GET USED TO DIE ERENT: A NEW WAY TO LIVE



The Domino Effect

Get Used To Different | Week 21 | Matthew 6:33

INTRODUCTION

There is a principle that applies to business, physics, and life—it's called "The Domino Effect." This principle describes how one event can set off a chain reaction of related events. A great example of this is the atomic bomb, where one atom splitting causes an unstoppable chain reaction. The same concept applies spiritually. In The Sermon on the Mount, Jesus describes a spiritual domino effect that can transform our lives if we start with the right "first domino." Many people place financial success, personal happiness, fame, or power as their first priority, but Jesus tells us that the first domino should be this: *"Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well"* (Matthew 6:33).

KEY POINTS

1. You Must Seek the Ruler of the Kingdom

Jesus begins by saying, "Seek first"—a continuous, daily action. Seeking God's kingdom and righteousness should shape every decision: where we work, how we spend our money, whom we marry, and how we live. But before we can seek the kingdom, we must first seek the King. This happens through daily time in God's Word, prayer, and worship. Many people give Jesus a place or even prominence in their lives, but He desires preeminence—first place in everything. If we make Jesus our first priority, the domino effect will change every area of our lives.

2. You Must Surrender to the Rule of the Kingdom

Seeking first the kingdom means surrendering to God's rule. In every decision, we are either following our desires or obeying God. If we place ourselves on the throne of our hearts instead of Jesus, we are pushing over the wrong domino. Many people chase after what they want in life, but when we align our will with God's, He provides more than we could imagine. True success is not settling for what is "good" but pursuing what is best—God's plan for our lives.

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3. You Will Show the Righteousness of the Kingdom

Jesus not only calls us to seek God's kingdom but also to seek His righteousness. Our character reflects what is controlling us. If we seek God privately, His righteousness will be visible in us publicly. The world needs to see the difference Christ makes in our lives. Jesus said, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled" (Matthew 5:6). When we are truly surrendered to God's rule, we will desire to live, think, and act in a way that reflects His righteousness.

4. You Will See the Resources of the Kingdom

Jesus promises that if we seek first His kingdom, "all these things will be given to you as well." People often worry about financial stability, security, and success, but worry comes from putting the wrong domino first. When we prioritize God, He takes care of our needs. Many strive to climb the ladder of success only to realize it's leaning against the wrong wall. But when we align our lives with God's kingdom, He leads us to true fulfillment. Like the domino effect in physics, where a small domino can eventually topple a massive structure, the impact of seeking God first can lead to incredible transformation in our lives.

The Domino Effect

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- 1. What are some "first dominos" that people often prioritize instead of seeking God's kingdom?
- 2. How can you practically seek Jesus before anything else in your daily routine?
- 3. In what ways have you seen the "domino effect" of seeking God first play out in your life or the lives of others?

Don't Rush To Judgment

Get Used To Different | Week 22 | Matthew 7:1-6

INTRODUCTION

If we are truly going to follow Jesus, we must accept that we will be different from the world. Nowhere is that more evident than in Matthew 7, where we encounter one of the most misunderstood, misused, and misapplied verses in the Bible: *"Judge not, that you be not judged"* (Matthew 7:1). This verse has become a cultural slogan, often quoted by people who reject or ridicule the Bible. Even among Christians, the idea that judging is wrong has gained traction, particularly among younger believers. However, Jesus' teaching is not about avoiding judgment altogether but about judging rightly. His message is simple: make sure your heart is right before you call out what is wrong.

KEY POINTS

1. We Are to Judge Cautiously

Jesus begins with a clear warning: *"Judge not, that you be not judged."* The word *"judge"* has two meanings in the New Testament. One refers to discernment, such as choosing ripe fruit. The other refers to condemning others unfairly or with a spirit of superiority. Jesus warns against the latter. We should never judge motives because only God knows a person's heart. Likewise, we should never judge appearance based on skin color, clothing, or possessions. Jesus continues, *"For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you"* (Matthew 7:2).

Before forming an opinion about someone, we should ask if we would want to be judged in the same way. Judgment should be based on facts, not assumptions. At the same time, judgment is right when done correctly. Calling out sin is not being judgmental; it is standing on God's truth. Saying that lying, adultery, and gossip are wrong is not personal judgment—it is agreeing with God's Word. However, we must ensure that we are not being hypocritical in our own lives.

Don't Rush To Judgment

Get Used To Different | Week 22 | Matthew 7:1-6

2. We Are to Judge Conscientiously

Jesus asks two questions to help us judge rightly: *"Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?"* (Matthew 7:3). The irony is that a splinter and a plank are made of the same material. Often, the very things we criticize in others are the same struggles we have. This is known as the Fundamental Attribution Error—judging others' actions based on their character while excusing our own actions based on circumstances. If someone is late, we assume they are irresponsible, but if we are late, we blame traffic.

Jesus warns that we naturally magnify others' faults while minimizing our own. Some people are "speck inspectors," quick to find flaws in others while ignoring their own sins. The solution is to judge yourself first. Before pointing out someone else's sin, we must examine our own hearts and motives. Jesus does not forbid judgment, but He tells us to judge correctly: *"Stop judging by mere appearances, but instead judge correctly"* (John 7:24).

3. We Are to Judge Compassionately

Jesus concludes, "You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye" (Matthew 7:5). Notice the words "first" and "then." Jesus is not saying we should never call out sin. Rather, He is saying we must deal with our own sin first. Once we do, we can help others with humility and compassion.

A spiritual person judges with love, not condemnation. Paul says, *"The spiritual person judges all things..."* (1 Corinthians 2:15). Right judgment is based on God's Word and is always factual, loving, and redemptive. We should respect others even if we disagree, discern right from wrong using God's Word, and take responsibility to lovingly guide others toward truth.

Don't Rush To Judgment

Get Used To Different | Week 22 | Matthew 7:1-6

- 1. Why do people misunderstand Jesus' command, "Judge not, that you be not judged"?
- 2. How can we balance standing for truth while avoiding a judgmental attitude?
- 3. What are some ways we can ensure we are judging ourselves before judging others?

Keep On Keeping On

Get Used To Different | Week 23 | Matthew 7:7-11

INTRODUCTION

There was a five-year-old girl watching her mother apply cold cream to her face. Curious, she asked, "Mother, why do you do that?" The mother replied, "To make myself beautiful." Moments later, when the mother wiped the cream off, the girl exclaimed, "What's the matter? Giving up already?" Just like that little girl's humorous observation, we often approach prayer with the same mindset—giving up too soon. Have you ever felt like giving up on God? Have you ever prayed and felt like your prayers made no difference? In this message, we're going to see Jesus give an encouraging, definitive teaching on prayer, reminding us that if we belong to God's family, He hears and answers our prayers. The key is perseverance. Never give up on the God who will never give up on you. Jesus teaches us four key principles about prayer.

KEY POINTS

1. There Is A Process To Abide By In Prayer

Jesus commands us to pray: "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you" (Matthew 7:7). Prayer is not just a request; it's a requirement. If we don't pray, we sin—not only against God but also against others who depend on our prayers and against ourselves by missing out on blessings.

The Bible warns about the sin of omission: *"If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them"* (James 4:17). Failing to pray is failing to obey. Prayer is not just about receiving; it is about aligning ourselves with God's will.

2. There Is A Persistence To Applying Prayer

Jesus emphasizes continual prayer when He says to ask and keep on asking, seek and keep on seeking, and knock and keep on knocking. Each of these verbs requires increasing intensity. Asking expresses dependence—recognizing our need for God. Seeking expresses desire—actively looking for God's will. Knocking expresses determination—persisting until God opens the right doors.

Keep On Keeping On

Get Used To Different | Week 23 | Matthew 7:7-11

George Müller is a powerful example of persistence in prayer. He prayed daily for five young men to be saved. After 18 months, the first was saved; after five years, the second; after six more years, the third. The last two were saved 52 years later—after Müller had died. Persistence in prayer means trusting God's timing, even when the answer seems delayed.

3. There Is A Promise To Answer Prayer

God promises to respond to the prayers of His children: *"For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened"* (Matthew 7:8). This means that prayer is not an empty exercise—God hears us and answers in different ways.

Sometimes, God answers directly with an immediate "Yes." Other times, His answer is delayed because He knows the perfect timing for our needs. There are also times when God answers differently, giving us something better than what we originally asked for. And finally, some prayers are denied. "No" is still an answer, and often a blessing in disguise. Many of us can look back and be thankful for the prayers God didn't answer in the way we originally wanted.

4. There Is A Parable That Advocates Prayer

Jesus compares God's goodness to an earthly father's love: *"Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake?"* (Matthew 7:9-11). Even sinful earthly fathers give good gifts to their children. How much more will our perfect Heavenly Father give what is truly best for us?

We can see a great example of perseverance comes from the discovery of King Tut's tomb. Archaeologist Howard Carter searched for six years before finally discovering one of the greatest archaeological finds in history. If he had quit just one day earlier, he would have missed it. Likewise, persistent prayer leads to incredible spiritual discoveries and blessings.

Keep On Keeping On

Get Used To Different | Week 23 | Matthew 7:7-11

- 1. Have you ever felt like giving up on prayer? What kept you going?
- 2. How does understanding persistence in prayer change the way you approach your prayer life?
- 3. Can you recall a time when God answered your prayer differently than expected? How did it impact your faith?

How Do You Get To Heaven?

Get Used To Different | Week 24 | Matthew 7:13-14

INTRODUCTION

Dr. Billy Graham once told a story about asking a young boy for directions to the post office. After the boy explained the way, Dr. Graham invited him to his crusade, saying, "If you come tonight, I'll tell you how to get to heaven." The boy replied, "No, I don't think I want to do that." When Dr. Graham asked why, the boy said, "How are you going to tell me how to get to heaven when you can't even find the post office?" Many people assume they are going to heaven simply because they die. For every one person in America who believes they're going to hell, 120 believe they're going to heaven. But Jesus makes it clear in Matthew 7:13-14 that there are two gates, two roads, two groups, and two destinations. God gives everyone the right of way to heaven, but only if they choose the right way.

KEY POINTS

1. Make Sure You Come Through the Right Gate

Jesus describes two gates: one wide and one narrow. The wide gate leads to a broad road that is easy to travel, with plenty of room for all beliefs, lifestyles, and choices. It's the path of least resistance, where sin is tolerated, truth is compromised, and people do whatever they please. But this road leads to destruction (Matthew 7:13). Many people take this road because they believe it leads to life, but Proverbs 14:12 warns, *"There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death."*

In contrast, the narrow gate is small, requiring humility and surrender. The Greek word for "narrow" (stenos) implies restriction. You can't bring pride, sin, or self-sufficiency with you. Jesus was clear that He is the only way to heaven.

2. Make Sure You Connect with the Right Group

Jesus also describes two groups: the many and the few. The majority take the broad road, while only a few find the narrow one. Even among those who claim to be Christians, many are religious but have never truly surrendered to Christ.

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How Do You Get To Heaven?

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Matthew 7:21 warns, "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven." Some people assume their good deeds or church attendance will get them in, but salvation requires true repentance and faith in Jesus alone.

Few take this road because it costs something. Luke 9:23 says, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me." Many refuse to surrender their desires, independence, or pride. But Jesus calls us to enter through the narrow gate and walk the narrow road, even if it means being in the minority.

3. Make Sure You Commit to the Right God

Jesus makes a definitive statement in John 14:6: "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." There are only two choices—Jesus or another god. Many people believe all religions lead to heaven, but Jesus makes it clear that He is the only way by presenting only two options: two gates, two groups, two gods, and two destinations. Your decision determines your direction, and your direction determines your destiny.

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How Do You Get To Heaven? Get Used To Different | Week 24 | Matthew 7:13-14

- 1. What are some ways we can stay on the narrow path in our daily lives?
- 2. How can we be sure our faith is real and not just going through the motions?
- 3. What makes it hard for people to follow Jesus, and how can we help them?

