

Luke 11:1-13 (NIV)

1 One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.” 2 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 Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us. And lead us not into temptation.’” 5 Then he said to them, “Suppose one of you has a friend, and he goes to him at midnight and says, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, 6 because a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have nothing to set before him.’ 7 “Then the one inside answers, ‘Don’t bother me. The door is already locked, and my children are with me in bed. I can’t get up and give you anything.’ 8 I tell you, though he will not get up and give him the bread because he is his friend, yet because of the man’s boldness he will get up and give him as much as he needs. 9 “So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. 10 For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. 11 “Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? 12 Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? 13 If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”

42-11-01-Teach Us to Pray

prayer, example, pattern, persistence, promise

Lu 11:1-13

If we want to follow Jesus, it means following Him in prayer.

INTRODUCTION:

–Christ’s Incarnation showed us how God would behave as a man. By becoming human, Jesus let us see how God Himself would live on earth. One of His behavioral habits was *prayer*. So, **HOM.idea**.

–Today, we’re looking at Christ’s teaching on prayer in Luke, who often portrayed a *praying* Christ. Our **text** begins with ...

- I. The Priority of Prayer– v.1,** “*Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.*”
- A. Christ’s disciples saw their need to learn to pray (they believed— and Jesus confirmed their belief—that *prayer can be taught*).
- B. As *God’s prophet*, John had taught his disciples by precept.
- C. As *God’s Son*, Jesus taught us to pray by example: He prayed*
1. * *at His baptism* (in Luke 3:21)
 2. * *when the crowds increased* (in Luke 5:16)
 3. * *before choosing the Twelve* (in Luke 6:12)
 4. * *before asking the Twelve to confess their faith* (in Luke 9:18)
 5. * *at His Transfiguration* (in Luke 9:29)

TRANS: By His example, Jesus showed us that prayer was a priority. Following Him means following Him in prayer. **And He gave us...**

- II. A Pattern for Prayer– v.2-4,** *He said to them, “When you pray, say: ‘Father, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us. And lead us not into temptation.’” (Familiar? He repeatedly taught this....)*
- A. Vain repetition or empty recitation is not the fault of the pattern.
- B. As a pattern of true prayer, the Lord’s Prayer teaches:
1. The foundation of prayer is relationship (“*Father*,” *Abba*)
 2. The context of prayer is God’s reign (It’s *loyal* to His Kingdom.)
 3. The business of prayer is proper requests *:
 - a. *for the present: “*daily bread*” for both ...
 - (1) our physical needs (not our greeds), and for

- (2) our *spiritual needs* (God's Word [*Our Daily Bread*])
- b. *for the *past*: "*forgive us our sins*" (an *initial and ongoing need*)
- (1) a *release* [lit. meaning] from *past weights and entanglements*
- (2) *releasing others from past sins*: "*we also forgive everyone*" (We must open closed, clinging hands, so that we can receive.)
- c. *for the *future*: "*lead us*" (in both *divine protection from evil* & in *divine direction* about the *right path to choose*.)

TRANS: Jesus gave a wonderful *pattern* here, but the *pattern* wasn't His whole *answer* to the request, "*Teach us to pray.*" He taught us...

- III. Persistence in Prayer** (in a parable)— v.5-8, *Then he said to them, 'Suppose one of you has a friend, and he goes to him at midnight and says, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, because a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have nothing to set before him.' 'Then the one inside answers, 'Don't bother me. The door is already locked, and my children are with me in bed. I can't get up and give you anything.' I tell you, though he will not get up and give him the bread because he is his friend, yet because of the man's boldness he will get up and give him as much as he needs.*
- A. **God isn't like a reluctant neighbor** (a closer look at the parable)
1. *God never sleeps* (He's *always listening* for our prayers, 24-7....)
 2. *He's not impatient with our requests* (He *invites* us to ask!)
 3. *He delights to meet our needs* (He *wants to show His love* to us.)
 4. *The door's not locked from His side* (Sometimes it is from ours.)
 5. *He isn't just a friend but our Father* (no real comparison at all...)
- B. **If persistence moved this neighbor, how much more so God?**
1. Christ was promoting *boldness* as the key element in prayer— Heb 4:16 (TLB), So let us come boldly to the very throne of God and stay there to receive his mercy and to find grace to help us in our times of need.
 2. **BUT**, in both cases, *reputation was at stake* [*the avoidance of shame*]
 - a. *In the parable, the code of Eastern hospitality was at work*:
 - (1) the *reluctant host's honor* as a *generous person* was at stake
 - (2) their *village's reputation for hospitality* was in jeopardy)
 - b. *In the Kingdom of God, there is even more at stake*:
 - (1) the intercessor's testimony ("*Does prayer really work?*")
 - (2) the King's testimony ("*Will God care for His subjects?*")
- C. Another question: "*What does our persistence accomplish?*"
1. It *doesn't improve God's desire to hear us* [Phillip Brooks: "Prayer is not conquering God's reluctance, but taking hold of God's willingness."]

2. It *doesn't change God*; it *changes us* [Warren Wiersbe: "Persistence in prayer is not an attempt to change God's mind but to get ourselves to the place where He can trust us with the answer."] (Prayer transforms us!)

TRANS: If we follow Jesus, making prayer a priority and persisting in the pattern He gave us, we'll experience the fulfillment of His...

- IV. Promises of Prayer, v.9-13**, "So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. "Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"
- A. **God answers our prayers, as we grow in determination:**
1. to "*ask*" merely expresses *our heart's desire*;
 2. to "*seek*" becomes *a refocus of our attention and direction*;
 3. to "*knock*" shows *we've committed ourselves to the answer*.
- B. **God answers our prayers, as we stay in communion** [lit.: "*Keep on asking, seeking, knocking*"] (In *ongoing communion, God can tell us why He hasn't answered* certain requests, or *why He won't*.)
- C. **God answers our prayers, according to our best interests:**
1. God is committed to giving us the best (*No divine pranks!*—no *snake* for a *fish* request, and no *scorpion* when we ask for an *egg!*)
 2. God's *best gift* to us is His Spirit, Who *bestows all the other gifts we need* and Who *stays with us as our Teacher in prayer*.

CONCLUSION:

—Jesus teaches us not just to pray, but to *follow Him in prayer*. [last verse of James Montgomery's wonderful poem, "What Is Prayer?":

O Thou by Whom we come to God,
The Life, the Truth, the Way!
The path of prayer Thyself hast trod:
Lord, teach us how to pray!]