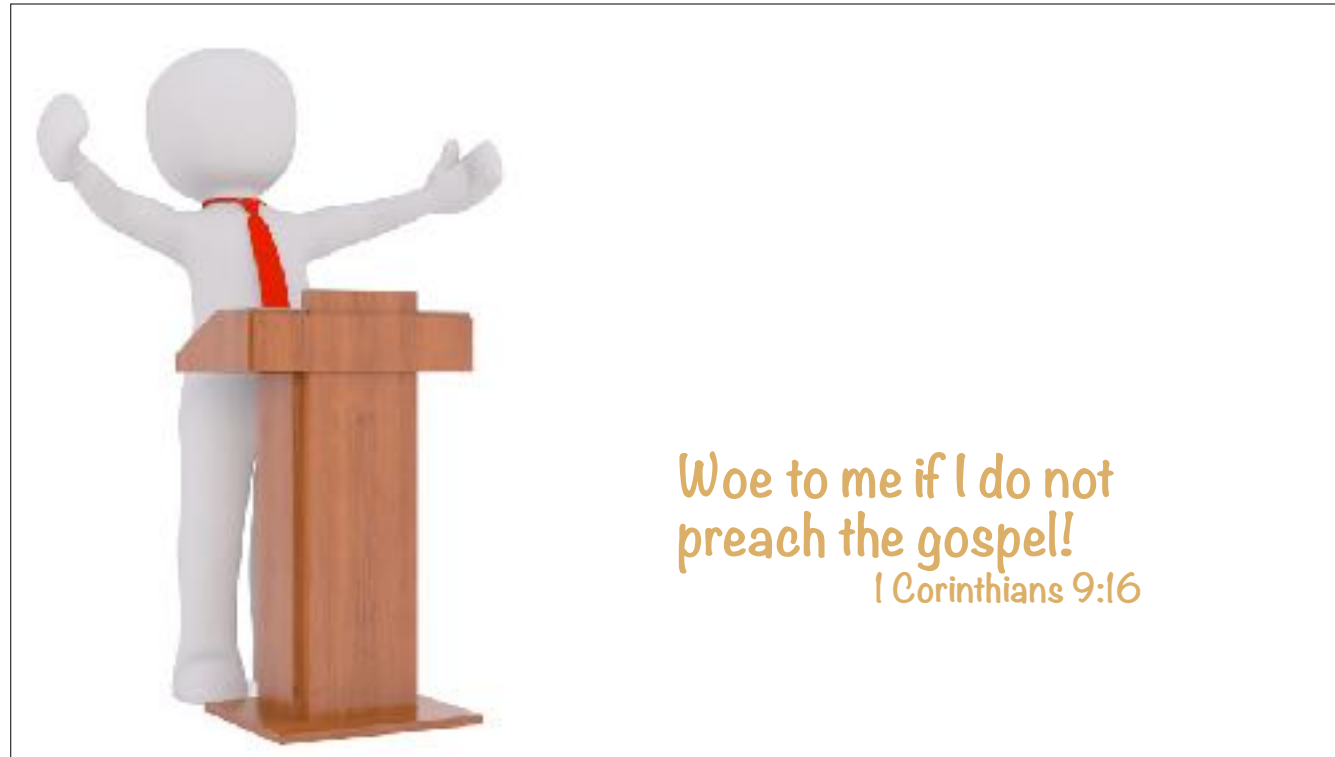


Good Gifts

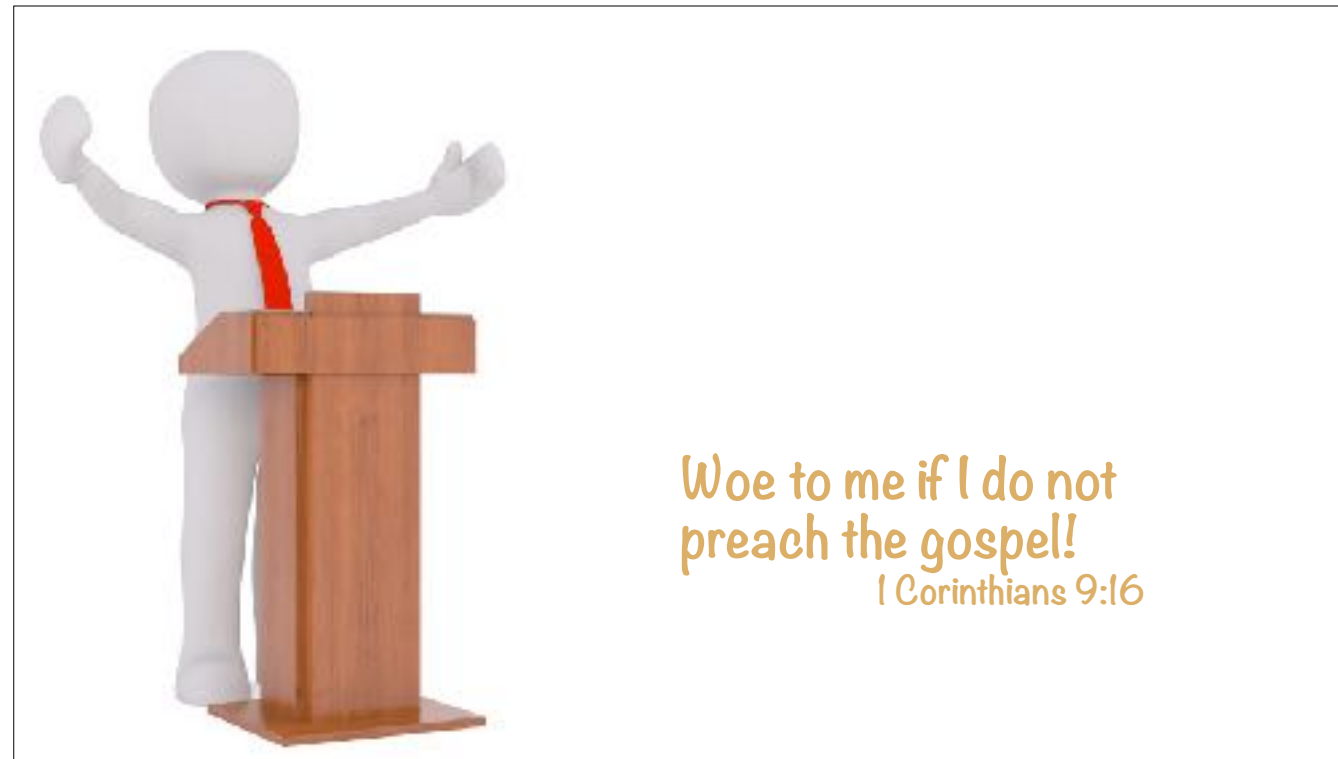


Matthew 7:7-11

- Apostle Paul... 1 Corinthians 9:16



- Paul was on a mission.
 - Really!
 - Chosen and prepared by God from birth to teach the Gentiles
 - Acts 26:16 (ESV) But rise and stand upon your feet, for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you as a servant and witness to the things in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you,
 - 1 Corinthians 9:16 (ESV) For if I preach the gospel, that gives me no ground for boasting. For necessity is laid upon me. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!



- 1 Corinthians 9:16 (ESV) For if I preach the gospel, that gives me no ground for boasting. For necessity is laid upon me. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!



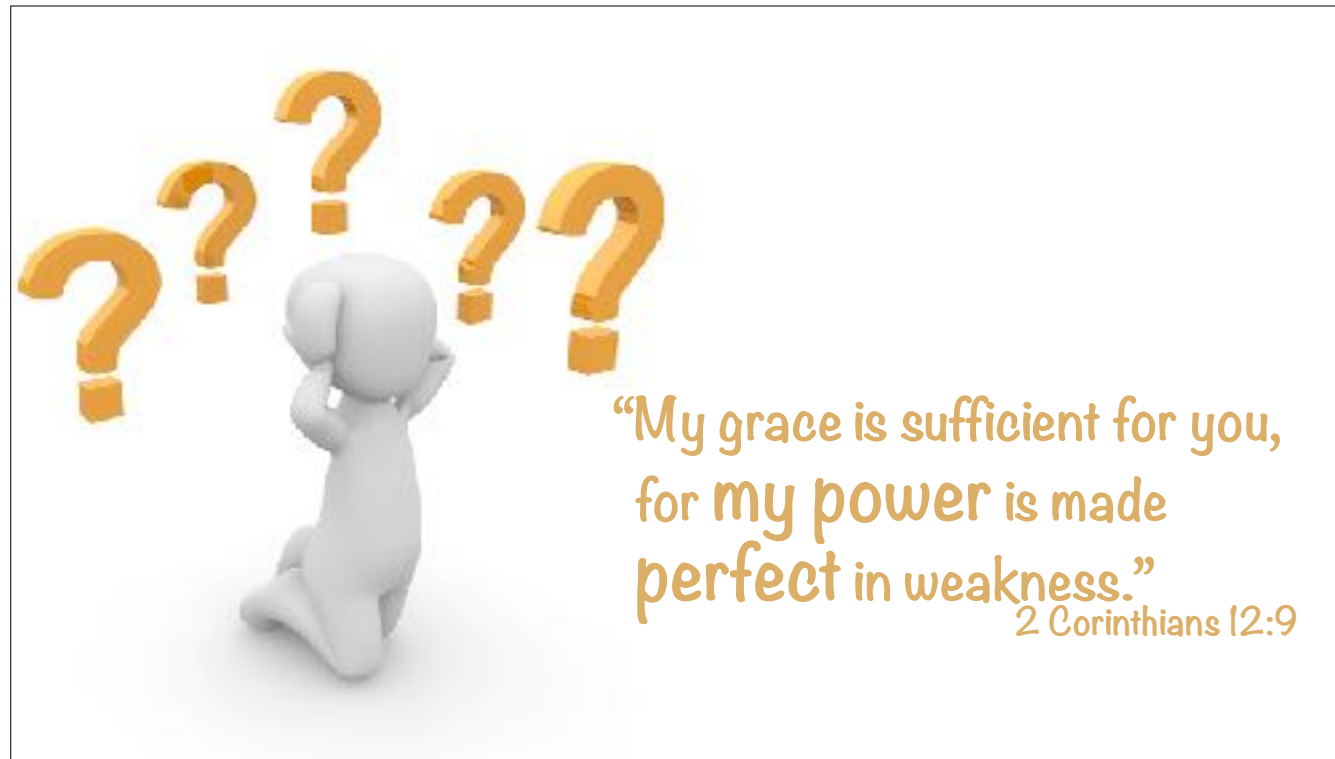
- 2 Corinthians 12:7 (ESV) So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited.
- Imagine being so driven to preach the gospel, but there is this difficulty; this hindrance that makes it much more difficult.
- What would you do?



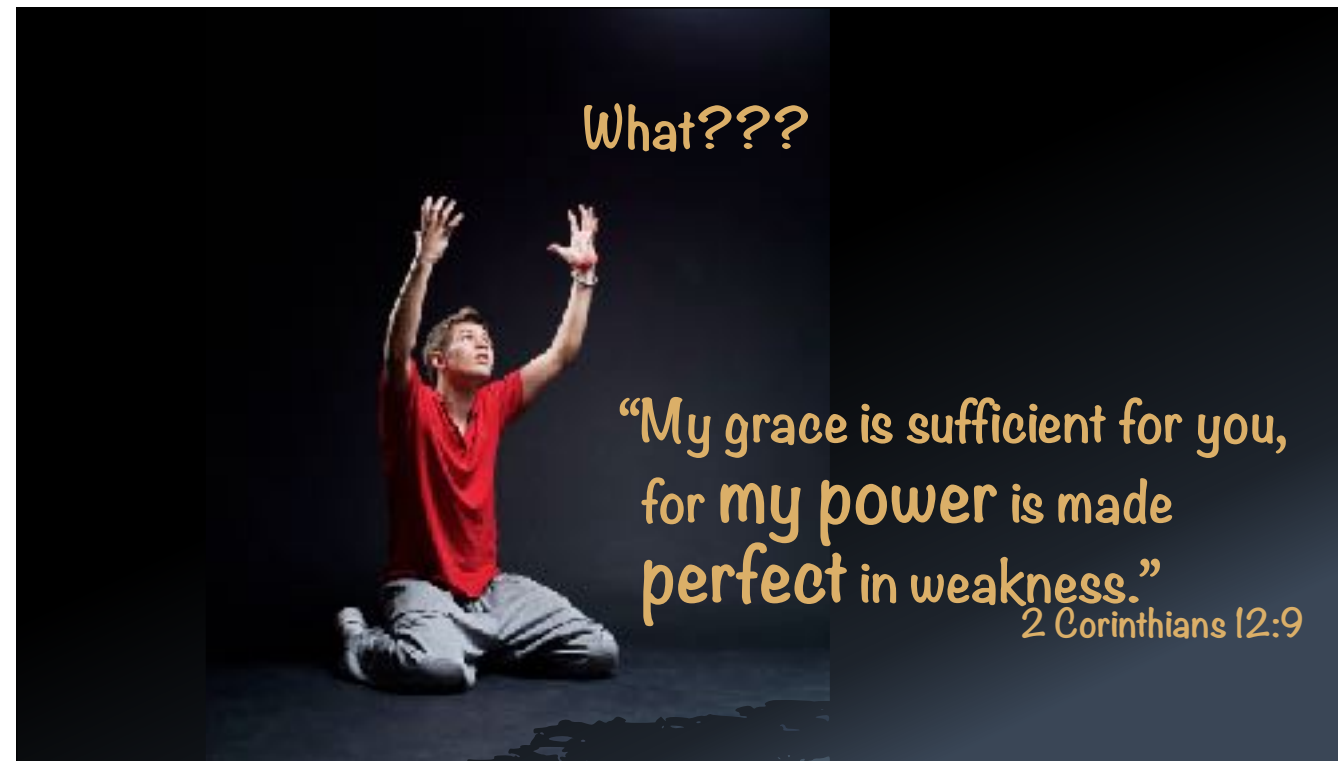
Three times I pleaded with the
Lord about this, that it should
leave me.

2 Corinthians 12:8

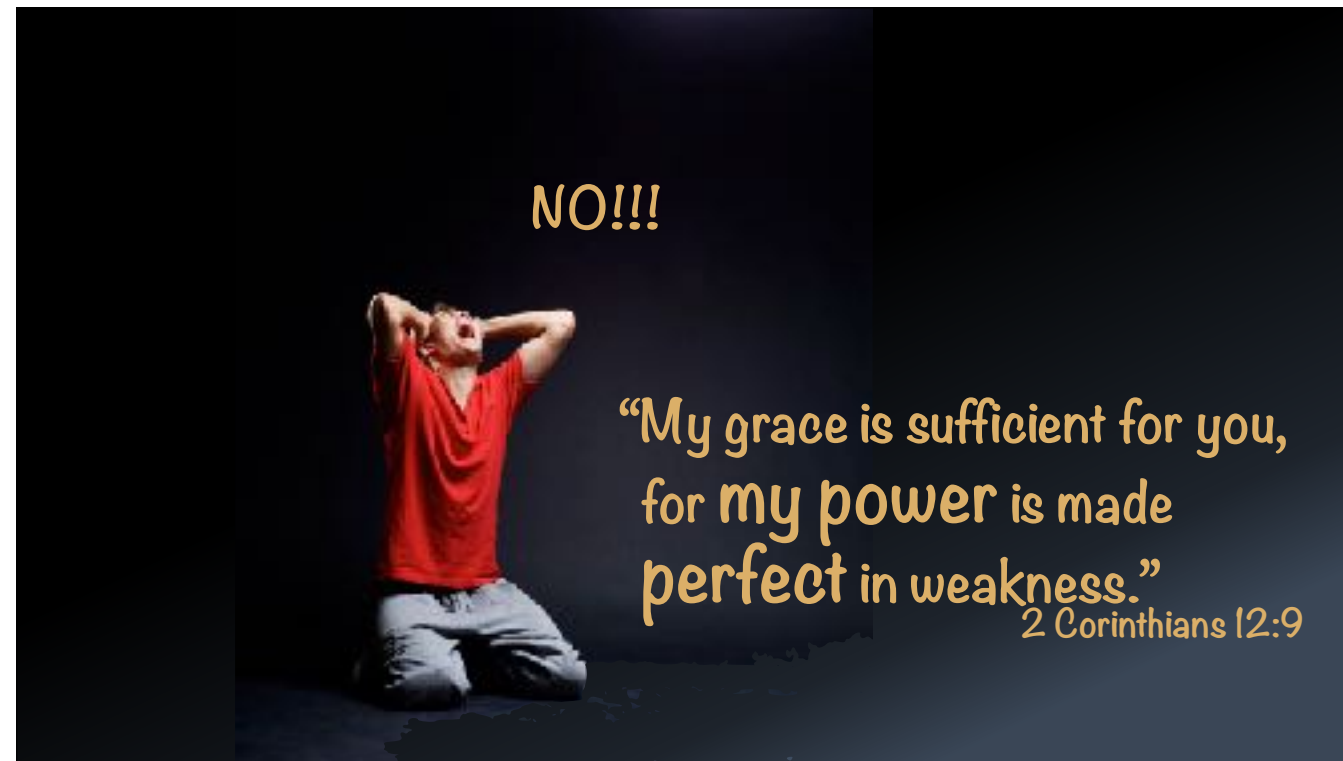
- 2 Corinthians 12:8 (ESV) Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me.
- Pray, Pray, Pray.... PLEAD
- How much more could I do if it weren't for this thorn?



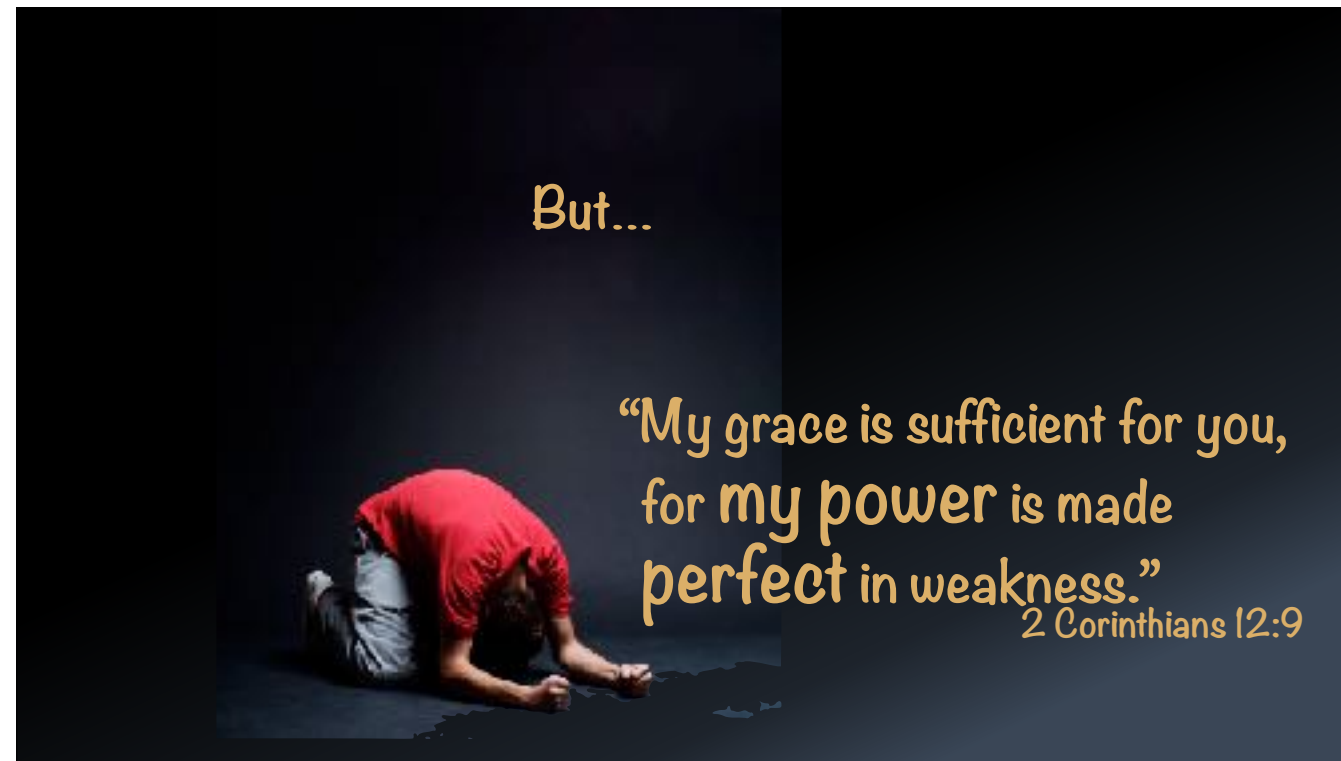
- 2 Corinthians 12:9 (ESV) But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.



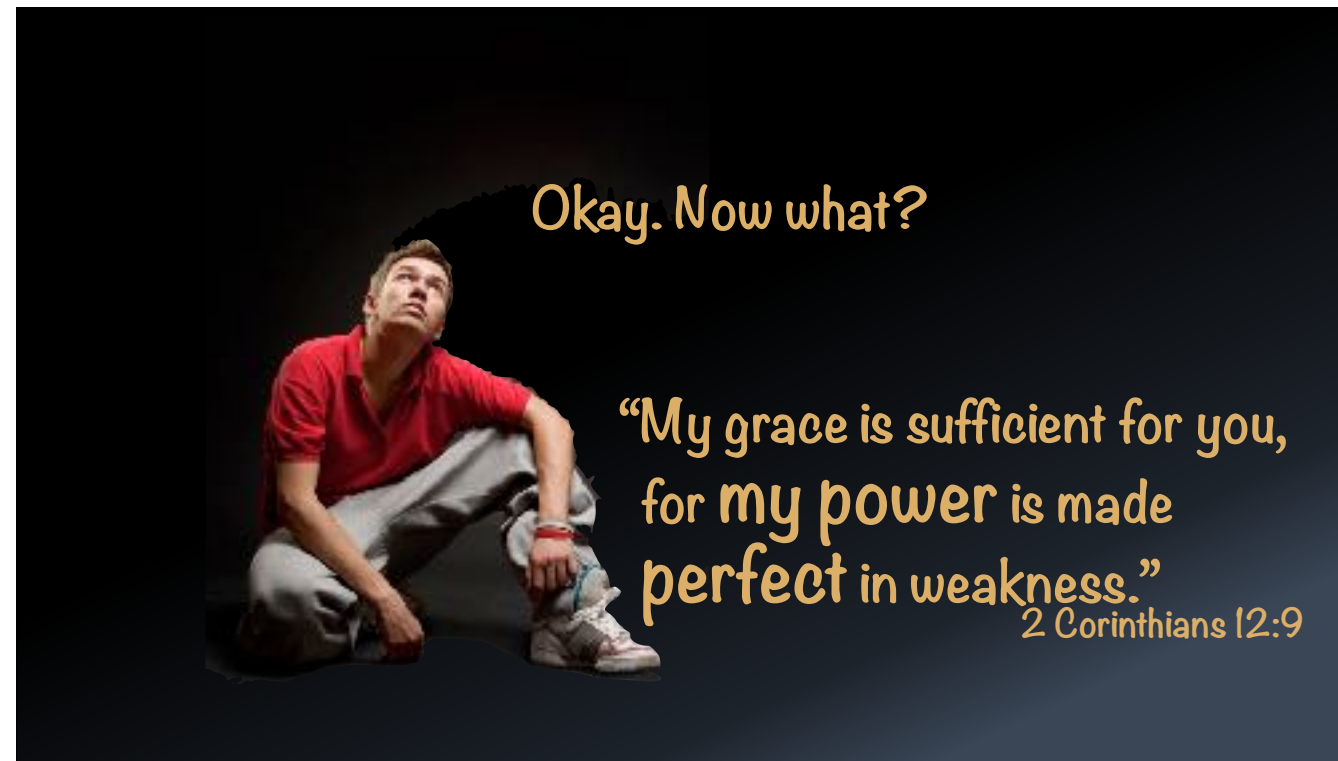
- What?
 - That doesn't even make sense to me?
 - What am I supposed to do with that?



- NO!!!
 - Why not?
 - What am I supposed to do now?



- But...
 - Please!
 - Think of how much more I could do.
- These are all normal reactions to not getting what we ask for in when we pray.
- Perhaps, one reason we struggle is because we sometimes fail to think about God correctly?



- Okay. Now what?
 - not just resigned to what my Father has done.
 - Acceptance
 - What my father has done for me is the best thing for me.
 - This is a good gift!

Therefore I will boast all the
more gladly of my weaknesses,
so that the power of Christ
may rest upon me.

2 Corinthians 12:9



- 2 Corinthians 12:9 (ESV) But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

For the sake of Christ, then, I am
content with weaknesses, insults,
hardships, persecutions, and calamities.
For when I am weak, then I am strong.
2 Corinthians 12:10



- 2 Corinthians 12:10 (ESV) For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.
- I am content ... when I am weak, then I am strong.

For the sake of Christ, then, I am
content with weaknesses, insults,
hardships, persecutions, and calamities.
For when I am weak, then I am strong.
2 Corinthians 12:10



- How could Paul think this way?
 - It has to do with how he thought of God, his father.
 - He set aside what he thought was best.
 - He submitted himself to a Father who he was convinced love him and ALWAYS does what is best for us
 - Especially when it's contrary to what I think
 - Especially when it's not obvious to me.

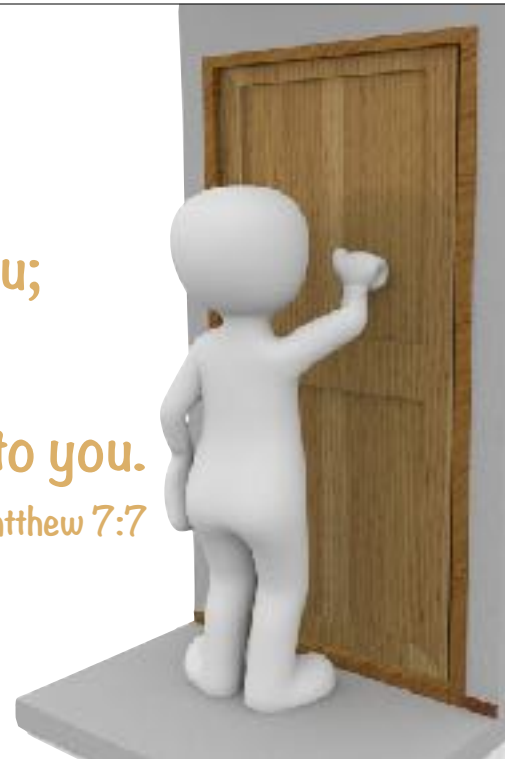
For the sake of Christ, then, I am
content with weaknesses, insults,
hardships, persecutions, and calamities.
For when I am weak, then I am strong.
2 Corinthians 12:10



- This is a great lesson for us!
 - The thorn is a gift. A good gift.

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

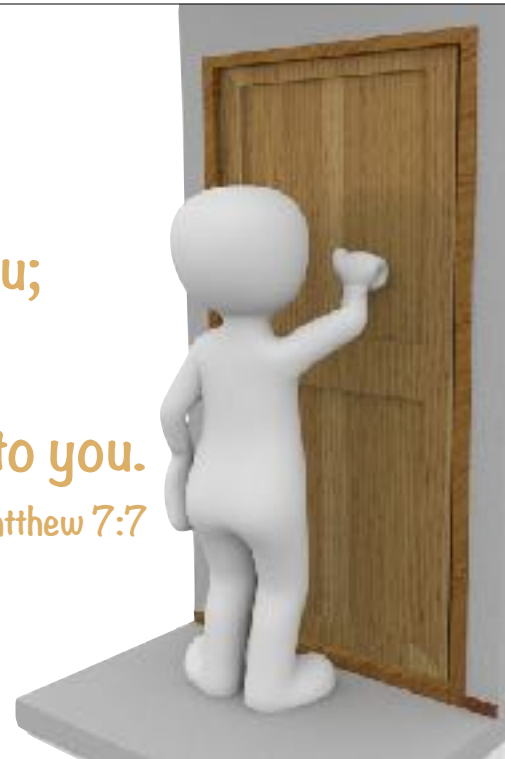
Matthew 7:7



- Matthew 7:7-11 (ESV) 7 “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. 9 Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? 10 Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? 11 If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!

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

Matthew 7:7



- Wonderful promises from Jesus.
- Why do we need these reassurances? encouragement?
- In part, this has to do with how we think about our Heavenly Father and WHY I am to practice righteousness (the root of my reasons)

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

Matthew 7:7



- Do I think of my Father as Hard God?
 - Angry, vengeful God; hard to please, quick to wrath
 - He's more concerned about His own honor and glory than us
 - He's all about laws and perfect obedience
 - He cares more about actions than attitude, motivation, or character
 - salvation is always in the balance
 - He's stingy and scary.

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

Matthew 7:7



- My righteousness is always about DOING just the right things so that God will accept me.
- Easy to see this if we want to
 - Adam and Eve eat fruit and are banished from Garden
 - Moses strikes rock and cannot enter promised land
 - Nadab and Abihu offer wrong fire (!) and are struck dead.

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

Matthew 7:7



If the righteous is
scarcely saved

1 Peter 4:18

- 1 Peter 4:17-18 (ESV) 17 For it is time for judgment to begin at the household of God; and if it begins with us, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God? 18 And “**If the righteous is scarcely saved**, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?”

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

Matthew 7:7



If the righteous is
scarcely saved

1 Peter 4:18

- I live in constant fear that I may not be saved.
- I make sure that I do what must be done down to the smallest detail (at least of what's emphasized by my group)
 - Tithe mint, dill and cumin (measurable, clear ways of checking my "righteousness")
 - Leave undone: justice, mercy and faithfulness (how do I measure these? Good Samaritan)

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

Matthew 7:7



If the righteous is
scarcely saved

1 Peter 4:18

- It's all about compliance!
- Stereotypical of the Scribes and Pharisees
- What does that mean about how I practice righteousness?

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

Matthew 7:7



- Do I think of God as a magic genie... only here to fulfill my most capricious whims.
 - An indulgent God, who doesn't really care about what I do, what is right or wrong.
 - A "loving" God that approves of me no matter what I do.

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

Matthew 7:7



- We are never given by our God a “blank check” in our prayers
 - James 4:3: You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.
 - He’s just waiting to snap his fingers and grant any request I make to him.
 - “Name it and claim it”; health and wealth
 - No promises to remove all difficulties
- Very popular today

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

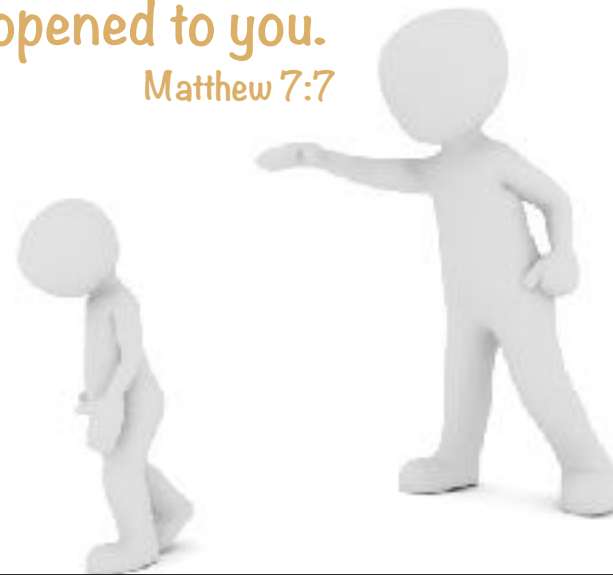
Matthew 7:7



- Do I think of my Father as a Gracious God, Loving and merciful?
 - My father is more concerned about faith, trust and character than in occasional sins.
 - Easy to see, too.
 - Abraham... liar: justified by faith
 - David... adultery, murder, disobedience: man after God's heart

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

Matthew 7:7



- But he's not all sunshine and rainbows
 - Loves —> Disciplines!

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

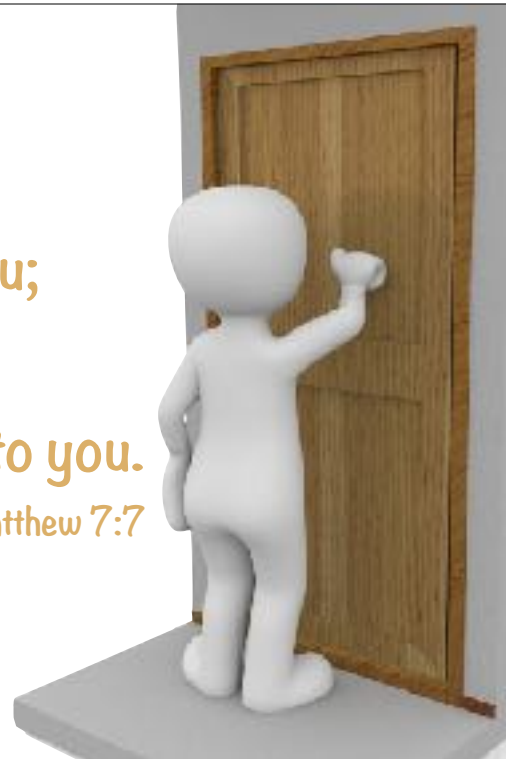
Matthew 7:7



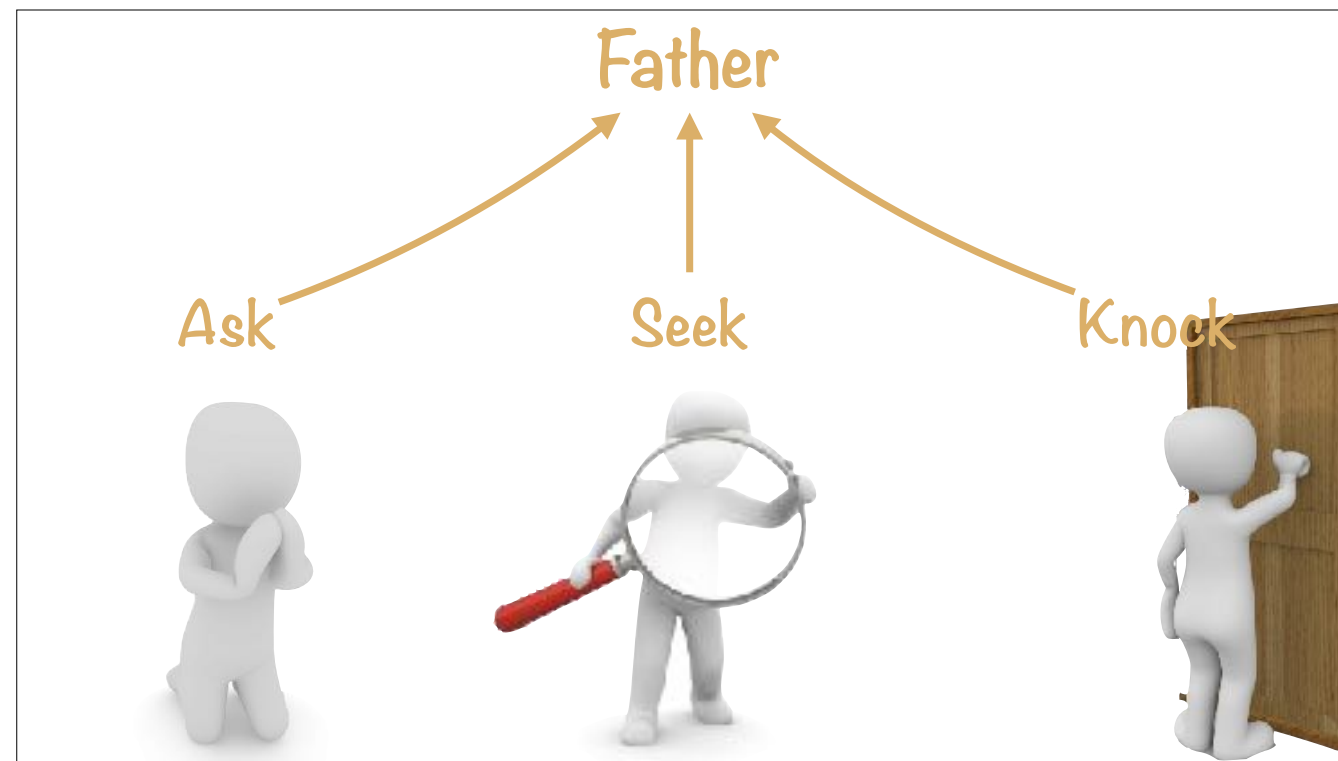
- What does this mean about how I practice righteousness?
 - What does this mean about how I approach God?

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

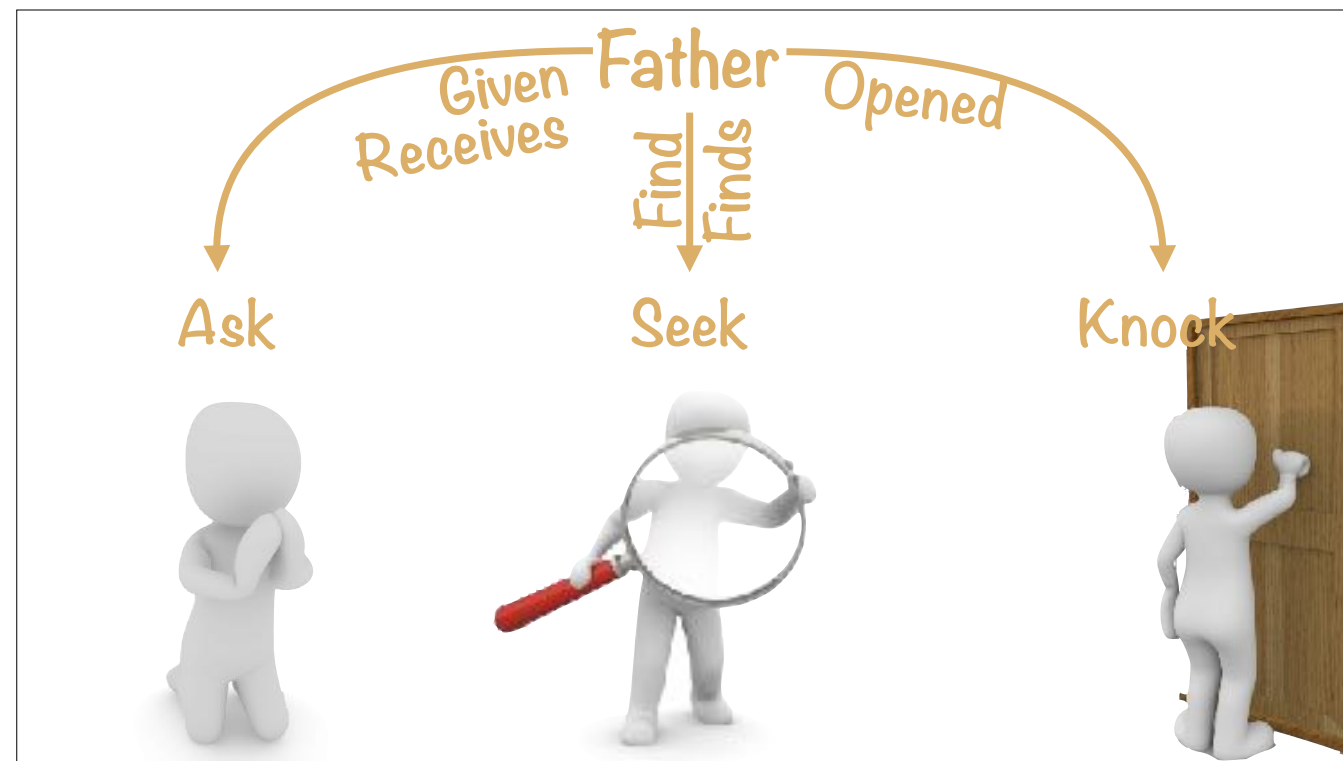
Matthew 7:7



- So what is Jesus teaching us?



- Ask — Given — Receives
- Seek — Find — Finds
- Knock — Opened



- Ask — Given — Receives
- Seek — Find — Finds
- Knock — Opened

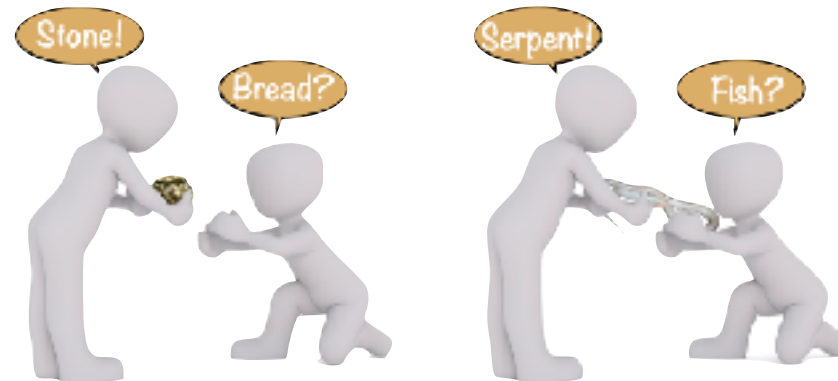


- 9 Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone?
- 10 Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent?
-



- 9 Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone?
- 10 Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent?
-

If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts
to your children, how much more will your Father who
is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!
Matthew 7:11



- Matthew 7:11: If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!

In times of need, I must
go to my heavenly Father.



- I must recognize my need
- I must ask, seek, and knock
 - Too often we actually fail to do this!
 - In past, because others often looked to other gods and credited the gods with the good received (Hosea?)
 - Now, I depend only on myself

In times of need, I must
go to my heavenly Father.



- I am His adopted child!
 - Galatians 4:4-7 (ESV) 4 But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. 6 And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” 7 So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

In times of need, I must
go to my heavenly Father.



- Romans 8:15 (ESV) For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!”

I must persist.



- I must persist
 - Luke 11:1-13 (ESV) 1 Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.” 2 And he said to them, “When you pray, say: “Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. 3 Give us each day our daily bread, 4 and forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation.” 5 And he said to them, “Which of you who has a friend will go to him at midnight and say to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves, 6 for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him’; 7 and he will answer from within, ‘Do not bother me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed. I cannot get up and give you anything’? 8 I tell you, though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his impudence he will rise and give him whatever he needs. 9 And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 10 For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. 11 What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; 12 or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? 13 If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”
- keep on asking, keep on seeking; keep on knocking
- It's too easy for us to become complacent, lazy, just accept the status quo
 - not because I doubt
 - not because I think I'll bug him
 - But because I know that he is a good Father!
- Hunger and Thirst for Righteousness!
 - know Him
 - walk with Him
 - experience Him

I must persist.



- keep on asking, keep on seeking; keep on knocking
- It's too easy for us to become complacent, lazy, just accept the status quo
 - not because I doubt
 - not because I think I'll bug him
 - But because I know that he is a good Father!

I must persist.



- Hunger and Thirst for Righteousness!
 - know Him
 - walk with Him
 - experience Him
 - desire more then keep asking
 - Spiritual growth much more than physical pleasures, needs

I must persist.



- Father, not just friend!
 - He's not just trying to "get rid" of me.
 - He loves me, does what is best for me

My heavenly Father
is a good Father.



- My Heavenly Father is Good
 - Too often we think of God as God, but fail to appreciate Him as my Father.
 - Emphasize deity and holiness (separate)
 - Emphasize power
 - Emphasize sin, anger, wrath, punishment, vengeance
 - He will never give us anything evil (impossible)

My heavenly Father
is a good Father.



- He will give us what is best for us
 - What we most need
 - What benefits
- Ephesians 3:20 (ESV) Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us,

My heavenly Father
is a good Father.



- He doesn't make a mistake, so I can completely trust Him.
 - Confidence in Him
 - Confidence in His Power
 - Confidence in His Gifts

My heavenly Father
gives only good gifts!



- My Heavenly Father gives only good gifts.
 - ASK does not mean that whatever I ask for, for whatever reason, I will get it.
 - when I seek the good things: salvation, righteousness; relationship;

*My heavenly Father
gives only good gifts!*



- anything that brings me closer to my Father and is good for me;
- I am assured He will give it to me.
- He will not give you things which are bad for you.

My heavenly Father
gives only good gifts!



- 2 Peter 1:3-11 (ESV) 3 His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, 4 by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. 5 For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, 6 and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, 7 and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. 8 For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. 10 Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. 11 For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

*My heavenly Father
gives only good gifts!*



- Ephesians 1:3 (ESV) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,

*My heavenly Father
gives only good gifts!*



- Luke 11:13: If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father **give the Holy Spirit** to those who ask him!”

My heavenly Father
gives only good gifts!



- 2 Corinthians 5:4-5 (ESV) 4 For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened—not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. 5 He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, **who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.**



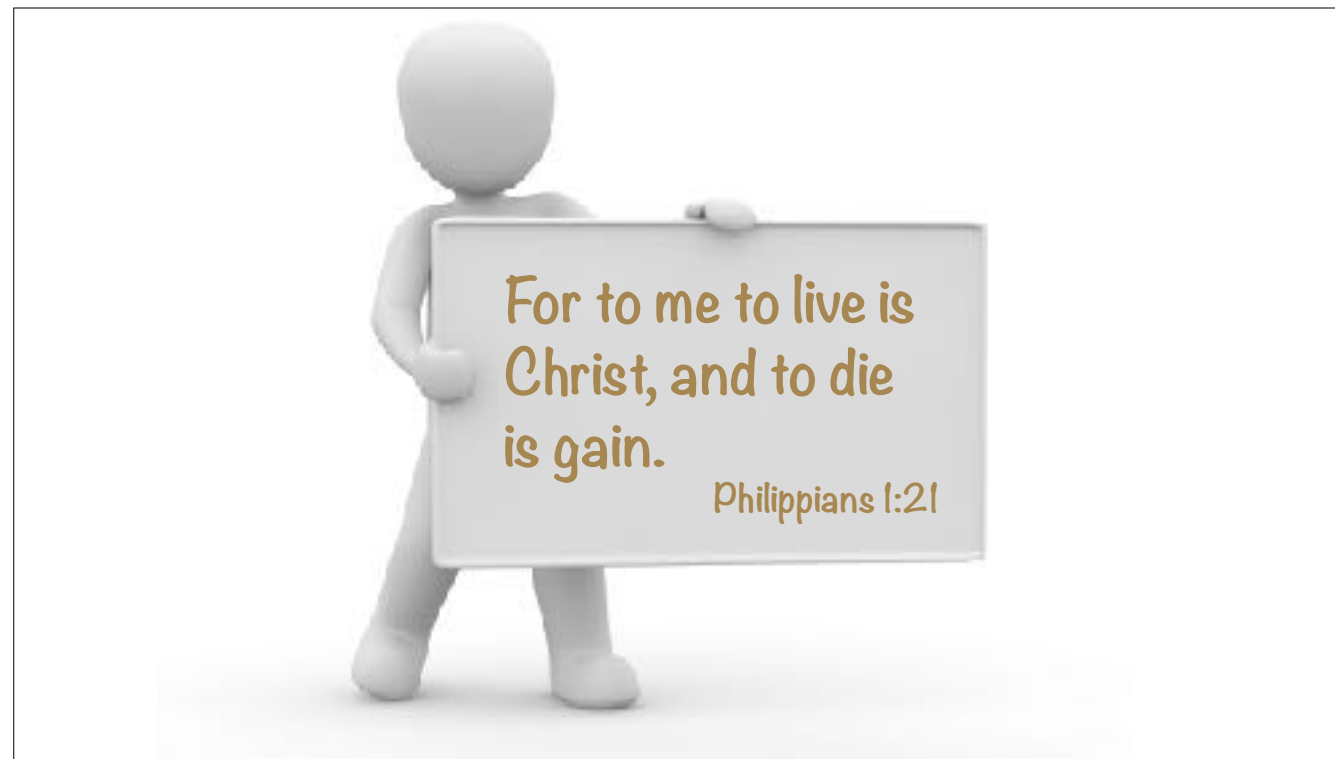
- Philippians 4:13 (ESV) I can do all things through him who strengthens me.
- Philippians 4:11-13 (ESV) 11 Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. 12 I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. 13 I can do all things through him who strengthens me.



- Why?
 - Rejoice!
 - Content!
 - 2 Corinthians 12:10 (ESV) For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.



- All Paul's confidence is in his Heavenly Father.
 - Whatever Paul faced, he knew that God is good to him.
 - Holy Spirit as guarantee.



- Philippians 1:21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

**We implore you on
behalf of Christ,
be reconciled to God.**

2 Corinthians 5:20



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Good Gifts

Matthew 7:7-11

Synopsis: Because our understanding of God is sometimes skewed by erroneous concepts, we fail to come before our Heavenly Father confidently and seek His gracious gifts. Often when we practice our righteousness, we are seeking to earn our Father's favor as if He is hard to please and often angry. When we remember that we have a good Father, who gives us good gifts, we can practice our righteousness with joy and contentment, knowing that He will always do what is best for us.

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“Let all that you do be done with love.”