel and it illuminates the darkness of your own heart and it leads you in love to consider the other whose behavior may be reprehensible.

But who still is one that you can show love to and grace to and practical care to and who needs the Gospel ultimately.

So I think that challenges, all that to say, challenges the notion that we only love those with whom we identify. Now that is relevant in a church, isn't it? If the only people that you spend time with are Christians and if the people that you know that aren't Christians are folk that you'd really rather not associate with and so you just keep away from, well, I can understand that and there are good reasons that we do that sometimes.

But it does beg the question, at what point do we get to show the grace of God to others by loving them, by going out of our way to care for them.

Second thing I want to say that this challenges, it challenges the notion that what Jesus was saying was really just a kind of variation on the theme. Some people will say this, that what Jesus said, whatever you wish the others would do to you, do also to them.

[ 34 : 13 ] Well, that's found in ancient Judaism and it's found in Confucianism and all different kinds of religions. So Jesus is really just kind of riffing on a kind of religious theme, if you like.

But actually what Jesus is doing is so much more. Some of the ancient, so Confucius for example, wrote, don't do to others what you don't want them to do to you.

That's completely different to what Jesus has said. It's very like the kind of theme that we have running through our society at the moment that says, I'll pursue my course in life and I'll do what I'd like to do and that's okay as long as it doesn't hurt anybody else.

As long as I don't impinge on anybody else's enjoyment of life, then whatever I do is fine. But you see the problem with that is it's still so self-centered because it allows us to say, well, it's all really about me.

As long as I don't hurt anybody, I don't actually have to pay anybody else any attention. I can just do what I want to do. I can just follow my own path and do what I want to do. But Jesus is saying, well that's entirely passive.

[ 35 : 23 ] You could just drift through your life pleasing yourself, ignoring everybody. Jesus says, whatever you wish the others would do to you, you do that to them. Do it to them.

It's very active. It's very deliberate. It's very practical. Remember that we read from the parable of the Good Samaritan.

The most unlikely of match-ups, the Samaritan comes across this man with whom he would have nothing to do with ordinarily. This man is bleeding all over the place and possibly going to die.

So the Samaritan goes out of his way when others have walked on by and he doesn't just say, you're all right.

He takes in to where he can get healed and he pays for the healing and he promises that he'll come back and pay for it the more payment that is needed if there was any extra.

[ 36 : 17 ] You see the way that he goes out of his way to care for the one who he could have said, well that person's unlovely to me. Very practical, very caring love. So Jesus in this golden rule I think is challenging these two things.

The tendency to only love those with whom we identify and the notion that Jesus is just kind of saying the same thing as a lot of other different religious teachers.

This is a wonderful teaching that Jesus gives here. And the question though is how we're to do it. Here's another little quote. I think the way that we're encouraged to do this golden rule when we recognize that our hearts are often very selfish and we'd really rather just do our own thing.

And when people often feel like quite a big bother to us is to remember the verses 7 to 11 that we've just been looking at which essentially is the gospel.

Which essentially is the knowledge of the fact that we in all our humility and all our loneliness go to a wonderful great God who longs to hear from us because he longs to give us good things.

[ 37 : 29 ] The provisions that we need for our lives but ultimately life eternal in the Son Jesus Christ. He longs to do that for us. He loves to lavish his grace and his care.

When we were dead in our trespasses and sins he sent his son. He stooped down. He came to give us everything that we needed.

So as those who have been treated with such goodness how can we then be mean spirited? Selfish. Those who pass by on the other side of the road and say I haven't got time.

I don't like that person. It's too much of a bother. However that applies in your life whatever circumstance you find yourself in when there's somebody in need. Remember go back to the verses 7 to 11.

I read this quote the generous attitude of going out of your way to encourage the depressed to forgive those who've wronged you and to help the disadvantaged requires positive action often self-sacrificial action.

[ 38 : 34 ] And here's the thing it says you don't do that to fulfill some law. You do it if the love of the kingdom burns in your heart.

The love of the kingdom burns in your heart. This transformative understanding that we thought about a little bit this morning of those of you who are this morning of this completely mind blowing reality of the kingdom.

The reality of who God is and how he has made things and wants to make things. The kingdom of God is the standard by which we live our lives.

And it's what Jesus is teaching in his sermon. So ability to practice verse 12.

Whatever you wish that others would do to you do also to them for this is the law and the prophets ability to do that. Because on a clear minded vision of verses 7 to 11 in order to be able to go out of your way to love and to show mercy and to show grace.

[ 39 : 38 ] You need to know the love and the grace and the mercy that has been shown to you and you need to have that fresh in your heart. It's really hard isn't it when we're called to gospel things to be warm to others especially those who do we don't think deserve it.

So we're challenged in this passage we're challenged to give much. We're those who are able to give much because in the gospel and in the goodness of God we have received so much.

Let me just pray. Father we ask tonight that you'd apply your word. We ask that you'd forgive our sins that you would challenge us where at the point that we're at in our lives where we need challenge but we pray that you'd lift up our eyes and our hearts to see the magnitude of your love.

Help us in our prayer lives. Teach us about yourself so that we can come humbly and appropriately but knowing that you are so good.

And we ask tonight that you would help us to seek a renewed life every day to seek actively for you to be at work in our hearts.

[ 40 : 54 ] To change us to make us more like Christ. To help us to be able to deal with the material or daily problems that we face. So bless us we pray in Jesus name.

Amen.