

Sunday, May 15, 2022  
"Meet Your King"  
Summary of A Call to Persistent Prayer  
Matthew 7:7-12  
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We all need a little encouragement from time to time. When we face a daunting task, it helps to know that someone thinks we are capable. This kind of encouragement is just what we have in Matthew 7. In the Sermon on the Mount, 'Jesus bombards his disciples with uncompromising demands.' The self-aware reader knows he cannot fulfill all of them. Jesus forbids anger and forbids lust. He commands that we keep our every word. He prohibits worrying and forbids boasting. He says, '*Be perfect... as your heavenly Father is perfect*' (5:48). The breadth and depth of this standard would lead us to despair, if Jesus did not pause to bring encouragement. Fortunately, Jesus does strengthen his disciples' resolve at crucial moments in his message. He invites us to lay aside our fears. As he tells his disciples how to live, he also explains how they may reach toward his standards. As one ancient writer noted, "The power for *doing* the Sermon on the Mount is in the Beatitudes at the *beginning*, in the Lord's Prayer in the *middle*, and in this Ask near the *end*." Like three deep springs beside a trail, these three texts renew those who walk the high mountain of the sermon. The Ask promises may 'be regarded as a final reference to that source from whom alone the power to keep [the Sermon's] commands proceeds.'