

On Matt. 7.1-2
Mark 4.21-25
Luke 6.37-38

Teach us, O God,
to use with others the measure of generosity and forgiveness that you offer to us
that we may ourselves receive the best you have to give,
a share in your own life of open love,
which happens in giving and sharing,
creating good and overcoming evil with mercy and kindness.
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lived, died and rose again by this same creative and generous love
which he shares with you and the Holy Spirit in eternity.
Amen.

On Matt. 7.3-5
Luke 6.41-42

God of truth,
it is so easy to see or think we see the faults of others
and so hard to see our own.
By your love and mercy open our eyes to correct our priorities,
to see and accept your forgiveness and renewal ourselves,
that we may be able to share it with others,
as we share the love of Jesus Christ, your Son, our Saviour.
Amen.

On Matt. 7.1-6

All wise God,
to learn the words of scripture and to follow it as written rules is not enough;
we need your wisdom to know how to act in each particular case.
Jesus, your Wisdom, tells us not to judge or condemn,
and then not to throw our pearls before pigs, or holy things to dogs.
If we are to regard people generously, and not judge them,
how can we see anyone as a mere unclean beast?
Through the Spirit of Christ, your Spirit of Wisdom,
enable us to understand how both sayings apply
as expressions of the love that is your Triune being.
So let us never finally condemn people,
never write them off or cease to care for their good.
But give us also the sensitivity not to force your word on people
beyond what they can take at any one time.
Give us tact and patience,
that we may not provoke people by brashness and insensitivity
or drive them into obstinacy and hostility to the good news of Christ.
May we learn to see ourselves clearly,
that we may truly help others,
through Jesus Christ, the light of truth and wisdom.
Amen.

On Matt. 7.7-8
Luke 11.9-10

Loving Father,
give us the faith,
 the courage,
 the persistence,
 and the wisdom
 to ask you for your good things:
 forgiveness,
 reconciliation,
 and your Holy Spirit
 to make us your true children.
May we ask and seek sincerely, out of a deep desire:
 may we put our whole will and strength into our prayer,
 all our heart and mind and soul;
 and may we go on asking and never give up.
Thus may our prayer align us with your will,
 so that we may indeed receive what we ask,
 find what we seek,
 and know the door of true and eternal life and peace
 opened to us by your freely given generous love,
 which rejoices to do us good,
 and unites us to yourself in Jesus Christ, our Lord.
 Amen.

On Matt. 7.9-11
Luke 11.11-13

God, our loving Father,
we praise you that, although we are weak, selfish, and often wicked,
 yet the love and care of imperfect human beings,
 especially the love of parents for children,
 can still be a parable and illustration of your goodness to us.
So we pray for parents and all who bring up children,
 that they may so care for them that the children will know that they are loved
 and thus be helped to perceive your love and care.
We pray, too,
 for all who have received inadequate, unloving, or vicious parenting,
 all to whom the idea of a father or a mother is meaningless,
 frightening, or embittering.
Break through to them with your love:
 heal their hearts and minds,
 and enable them to receive your blessing and your joy,
 through Jesus Christ, our Brother, Friend and Helper,
 who bore our suffering that he might give us your bliss.
 Amen.

On Matt. 7.12
Luke 6.31

God, Holy Trinity,
you live eternally in the mutual sharing of love,
 which is the fullness of being and joy.
In imaging that love is our true life,
 which fulfils and exceeds all our desires.
So let us treat others as we want them to treat us,
 that we may find our joy in theirs,
 and so fulfil all your will, as revealed in your salvation:
 in your commands,
 your warnings
 and your promises,
and supremely in Jesus Christ, your Son,
 our Lawgiver, Prophet, Priest, King and Friend,
 the complete expression of your being and of ours.
Amen.

On Matt. 7.13-14
Luke 13.23-27

Jesus Christ, the Way and the Door of true life,
give us the wisdom, strength and faith to find and enter by the narrow gate,
 the door of trust, hope and self-giving love,
into the home of true humanity,
 the place where we can become our true selves
 and find final security and rest in love,
 in true unity with God through you.
Enable us to bear the difficulties, uncertainties and sufferings of this way
and to resist the temptations of the wide gate and easy road
 that lead to loss of our true selves and destruction of real community,
 the false roads of selfishness:-
 lazy love of comfort and avoidance of challenges,
 greedy desire for material possessions,
 careless and callous cruelty to the powerless,
 pride and exclusivity that ignores their suffering,
 complacency that blinds us to our own evils,
 and weak and cowardly following of the fashions and trends
 of greedy or fearful societies
 which reject outsiders and cling to wealth and privilege
 at the expense of the good of the earth and other people.
We ask this for your truth's sake,
 for you trod the way of suffering
 and entered by the gate of the cross
 into your kingdom of eternal love,
 the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.
Amen.

On Matt. 7.15-23

Help us, O God, to be loyal to you by deed as well as word.
Live in us by the Spirit of your Son,
that the fruit of our lives may be good, and according to your will.
Amen.

On Matt. 7.15-23

God of truth and love,
grant us, through your spirit of wisdom, watchfulness and discernment,
to distinguish between genuine messengers and messages from you
and false and counterfeit ones.
Keep us from rash and hasty judgements
which may condemn the good or welcome the bad.
Preserve us from rushing to embrace any new spiritual movement
without testing it first by the standard of Jesus Christ
and its ability to free human beings for the love he shows
which bears fruit in self-giving for each other and trust in you.
For without the fruits of your spirit,
love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness and self-control,
human beings destroy each other and your creation
as hungry wolves slaughter sheep.
All this we pray to you through the same Jesus Christ,
the good shepherd,
in whom we find your protection and truth.
Amen.

On Matt. 7.15-27
Luke 6.43-49

Keep us, God of truth, from self-deceit
about ourselves,
about things we do or would like to do,
or about ideas or movements we back or would like to support.
Make us realise that fine words,
fine propaganda,
fine feelings
and fine intentions
are not enough
and do not truly measure ourselves, other people or human projects.
For you are the God who carries out your Word:
you act in just and holy love
which cannot accept evil, cruelty, selfishness and falsity,
and our true being is found only in relationship with you.
So may we look at what we do,
and at what the results of ideas, actions and movements are,
and thus come to see ourselves and our world with your eyes
and follow you in practising your way of goodness
in faith and hope and love,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
Amen.

On Matt. 7.21-23

God of power and love,
we praise you that your Son, Jesus Christ, healed the sick,
drove out the powers of evil that control people,
and prophesied the future.
We thank you that you still give such gifts to people.
Yet Jesus refused publicity for its own sake,
and would not base his mission or his relationship to you
on signs and wonders and mighty works.
So let us beware of relying on such gifts of the spirit and neglecting the fruits,
chiefly faith and love:
for it is trust and merciful love
which unite us to Christ and to you in holy obedience,
and to our neighbours in respect and care for their good,
and so it is trust and merciful love
which prepare us for a share in the completion of your kingdom,
the fulfilment of true and eternal life with you
in the unity of the Son and the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

On Matt. 7.24-27

Luke 6.47-49

Matt. 5-7 as a whole

Christ, our Rock, our Strength and Protection,
it is by active faith, not words alone, that we become fully founded on you,
securely based on your love.
You call us to build our lives on you by obedient faith,
relying on the mercy of God that you show to us, and not on human opinion,
drawing close to God as our loving parent through you,
longing for his kingdom, the fulfilment of his will, and ready to suffer for it,
forgiving others as we depend on God's forgiveness,
showing care and respect for all and seeking their good.
Only so can we endure when the storms of life,
suffering, disappointment, temptation and persecution come upon us,
and not be swept away in panic and bitterness,
or demolished by depression and despair.
Let us not just hear your word and fail to act on it,
or proclaim ourselves your followers but fail to follow and obey you.
Rather enable us truly to answer your call and do as you tell us.
So, when the storms of life come,
may we stand firm for you, relying on your strength,
who endured for us the agony of the cross
and rose again to give us eternal life
in the union of the Spirit
to the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

On Matt. 7.28- 8.1

Lord Jesus Christ,
Word and Wisdom of the eternal God,
the source and goal of creation,
as we hear your teaching read and preached,
save us from becoming casual,
from not listening,
from letting familiarity deafen us to its power and authority.
May your Spirit open our ears, our hearts and our minds
to God's awesome holiness and call to righteousness,
to the wonder of divine love and forgiveness
and to the staggering revelation of almighty God as a devoted parent
who can be trusted and relied on through you.
So may we, in trusting love and awe,
enter ever deeper into relationship with God as loving children.
May we follow and live by what we learn in peak experiences of you
on the plains of our everyday existence,
and know God's kingdom growing in our lives,
until we share the wonder and joy of its final coming.
Amen.

On Matt. 7.28- 8.1

Mark 1.21-22

Luke 4.31-32

Almighty and all glorious God,
whose Son struck the people with wonder by his teaching,
we pray for all Christian preachers and teachers
in their proclamation and explanation of your Word.
Fill them with your Spirit
that they may themselves know your glory
and the wonder of your message to us in Jesus
and be able to communicate it to others
that people may come to trust and adore you
as our loving, holy and righteous parent,
and so enter and grow in your kingdom and salvation
through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord,
Amen.