

Sovereign Grace Church
“The Power of Asking” outline
October 21, 2018

Matthew 7: 7-12

This morning we will continue our consideration of the passage which prohibits our judging others, in the sense of condemning them. We have discerned the difference between judging as condemnation and judging as discernment. One must be able to discern when it is that our recognition of the sin has morphed into a condemnation of the one who has sinned. We also considered that even our willingness to provide help to our faltering neighbor may not be regarded as help. When we provide solutions to those who don't think they have a problem...or perhaps think that they have a different problem than the one for which our solution was intended.....our solution, if pushed, may be regarded as a condemnation! So we must use wise discretion in our efforts to help and not just push ahead because we see something amiss.

But what is the positive response to helping our faltering friends and brethren? If we are not to judge them or force our help upon them...what ARE we to do. The last section in 7: 1-12 provides us with the answer. This passage is often restricted to our requesting things from God in prayer. This is certainly included but the immediate focus is on our relations to other human beings. The solution seems to be not to condemn, not to push, but to simply ask! We will consider this notion during this morning's message.

1. The World in which We Live II Cor. 4: 3-4

- **Our kingdoms are naturally tied to Satan's kingdom Eph. 2:1**

- **Our Power in this kingdom Lk 22: 24**

- **We are to follow Jesus while still residing in Satan's kingdom Jn 18: 36; 20: 19**

**2. Resolving things according to the World/Flesh 7: 1-6
Jn. 8: 11; Matt. 15: 8**

3. Resolving things according to the Spirit/Christ 7: 7-8

- **Asking vs. Demanding**

- **The Power of Asking**
 - **Asking as it relates to Receiving Jms 4:2; Jer. 29:13**
 - **When we don't get what we Want 7: 9-10**
- 4. The Summary Virtue v. 12**
- **Positive vs. Negative**
 - **Guidance in our “asking”**
 - **Virtue-based ethics**
 - **Substance of the Law Matt 22: 37-40; Rom. 13: 8,10**

Questions for Conversation and Reflection

- 1. What tends to be your normal response to someone you believe is involved in a sin? Does the particular sin make a difference? Does it make a difference if the sin is something you have no problem with vs. a sin with which you also struggle? How do you tend to look at them as a person? Do you identify the person with the sin? Do you find yourself condemning them or pushing them in a direction you think may help? What has been the result?**
- 2. What tends to be your normal response to someone who is judging you.....or is seeking to “help” you when you don't think you need any help? How does Jesus understand both judging and being judged in His kingdom? Which is harder for you: not judging other people or not taking offense when you find yourself judged by them?**
- 3. Have you ever simply “asked” someone to change their behavior or whether they would like help in overcoming a problem? What was the result? Have you ever been asked to change your behavior or some circumstance under your control? Did you? How do you explain the power of simple asking? Do you find it comfortable eating a sandwich in front of your dog? What was your response? Did you take your sandwich and leave? Or did you give him some of your sandwich? If you did, did you throw it far enough away so that you could finish it before he got back? Or have you developed the power to say “no” in his presence without feeling guilty about it?!**