

Dogs, Pigs, and Finding the Pearl

by Duane Troyer

This sermon delves into the importance of seeking God with a deep longing and desire, emphasizing the need for a genuine partnership and relationship with Him. It explores the concept of not casting pearls before swine, highlighting the significance of not sharing valuable spiritual truths with those who do not value or appreciate them. The message also touches on the idea of asking, seeking, and knocking in prayer, emphasizing the need for a sincere heart and alignment with God's will. Ultimately, the sermon underscores the fullness of Christ and the deep longing for a meaningful connection with God.

Scripture: Matthew 7:6, Luke 13:24, Colossians 2:9, 2 Peter 2:22

Topics: "Desire for God", "Spiritual Discernment"

Description

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Transcript

I greet everybody in Jesus name this morning. And glad to be here with you. Glad for this place to gather and a beautiful day to gather.

Yeah, I had a lot of thoughts about the opening two there. I appreciate it. I probably won't take time to expound much on it.

I can identify with things that I wish would go away in my life that I just continually struggle with. And then every now and then somebody will say something that makes me realize, oh, it's good for me. Something I wish, some quality I see in others that I wish I could attain better.

But, let's take another look at the Sermon on the Mount here today. For those of you who may be the first time here, we've spent the best portion of the last year going through what's called the Sermon on the Mount. What I believe and I think Jesus expressed is foundational to Christianity.

The hearing and doing these teachings is foundational to Christianity. As I was sitting back there watching Norman here, I was checking out this crack in the wall. And I can almost guarantee you that this is not a

wall problem, this is a foundation problem.

And that is all the cracking and crumbling and sagging that goes on in Christianity, in our personal lives, or in this thing called the Christian Church. I think it's pretty safe to say like always, almost always, there's a foundational problem here. Somewhere these teachings of Jesus that he gave here on the mountain are not being heard and done.

So anyway, I want to get into the next section. We're in Matthew 7. Why don't we stand up and we'll read this, Matthew 7, verses 6 to 11. Do not give what is holy to the dogs, and do not throw your pearls before swine, or they will trample them under their feet and turn and tear you to pieces.

Ask, and it will be given to you. Seek, and you will find. Knock, and it will be opened to you.

For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. Or what man is there among you who when his son asks for a loaf will give him a stone? Or if he asks him for a fish, he will not give him a snake, will he? 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 what is good to those who ask him? Let's pray. Our Father in heaven, we pray that you would be with us today, and thank you for gathering us all together.

And I pray, Lord, that you would give us understanding of these words that you gave us. Help us to draw out of them something that would draw us closer to you, and give us this heart that wants to seek and to ask, and that longs to be with you and one with you. And we ask that you would guide my thoughts, and that you would help us to look into this in light of all the treasures that you would like us to have.

We ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen. So, the first verse here that we're looking at is verse 6. Do not give what is holy to the dogs, and do not throw your pearls before swine, for they will trample them under their feet, turn and tear you to pieces.

What a strange teaching. Jesus is giving this illustration of perhaps a man with a bag with some really precious and valuable pearls in there. And he's going along, and here comes a pack of dogs, or a herd of pigs, you know, the big ugly kind that have the capability to tear human beings to pieces.

And he takes these pearls and he offers them to them, and after all, these are valuable, right? They're precious, they're pearls. But these beasts who value nothing except something to eat and to fill their bellies just take one bite out of these things and decide they're nothing to eat, and they're dissatisfied with what they've been offered, and they turn around and they turn on this man and they tear him to pieces and eat him. What a devastation.

These pearls are marred from being bitten on, they're trampled into the mud, and the man who possessed them at one time is tore up and dead. The pigs and the dogs are the winners. So, Jesus is implying here that the problem here was that these pearls were offered, these pearls that were valuable were offered to something that didn't value them.

So, what's going on here? What does this mean for us? Pretty certain Jesus is not just giving us some instructions on how to raise pigs and dogs, or how not to. So, we call this sermon the Sermon on the Mount, but Jesus didn't call it that. He called this sermon, or these teachings, he called them the good news of the kingdom.

In Matthew 4, that's what the scripture calls this teaching that Jesus is bringing. He is preaching the good news of the kingdom. It's good news, it's precious, and this precious promise has been long waited on.

For thousands of years, there's been this promise that there will come a king, he will deliver the people, he will rule forever, he'll sit on David's throne. The promise goes further back than David. It goes back to Moses, who said, yet one more prophet will come after me, and he will tell you God's word.

It goes further back than that. It goes to Abraham, who it was promised that in your seed, all nations will be blessed. And it even goes further back than that, all the way back to the Garden of Eden, where there was this deliverer promised, who would crush the serpent's head, and he would restore to humans what they had.

This relationship and this partnership that God had created when he made Adam and Eve, and put them there in the garden, and said, keep this, and dress it, and multiply it, and cover the earth with my goodness, that work was stopped. And there's a promise that someone would come and restore that again. And so this kingdom was highly anticipated.

The Psalms and the poetry and the Hebrew literature is full of this promise. They were familiar with the idea that they would be, promised that they would be rulers of creation. The Psalms and the prophet used terms like the kingdom of God, the Messiah, the proclamation of the good news.

And this kind of literature is drilled into every Hebrew boy and girl, and they are familiar with it. Every mother is longing to give birth to this promised one who would come. It's a highly, highly prized promise.

It was a pearl of great price. Jesus refers to this kingdom later. He refers to this kingdom as a pearl of great price.

In Matthew 13 he says, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant who is searching for pearls. And when he finds this one of really great price, he goes and he sells everything that he has, so that he has the means to go buy this one. So I think it's reasonable to think that what Jesus is saying here, when he's saying, don't cast your pearls before a swine, that he's saying, don't take the kingdom of God and give it to, but who are the pigs and the dogs? So, dogs and pigs are... the scriptures hardly ever have anything good to say about them.

They're these unclean animals. The dogs are these creatures that return to their own vomit and eat it again. And the pigs go, you know, wallowing in the mire.

You can clean them off and they go right back into the mud holes. They're not considered a good desirable animal. And so the people, the Jews, would refer to outsiders, those unclean people, as dogs and pigs.

The Gentiles, in numerous places the Gentiles were referred to as dogs. I don't know if this is in scripture, but I've heard that they considered the Romans in particular as pigs. And so, but Jesus here, he's breaking this kind of thinking down.

He's already been saying things like, you know those loving things you should do to your neighbors and your brother? You should greet your brother and those things? Everybody does that. But you, I want you to love your enemies. I want you to bless the people who curse you.

I want you to not only greet your brethren. And so Jesus is breaking this down and he's presenting this idea that those who are not fit for the kingdom of God are not identified by their nationality or their race or their class or their caste or whether they're a slave or a landowner or all these kind of things. And if the point isn't clear yet to the Jews, it's going to be clear as soon as he comes down off this mountain.

Because who's the first person? When Jesus comes down off the mountain, who's the first person that he extends this precious thing about the kingdom, the thing he came to do, this bringing healing and restoration to people? The first person he meets is a leper. It's an unclean leper. And he heals him.

And who's the second person he meets? It's a Roman centurion. And he heals his son that's at the point of death. Or maybe died.

I'm not sure. But anyway, it's becoming real clear to them that Jesus is thinking outside the box concerning who are the pigs and the dogs. But what Jesus is not saying is he's not saying that everyone, under any circumstances, is worthy of this pearl.

Or is ready for this pearl. We just got done, and we talked about this in the last message, Jesus just got done talking about judge not. That you be not judged.

And we talked about that Jesus, in saying that, Jesus is not saying we should throw out our moral compass and not have a discernment about what's right and wrong, what's good and evil. We also talked about how he's not talking about that we should not discriminate at all. And this teaching here makes that obvious.

He's saying that you should have a moral compass and that you should do some discernment here and you should evaluate some things. Not everyone values the kingdom of God. Not everyone considers this the good news of the kingdom.

Not everybody considers this is the precious promise. The dogs and the pigs here are people who don't value heavenly things. They do not value the things of the Spirit of God.

They are people like Esau, who lightly esteemed his birthright and he sold it for a bowl of soup. They're not ready for it. It doesn't mean that they might not get there, but they're not ready for it, and therefore, you are going to devalue, you're going to ruin this pearl and yourself by sharing this something that's super valuable with someone who sees no value in it.

That's one of the ways that we can devalue something because there's a disconnect between you and this other person. You found something and it's really precious to you and you're trying to persuade someone else and insist upon the preciousness of this and he just doesn't see it. And two things happen.

One is you're devaluing this thing that's so precious for you and the other thing is you're potentially turning this person further away from seeing the value of it. There's examples in the Old Testament of when this happened. Solomon, when he was king, God granted, gave him all this splendor and glory in the kingdom and what did he do? He brought in all kinds of people from all over the world and he shared and he showed this splendor to them and they did not value the God who gave these things.

And by and by, these strange women were his downfall and they rent his heart from God. Hezekiah, when he was king, he showed those messengers of Babylon his full house of treasures. He showed them all the silver and the gold and these valuable vessels, things that were holy, things that were sacred, things that

were of and about God, things that represented God.

He showed these to people who had no interest in this God. And Isaiah the prophet came and he said, this is what's going to happen. This same Babylon, who you shared these things with, is going to come in and they're going to take all these vessels and they're going to take them out of here and they're going to take them to Babylon and your kingdom is going to be destroyed.

This principle is seen in other teachings, like Proverbs 9, 7, where he says, He that reproved the scorner gets himself to shame. Jesus told his disciples that when you go out preaching and you take this gospel of the kingdom into all the world, once people have shown to you that they're not interested in it, shake the dust from your feet and go, move on. This same principle is applied when Jesus spoke in parables and he told these stories that the person who longed and desired for truth could get it out of it.

And the other people just heard a story. So practically, what does this mean for us? I've often heard this verse used in reference to not evangelizing, not taking the gospel to people that aren't coming to you or people that aren't asking about it. And though I think the principle can apply to some extent, I think we can and do sometimes waste our time and energy by trying to insist the good news upon someone that just scorns it and doesn't want it.

But some years ago I came to the conclusion that I don't think this is the main place where these kind of things happen because for one thing, Jesus said that we should take the gospel into all the world and we should preach it to all creatures. And not only that, they are not the ones who turn around and rend us. So I might try to... After all, isn't it... I mean, the Scriptures say that it's not the will of God that any man should perish but that all should come to the knowledge of truth.

I think it would be the will of God that every human being in the whole world would at one point or another have the gospel preached to him or presented to him. Now, if I go out and I present this or preach this to people and they mock me, they ridicule me, they say all kinds of bad things to me, that's not turning and rending me to pieces. The time when that really happens is when we bring people who do not value the kingdom of God and we bring them into the fold.

And we bring them in and we make them a part of us. We take people who are not really seeking this pearl of great price and we baptize them, we bring them into our love feasts and we make them a part of us and there's a disconnect between what they value and we value. Those are the people who will turn around and they will rend the body of Christ.

It was later, after I had come to those conclusions, that I found out that numerous early church writers wrote exactly that. The Didache says something along those lines when it's talking about communion and it says, let no one eat or drink of your Eucharist except those who have been baptized in the name of the Lord. For concerning this, the Lord has said, do not give that which is holy to the dogs.

Tertullian wrote about it, others wrote about that same thing. I do think it's a broad principle that is applicable in more areas than just that but I think those are some of the real ways that it happens, has happened and does happen to people today. So God follows this same principle with us.

He shares His treasures with those who see them as treasures. He sheds light to the person who wants light and He sheds more light to the person who appreciates light. He gives truth and more truth and more truth to the person who loves and desires truth.

He gives His kingdom to those who deeply desire it and value it. And that brings us to the next thing that He taught here. Ask and it will be given to you.

Seek and you will find. Knock and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives and he who seeks finds and to him who knocks it will be opened.

The treasures of God are for the desperate. They are for those who long for them. The truth is usually hid in plain sight.

It's visible to those who long for it and it's invisible to those who don't want it. God dwells in enough obscurity that we must seek to find Him and He dwells in enough light that if we seek we can find Him. You know, sometimes I play hide and seek with my little children and I'm never far away.

I'm always just around the corner and partly visible and easily findable and yet these little guys who can't see over everything, they really have to look for me. And something like that is the way God is. He needs to be sought after and yet He's very findable.

When Paul, we read in Acts, when Paul was preaching there on Mars Hill, he said he made mankind that he would seek God if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him though He is not far from each one of us. He made mankind to seek Him and that is one of the distinguishing marks between a man of God and a man of the world. The one seeks God and the other one doesn't.

I think perhaps, I don't know about all, but I think perhaps the huge majority of problems in a believer's life and even within the church is a lack of an intense desire to know God. And a lack of a deep longing to seek and to press into the things of God. We can set up all kinds of structures.

We can come up with programs. We can come up with accountability groups. We can come up with discipleship classes.

We can come up with all kinds of things like that. And if the heart to seek God is not there, they are all worthless. Notice how Jesus here first says, Ask and you will be given.

Seek and you will find and then He says, Knock and it will be opened to you. I tend to think there is like a progression here. If someone here told me of some great man somewhere who has a great estate and he is just a really great man and you really benefit from knowing this man and it would spark my interest.

First I would start asking questions. What is great about him? What does he do? Where does he live? And I would gain knowledge about this. And my next step would be to go seek him.

And I would go. I would seek. I would cross the mountains and through the rivers and I would go until I have sought and I have found his place.

And I would look at his estate and I would start gaining more than what I had heard when I just asked. I would start seeing and experiencing some of this greatness. But if I really want to know this man, what is my next step? I will be knocking on his door.

And I will be knocking and knocking until he himself opens the door and I get to know this man. Those are the people who God reveals himself to. And he enters a relationship with that person because that person and God have something in common.

And if I can drive any point home today, this is the point I would like to drive home, is that God does for us the thing that he is asking us to do for him. In Luke 15, there are these three parables of something that is lost and then a really diligent seeking after. There is the parable of the lost sheep.

And the shepherd, he leaves the 99 and he goes through the hills and the mountains and the wilderness and the gullies and the brush and he searches and searches until he finds this one lost sheep. And he brings it home and he calls his friends together and they all rejoice. And then there is the parable of the lost coin, about the woman who lost the coin.

And she lights a lamp and she sweeps the house and she cleans and cleans until she finds this lost coin. And then she calls all her friends together and they all rejoice about this thing that is lost. And the next parable is of the prodigal son.

And the son is gone. He is lost. He has left.

And the father is daily, he is watching out the way in which he went and he is looking for him to return. The reason I am convinced that the father was doing that constantly or regularly is because it says, once the son turned and started coming home, while he was a long way off, the father saw him. And he forgot everything else and he left everything else and he ran out to meet him and to be united with his son again.

These three parables are depicting the heart of the father. They are depicting the heart of the father. A father who so deeply longs for us.

He so deeply longs to know us and be united with us that he leaves everything for that. And that very same thing that he does, he wants us to do for him. And when we do, there is a connection.

There is a oneness. There is a knowing each other. We are of one heart and one will.

It produces a deep and meaningful love, faith, relationship. Not just a relationship based on feelings and emotions. Neither is it just a relationship based on knowledge and logic.

It is a relationship that the maker of heaven and earth and us come to know each other. And I think this is what Paul was preaching on Mars Hill. I think it's what Enoch had when it says that he walked with God.

I think it's what Abraham had when it says that he believed him. You know, in the book of Daniel, there are these couple times in the book of Daniel where the angel is communicating with Daniel. And in the Masoretic text, the angel says to Daniel, O man greatly beloved.

Or depending on what translation you read, it might say, O man highly esteemed. But do you know what the Septuagint says? It says, O man of great desires. Sorry, it says O man of desires.

It says O man of desires. And if I think of someone who would be called a man of desires, I would think it to be a man with deep longings, deep yearnings and searchings for something. That would be a man of desires.

And I think for that reason, he is rightly called a man greatly beloved or highly esteemed by God. We see this same thing when we read through the Song of Songs. There's this intense longing for each other.

Between the bride and the groom. You know, when one of them realizes that they're not quite sure where the other one is, especially when the bride realizes she's not quite sure where the groom is, it consumes

her thoughts. She goes and she searches and she asks the keepers in the city, Have you seen him? I need to know where he is.

Just a little snippet of this kind of heart there in the Song of Songs is in chapter 3, verses 1 to 4. It says, In the night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loves. I sought him, but did not find him. I called him, but he did not hear me.

I will rise now and go about the city and the marketplaces and the streets. I will seek him whom my soul loves. I sought him and did not find him.

The watchmen who do the rounds in the city found me and I said to them, Have you seen him whom my soul loves? If you get toward the end of this song, the groom says in chapter 8, verses 6-7, it says, Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm. For love is as strong as death, jealousy as cruel as Hades, her spark are sparks of fire, even the flames thereof. Much water will not be able to quench love, nor will rivers drown it.

If a man would give all his possessions for love, men would utterly despise them. Our desire, the desire within us to find and know our creator, should be so great that if someone would come and offer us everything in the world to buy it from us, we should utterly despise the offer. In Matthew 13, it says, The kingdom of heaven, in verse 44, The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and hid again.

And from joy over it, he goes and sells what he has and buys the field. And again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls. And upon finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had to buy it.

He's saying the kingdom of heaven is like this. Like a man who is walking out through the field, somewhere out through the field, and he came upon a treasure. And what did he do with it? He quickly went and hid it, and he went home and he sold everything he had so that he would have the means to go and buy that field and make a rightful claim to this treasure.

There was nothing that could stop him. He was willing to forsake everything for it. The same way with the man who found this pearl.

He found it, he went back home, he sold everything he had so that he would have the means to buy that. This kingdom of God, this kingdom of heaven that Jesus said, comes not without word observation, but is within us. It's a new creation, it's a new reign that begins at the heart of issues.

It's a place where we get to the root of things. It's a place where we must go beyond simple commands and simple do's and don'ts, beyond the words of paper and ink, in order to find it. And the Father knows this.

He knew it all along. The Psalms and the poetry are full of this expression, Let me see your face. Would you reveal yourself to me? Make your face shine upon us.

Let us hear you. People who long for God are expressing that, and have been all along. Philip did it to Jesus.

He said to Jesus, Show us the Father, and it'll be enough. Show us the Father, and it'll all be enough. And Jesus said, Philip, how long have I been with you? And you still don't know who I am.

If you have seen me, you have seen the Father. You know, Paul said in Colossians 2, He said, in Jesus dwells all the fullness of God in bodily form. All the fullness of the Godhead, all the fullness of deity, is dwelling in this one man, Jesus Christ.

He also says there, In him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. So, look nowhere else.

It's all found in him. If we look at the life of Jesus, at the words of Jesus, at the behavior of Jesus, at the mind of Jesus, we are looking into someone in whom is hid all wisdom and all knowledge. Everything that we would need or should need or should even get is hid there.

Now, the fact that it's hid means that it's probably not evident to the casual observer. It must be asked for. It must be searched for.

It must be knocked for. The Father gave us this treasure in a form that we can relate to, on a level that we can identify with. He did not keep these treasures, all these treasures of wisdom and knowledge, He did not keep them in some unperceivable form.

He didn't share these wisdom and truth in a way that they could not be digested by us. He gave them in the form of a human being. Someone that was right down here on our level.

God did what every reasonable father does. And that brings us to the next thing that Jesus said here in Matthew 7. He said, Or what man is there among you who when his son asks for a loaf, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, he will not give him a snake, will he? 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 what is good to those who ask him? Physically, I'm sure none of us would ever do this. If your son asks you for a piece of bread, you'd pick up a stone.

I do think that sometimes when our sons or our children ask us a question, our little children ask us a question, and we give them some highfalutin, lofty answer that is way above their level, it's kind of like giving them a stone. They can't digest it. They can't comprehend it.

And that's not what God did when he gave us Jesus. He gave us, when he gave us all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, he gave it to us on a very comprehensible, relatable, in a very relatable form, in the man Jesus Christ. And so that begging question that sits deep within us human beings, whether we've ever spoken it or not, show me God.

Show me my maker. God has heard that. And he sent his Son and he showed it to us.

He showed himself to us. And yet, the multitudes miss it. Even those who seek God pass over it and dismiss it.

In this passage we're reading today in Matthew, it says, Seek and you will find. But you know that Jesus also said, Many will seek and will not be able. In Luke he said, Strive to enter in through the narrow gate.

And then he says, For many will seek and will not be able. People have their assumptions, they have their expectations of how God is, of where he is, of what he is, and they look for him, but they look amiss. And

they ask for him, but they ask amiss.

It happened when Jesus was here. When he was 12 years old, he went missing. And what was the people's immediate assumption? They assumed that he was with their kinsfolk.

They assumed he was among them. And this is a common problem that people make. They think, Oh, my kinsmen and my people are good people and God is among us.

And they just assume that. But when they went to seeking for him, they found out he's not there at all. He's not there at all.

Another time that people sought for Jesus and didn't find him where they thought they'd find him, is after he had died. And Mary, Magdalene, maybe, and the other Mary, or a couple women, went to the grave. And they were going to find Jesus there.

And they were going to put some ointments or something on him. And they looked in there and he was not there. And some angels were there in dazzling clothes.

And they said, What seek you? And they said, We're looking for Jesus. And they said, Why do you seek the living one among the dead? This is another common problem. When people are looking for the living one, they are looking for Christ.

They are looking for God among dead religions, among dead structures, with dead faith that has no works, or with dead works that have no faith. They look for it among dead saints, and dead covenants, and all kinds of death. And I think what God is saying, or would want to say to us, is why seek you the living among the dead? He's not there.

There was once a band of people who did come seeking for Jesus, and they did find him. It was in the Garden of Gethsemane. And it was a band of officers and soldiers, and they had spears and staves and lanterns and torches, and I think they were expecting a really big deal.

And when they came and Jesus said, Whom seek ye? They said, Jesus of Nazareth. And Jesus said, I am he. And they all fell backwards.

They were blown away. They were taken aback. I think they were taken aback at the simplicity, at the meekness, at the harmlessness of this man who they came out as a band of soldiers to capture.

And so it goes with many seekers. Paul warned about this in Corinthians, that he was concerned that these people would be beguiled, and be carried away from the simplicity that is in Christ. When Jesus said, He that seeks to save his life will lose it, and he that loses his life for my sake will find it.

In that little kernel of wisdom is the answer to finding God and to knowing our Maker. You know, Jesus said, Ask, and it will be given. When Jesus is promoting a partnership, he's promoting a relationship, and he's inviting us into this partnership.

It's what he had intended in the beginning when he made Adam and Eve in the garden as rulers over his kingdom. To partner with him, and to spread this goodness of God over the whole earth. And today's teaching here, he's wanting us to ask him for what we need.

Now, we might ask, like, why? Because he's told us already in this same sermon, he's told us that he already knows what we need before we ask. It would totally make rational sense to us if Jesus would say, God already knows what you need before you ask, so don't bother asking. But that's not what he says.

Rather, he says something like, God already knows what you need before you ask, therefore, ask. What's that about? It's because he wants this partnership. He wants this relationship.

He's wanting our will to become his will. He's wanting those two wills to become one. When those wills are in conflict, he wants to communicate until they are together.

In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus asked God to remove this cup. Did the Father do it? Was it as simple as ask what you will, and it'll be given to you? Jesus himself was asking for something, and it was not being granted to him. Jesus asked multiple times.

Until his will was surrendered, and he said, but, not my will, but your will be done. Until he came to that point where he was ready and willing to lose his life for the will of the Father. And therein was the secret.

It was at that moment that he had angelic support. It was at that moment that he had support from heaven's angels. From there on out, he could endure the cross.

He could look at his friends and say, don't weep for me, weep for yourself. He seemed to be more concerned that his mother would be taken care of than what would happen with himself. He had totally lost his life.

There's a number of places in the scriptures where it says, ask what you will and it'll be done. Or something kind of like that, that kind of sentiment. These are not just name it and claim it, a promise for a name it and claim it type of request.

Almost always, there's a condition. What happened here with Jesus in the garden is a perfect example of that. There were two wills there that were a bit in conflict with each other.

Only when those two wills became one was granted what needs to be granted and the Father's will could be accomplished. I went through some of these places throughout the Old and the New Testament where this kind of sentiment is presented of ask and it'll be given to you. And I took the conditions in the surrounding passage and I put them together.

If you would all put them together it would read something like, and I probably missed a bunch, but it would read something like this. Ask what you will and if you fear God and are humble and you call upon Him in truth and keep His commandments and if you ask in faith with all your heart if you're abiding in Him and you ask while He is near in Jesus' name and according to His will it'll be granted to you. I want to close here.

As I was putting these thoughts together and thinking about these things I was reminded of a German song that we sang pretty often. It starts in *Wo ist Jesus mein Verlangen?* Where is Jesus my desire or my longing? And he goes, the first several verses you read this intense desire that he has. The writer talks like *I will call with Angst und Schmerzen I will call with Anxiety and pain Where is He? There's no rest in my heart until I have Him.*

And he goes on to say Oh, if I just had the wings of a dove that I could fly over the mountains and over the hills until I find Him. And then later in one of the later verses it says something like he finds Him and he says something like I will no longer search for anything else because He found my soul. And I just think that that's how much this this partnership and relationship goes together is that I think we could rightly say that we seek for God and He finds us.

And that connection between God and man can be restored. What was lost at the Garden of Eden by the Adam that sought his own will was restored in the Garden of Gethsemane by the Adam that sought only the will of God. May the Lord add His blessing.

And open it up for comments or corrections. Thank you, Duane. I had a couple of thoughts.

One was the last thing or one of the last things you shared there God God finds those that seek for Him. That was a good one. It made me think of one of the one of the laws in the Old Testament something to do with like if somebody's this sin involving two people if if one person can be a fig could possibly be a victim if that person if that person cries out then they're without guilt but if they if they quietly go along then they're guilty.

It just made me think of God seeking Him is just like when you said it I immediately thought of a lost sheep like how trying to find the shepherd like how futile but they but they cry out at least and then the shepherd the shepherd does the rest but if the sheep is silent like what can the shepherd do? And then I thought of oh when you said I wish I could remember exactly how you said it that God is looking to have a relationship with people who did you say He shares something with or He has in common people that have something in common with Him and I immediately thought of the one that says that we would have fellowship in His in His suffering and I just thought those who are those who are willing to suffer you could say for truth or for the benefit of others I thought it went along with what what you're sharing about those willing to seek after this precious thing I think one of the precious things it's in the two commandments one of the precious things is a right relationship with Him and then the other precious thing is those is others wanting to help them be a help to them being willing willing to suffer that you'd be a help to others I mean that's Christ's example to us and that's what God has done for us and He's He wants to He can we can have fellowship with Him if we're if that would be our heart as well Thank you Brother DeWayne I just wanted to address this passage Luke 13 verse 24 Sometimes the distinction I'm about to say would make no matter to people that don't concern themselves with this false teaching of the inability of man as Martin Luther taught kind of a semi-gnostic sort of thing it's not so important but the way that it's translated King James well this is the New King James Strive to enter through the narrow gate for many I say to you will seek to enter and will not be able sort of draw attention there's two different words in Greek the typical word that has to do with somebody not being able would be Dunamai that's not what this that's what not what this word is it's Iskul which is a root that has to do with strength so somebody not having not being strong enough or not having enough strength and that's that's probably a better rendering of this and like I said if you don't concern yourself with this you're totally on board with free will you don't even engage in apologetics with people that would say oh no man lost his his ability to exercise free will in the garden and all that kind of stuff then passages that uphold that false teaching like this the way it's translated then it then it makes it doesn't matter if you're not involved in that kind of idea and you're totally focused on free will and but if you do have either those conversations or you wonder like well do we have totally free will or you know did we lose the ability or those kinds then passages like this rendered like this is a problem and so I just want to point that out it's a better rendering would be is that some will not be strong enough and it goes back to the basic teaching of Paul he's always talking about walking with the flesh

because you know you're not strong enough because you have these desires for the flesh or whatever versus walking with the spirit where like brother Buddy pointed out you know suffering to do what is good and to walk according to the spirit um so that's that's that's kinda really I think pretty clear what Jesus is talking about somebody not being strong enough they will seek will not be strong enough to enter through the narrow gate so not strong enough to crucify the flesh and etcetera so exercise temperance self control so anyway yeah I just wanted to say Amen and and appreciate um everything you shared there and just especially want to say amen just past year explaining about the passage about not casting pearls before the swine I think just sometimes the way those things go is you you wonder about like what does this really mean like how does it apply what should we do and then and then when it happens you know then you're like oh that's what this means and then it then it becomes plain it's no longer a hypothetical yeah I appreciate it the opening and the main message other things to think about and I just appreciate the things we were brought out concerning thorns in the flesh I I like to think of it and in the way he brought it out to more like you know spiritual problems that we might have personally and I would confess to that for sure that thorns in the flesh that want to stick around are oftentimes way more devastating if you you know if they're spiritual than just fleshly fleshly pains or something that Paul Paul didn't sweat about those things see they were they were part of his life he he was willing to face them and would seem like a small thing for him to be asking God to remove this so I would think to you with something something perhaps deeper that had more to do with salvation more to do with with the well-being of his soul than something physical but that again it's just one of my little ideas about it and yeah then just the the beauty of the fullness of Christ is something that just keeps keeping pretty precious for me and and it's pretty pretty much all over the scriptures the Apostle Paul really was hitting that good in Colossians 2 you know in Christ we find the fullness of the of the body of the Godhead bodily in a human form we find the fullness of Christ of Christ in other places too it's just obvious how Jesus said he didn't come to destroy the law but but he himself was going to be the one that that would fill it to the brink he would make it full and yeah for every generation we can we need to go to him we need to find find him as the thing that would fill ourselves fool anyhow that's some of my thoughts god bless y'all one quick thing to add what you said Atlee is you know Revelation remember when it says the tabernacle of God is with men and like and it says that in Christ dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily and I just think like the tabernacle like is with us you know Christ like when we're in Christ and I just think yeah I just want more of a life that's like just full of God being being at the fellowship meal Thursday kind of stayed stayed a little late and just just really appreciate this just want want to like talk with brothers and sisters about God and just just like embrace the Lord and and just have a life that you should start diminishing the diminishing the the earthly things and and just like be full of love and compassion you know and just just seek God with the whole heart just just that relationship is really meaningful I just think like what is what is life about you know what's what's the purpose of life and you know just want to go and like go to a stream and just like fill the water you know on your feet or something yeah just God bless you guys yeah my thoughts are very similar I appreciate what brother Dwayne pointed out there at the beginning I guess I'd never made the connection before he didn't dwell on it much but I'll kind of come back around full circle draw attention to it again so Jesus says talks about dogs and talks about pigs and the only other place that I can think of in the scriptures that mentions that is what Dwayne pointed out which I'd never made the connection was 2nd Peter chapter 2 verse 22 so Jesus says do not give what is holy to the dog nor cast your pearls before swine Peter says what it has happened to them according the true proverb a dog returns to his own vomit and a sow you know female pig right having washed to her has returned to her wallowing in the mire or in the mud so that's that's interesting Jesus says lest or else lest they trample them under their feet and tear you in turn and tear you to pieces so yeah similar similar thoughts here

yeah years ago or doing some street preaching when I would be out there a lot of times just reading scripture just reading the passages that talk about warnings about behaving like this this this all these you know whether it's Galatians 5:19 or whatever Colossians 3 Ephesians 5 different passages and I remember a few times at least a few times some men coming up to me and being very angry and and threatening that they were going to hit me in some way or whatever choice of words they use but but yeah they were going to use violence and I think it's very similar to some accounts in the book of Acts that you see the Apostles they're preaching most of the time it was to the Jews but they're preaching to people telling them to repent and then when all of a sudden they had this kind of problem they would then shake the dust in their feet stop the preaching and and then go somewhere else or some cases actually getting stoned right there or whatever and I know Dwayne kind of had a little bit of a different thought more of it being which I'd never thought about before and I think it's interesting about you basically bringing those that aren't really regenerated in the heart they're not really repentant but hey they want to join this this church thing you got going on because it's I mean hey they got a family and that'd be a good thing for their family or whatever who knows whatever the scenario might be but they're not really wanting to turn from that stuff and so they come in and pollute the church and it seems like that was kind of what I was understanding Dwayne was saying but a different perspective would be kind of like what Micah was saying and then similar to my experience is is that you're trying to reason with somebody that's irrational and not reasonable and they're actually threatening you that kind of like the proverb and I'm trying to remember exactly how the proverb reads but it basically talks about how you shouldn't try to reason with a fool lest you also become a fool with them sharing their folly something like that and so similarly when you're when you're preaching you're passing you're casting pearls you know with the Word of God to people I've had like I said these situations where people are getting really angry about you calling them to repentance and then of course you know the words which are the words from God are piercing their heart of their conscience and they're feeling guilty and they don't like this feeling and they're getting angry as a result rather than getting humble and repent and then they're they're threatening you that lest they turn and tear you to pieces I think kind of fits that so there's a little thought there I think it was similar what Michael was saying with his neighbor seems like Oh Oh Oh

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/fl5juOHDgk4.mp4>

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