

How Much More?— Sunday July 7th 2013.

⁹ “So I say to 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 he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it will be opened. ¹¹ Now suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he? ¹² Or if he is asked for an egg, he will not give him a scorpion, will he? ¹³ If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?”

(Luke 11:9-13)

Beloved in the Lord,

How much more? is the question that Jesus poses in this teaching. How much more do loving parents give their children over and above what they need? All of us who are parents or grandparents have given and continue to give much more to our children and grandchildren than what they need. Why? Because we love them. That is one way that we show our love to them. When we love someone we love to be generous, we love to give gifts. How much more do we give to those whom we love? As much as we can because that is what love does.

Love always seeks to give good gifts and not bad ones. Jesus illustrated this truth using a very basic and easy to understand illustration. **Now suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he? ¹² Or if he is asked for an egg, he will not give him a scorpion, will he?**

No good father would give his son a snake for a fish or a scorpion for an egg. In Matthews version we read: **“Or what man is there among you who, when his son asks for a loaf, will give him a stone? ¹⁰ Or if he asks for a fish, he will not give him a snake, will he? ¹¹ 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!” (Matthew 7:9-11)**

This is a very clear teaching. A good father, a good parent will always strive to give good things to his child. Having stated this Jesus then said: “How much more...”

Jesus is showing us that our God is a loving Father, who loves His children. When and if we grasp this concept then our understanding about God dramatically and radically changes. Our relationship with Him deepens. We reach a new level of existence with God. So many people live with misconceptions about God. They have a perverted or distorted understanding of Him. Many think that He is a mean old judge waiting to punish them for each and every sin. Many see Him as angry and hard to please. Someone who wants to curb our pleasure.

Nothing could be further from the truth revealed to us in God's Holy Word – The Bible. Jesus reveals to us that God is a loving Father, who loves His children, who is generous, who is loving and kind, who protects and upholds, who shows mercy, who raises us up when we are down, who delights us, who strengthens us and who blesses us.

How much more?

Over and over in God's Word we read how God pours out His blessings upon people, who live in Godly trust who fear and respect Him. He can pour out blessings because his reservoirs never run dry. God is wealthy. If you only have a little you cannot pour out, you can only drip. Here a little, there a little. Ah, but God pours out His blessings, because the earth is His and the fullness thereof. He owns everything. He is never short of anything.

We read in Malachi where God speaks to Israel about their giving for His work:

Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this," says the Lord of hosts, "if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows. (Malachi 3:10)

God is telling us that if we are faithful in our giving to Him, then He will pour out His blessing upon us till it overflows. He says that He will open the windows of Heaven and cause the blessing to flow. Only God can do that, because He has the resources. How much more?

Please understand that our Father is not a miser. He loves to bless His children in all sorts of ways. He has so much that He desires to give to us, but often we miss out because we simply do not trust Him. Why do we not trust Him? Often because our understanding of Him is not right. We really do not see Him as a loving Father who loves to bless His children. He cares for us, He provides, He loves us with an eternal love, yet we do not trust Him. We need to understand that He always has our best interests at heart. Everything He does He does in love because He is love. This is what I am trying to get through to you today in this sermon. This is what Jesus was saying when He said: "How much more will my Father..."

God is so much more than you can even begin to imagine, and He has so much more to give to you, if only you will come to Him in faith and trust in Him.

Paul wrote: ***"Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! ³⁴ For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became His counsellor? ³⁵ Or who has first given to Him that it might be paid back to him again? ³⁶ For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen."* (Romans 11:33-36)**

Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God. This is so beautifully stated. We cannot begin to comprehend how great is our God.

In Ephesians Paul wrote: ***“For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, ¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, ¹⁶ that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, ¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸ may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, ¹⁹ and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.***

²⁰ Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, ²¹ to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.” (Ephesians 3:14-21)

Paul is praying that we would comprehend the greatness of God. How great is His love. How rich He is. How much He loves each one of us. That we would grasp the truth that He is able to do far more than anything we ask or think. How much more will your Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him? Through the Holy Spirit, God has given us a complete gift. As we considered last Sunday, it is important that we listen to, that we follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit. That we yield ourselves to Him. It is important that we trust in His Word. It is important to commit all things unto Him. To know about Him, but not trust Him is futile and of no benefit whatsoever. We need to allow Him to work in and through us.

The Holy Spirit is our Helper. He is our Guide. He is God’s Holy Spirit, He is God. He is our Attorney. He is the one in whom we should seek our guidance day by day, step by step. When we do we are blessed.

With every day our comprehension of God will grow. We will be stronger in our faith. We will gain a deeper understanding of Him and His ways. Our love toward Him will continually grow stronger. Our desire to live for Him will grow and our desire to honour Him in all we do will grow. This in turn will lead to an increase in our good works. We will find that beautiful fruit of the Holy Spirit growing in us, and at the same time a diminishing of the works of the flesh.

Paul writes in Galatians: ***“But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law. ¹⁹ Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, ²¹ envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control;” (Galatians 5:16-23)***

The first part – the works of the flesh – these do not honour God.

The second part – The fruit of the Spirit – this honours God.

The degree by which we will display the works or the fruit is totally dependent upon how much we yield to the Holy Spirit. How much we seek first the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness.

Let us engrave upon our hearts the simple truth that God is love and He loves us. He is bountiful in mercy. He wants to give us so much more.

How much more?

As stated by Isaiah and quoted by Paul:

***“Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard,
And which have not entered the heart of man,
All that God has prepared for those who love Him.”***

Amen.

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All Bible quotations taken from New American Standard Bible.