



“How Is Your Prayer Life?”

Part 2

Luke 11:5-13

March 5, 2023

“Those who live without prayer live
without God in this world.”

- Matthew Henry

This prayer is only 37 words long –
& takes about 15 seconds to pray!

Luke 11:1-13

1 It happened that while Jesus was praying in a certain place, after He had finished, one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray just as John also taught his disciples."

2 And 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 'And forgive us our sins,

For we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation."

1. We are to pray to the Father.
2. We are to “hallow” or revere God for all of His attributes.
3. We are to desire God’s kingdom be established here on earth.
4. We are to ask that our daily needs would be provided.
5. We are to ask for the forgiveness of our sins, and extend forgiveness to others.
6. We are to ask God to keep us away from temptation.

5 Then He said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend, and goes to him at midnight and says to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves; 6 for a friend of mine has come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; 7 and from inside he answers and says, 'Do not bother me; the door has already been shut and give you anything.' 8 "I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence 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 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?"

What made the difference and affected the outcome in this parable?

1. When there was a need, Bill went straight to Ray.
2. There was a willingness on Bill's part to approach Ray and ask for the bread.
3. In spite of initially being told "no", Bill continued, he persisted. He asked Ray to give him the bread. If Bill had gone home after the first refusal, he would not have gotten the bread he needed.

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- Notice that the persisting intensifies – ask – seek – knock.
- "If we don't receive by asking, then let us seek; if we don't receive by seeking, then let us knock."
- **Note:** "God is not a celestial slot machine where you pull the handle enough times in prayer and you will get what you want!"

-Thomas Manton

- Rod Mattoon

- **Think about this:** The times in our lives when we have been most faithful in prayer have been the times in our lives in which we were the most needy. The greater the need, the greater the prayer.
- "God has ordained to include us in running the universe. He really does respond to our prayers. They are woven into the fabric of causes that God wills to be moved by. We do not pray in vain. He is our Father. And when he hears his children, he responds. He is not deaf or indifferent or powerless. He hears and he acts."

5 Then He said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend, and goes to him at midnight and says to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves; 6 for a friend of mine has come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; 7 and from inside he answers and says, 'Do not bother me; the door has already been shut and give you anything.'"

8 "I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will get up and give him as much as he needs."

- For the sake of understanding this, let's put names on these guys. John is the visitor who has been on a journey. Bill is the host that John comes to visit. Ray is Bill's friend that is sleeping at his own house.

- John arrives late, maybe unexpectedly, to Bill's house. In ancient Israel journeys were often undertaken by night in order to avoid the stifling heat of the day.

- Bill realizes he has no food in the house for John. So he goes over to Ray's house, pounds on the door, and asks Ray for 3 loaves of bread.

- In the first century, when someone shows up at your home especially from a long journey, it was the custom to provide them with a generous amount of food.

- Obviously Bill is desperate.

- So, even though it is midnight, Bill goes to Ray's house and asks for 3 loaves for John who is visiting. Think about it: 3 loaves is a lot. Who has that laying around?

- Someone has said, "He may not have any bread, but he certainly has plenty of crust, coming after midnight and waking this fellow up out of a sound sleep to get bread!

- Ray says, "no!" "Bill, do you know what time it is?" "It's midnight!"

- But through persistence by Bill, Ray finally gets up and gives Bill what he needs.

- **Bottom Line:** Bill has nothing. He cannot solve his dilemma by himself, by his own strength, and from his own resources. He is totally dependent on Ray.

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Thomas Watson, a Puritan pastor from 350 years ago, asked in his book, Body of Divinity, "Why does God keep us asking, seeking, and knocking? Why does God delay in answering our prayers?"

He gives four answers:

1. Because he loves to hear our voices in prayer. Remember it was Adam and Eve that cut off communication with God.
2. That he may humble us. We may too easily assume we merit some ready answer, or that he is at our beck and call like a butler, not as sovereign Lord and loving Father.
3. Because he sees we are not yet fit or ready for the mercy we seek. It may be he has things to put in place—in us or in our church or in the world. There are a million pieces to the puzzle. Some things go first to make a place for the others.
4. Finally, that the mercy we pray for may be the more prized, and may be sweeter when it comes.

"My friend, do you think that God is asleep? Do you feel that He has gone to bed when you pray, and you cannot get Him up? Do you believe that He does not want to answer your prayers? God does want to answer your prayers and He will. That is what this parable is saying. It is a parable by contrast and not by comparison. You do not have to storm the gates of heaven or knock down the door of heaven in order to attract God's attention. God is not reluctant to hear and answer you. God tells us in Isaiah 65:24, "And it shall come to pass; that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." God wants to hear and answer."

- J Vernon McGee

"My parents prayed for me to become a believer in Christ for 20 years and finally at age 39, God's Spirit granted me the grace to believe and be born again. I prayed for my son for almost 20 years and he was recently born again. On the other hand I am still praying for a daughter who is not born again (and I have prayed for her for over 25 years). And yet, from passages such as Luke 11:5-13, I receive encouragement to continue to pray and will do so until the day I die."

- Bruce Hurt

1. **We are to pray to the Father.**
2. **We are to "hallow" or revere God for all of His attributes.**
3. **We are to desire God's kingdom be established here on earth.**
4. **We are to ask that our daily needs would be provided.**
5. **We are to ask for the forgiveness of our sins, and extend forgiveness to others.**
6. **We are to ask God to keep us away from temptation.**
7. **We are to be persistent in our prayers.**

Luke 18:1

- 1 Now He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart,
- if you get frustrated with praying and stop, start back up again. Blessed is he who prays.

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?"

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- The point here is that a good father will only give what is good for his child.
- God's answers are always good, even though we can't always see it.
- When God delays His answer so that we might ask, seek, and knock, He is giving us a fish.
- When God withholds from us what we ask for or gives us something different, He is giving us an egg. (Job, Paul)
- When God lavishly gives us more than we could ask or think (Eph. 3:20), He is giving us a barrel of fish and a dozen eggs.
- Prayer is not designed for God to fit into my plan and my universe. We do not have the wisdom to run the universe.
- Prayer is designed for me to fit into God's plan and His universe.
- Prayer was never meant for God to stop being God.
- Sometimes we ask for foolish things, like a snake or a scorpion. God withholds. Sometimes He does not. He can turn anything into a fish or an egg.
- Do you want God's best for yourself? Then demand from God that He only gives you what is best. "Here is my request, but only give me what is best."
- God answers all of our prayers.

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- When Jesus said this, the Holy Spirit had not been given to every believer at salvation.
- The prayer for the Holy Spirit was answered at Pentecost. (Acts 2)

• The greatest blessing God could give a believer then, was the possession of His Spirit.

“You ask for comfort, He gave you the Comforter, right? You ask for help, He gave you the Helper. You ask for truth, He gave you the Truth teacher. You ask for power, He gave you the Spirit of power. You ask for wisdom, He gave you the Spirit of wisdom. You ask for guidance, He gave you the Guide. You ask for love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control and He gave you the Spirit whose fruits were released in your life.”

“The whole idea is come and ask for whatever’s on your heart and rush into God’s presence whenever you want, of course with a measure of humility and reverence, but still unbare your heart, speak boldly, be persistent, go over the top, if you will, and you can expect that God who is generous will give you whatever’s good.”

- John MacArthur

Application

1. Prayer is a privilege. To make prayer possible, it cost the Son of God His life.
2. God has made Himself accessible. The throne room is wide open.
3. Our biggest problem in prayer, is not: will God give us what we want? but rather: will I persist in asking Him to give me what is best?
4. Prayer is not so much changing the mind and heart of God as it is changing the mind and heart of us.