

ASK

Prayer Series Overview:

- Talk to God (Luke 18:1-8)
- The Model Prayer (Luke 11:1-13)
- Praying in Weakness (Romans 8:9-30)
- Praying with Confidence (Hebrews 4:14-16, 10:19-22)
- Just Pray (A full night of praying together)
- Helping One Another Pray (D-group rhythm)

Introduction: Luke 11:1-13

You have probably heard it said that some things are better caught than taught. Much of discipleship is this way, including prayer. As we study prayer in the sermons and small groups, Luke 11:1-13 reminds us that some of Jesus' most important teaching on prayer arose from his disciples watching him pray and wanting to pray more like their Teacher. Jesus taught his disciples a model prayer that was less about the mechanics of what to say to God and more about knowing the God to whom they were praying.

This week's main point:

Knowing who God is and how God is gracious should shape how we pray.

Knowing that Jesus prayed tells us two things. First, he is dependent on God's help and direction. Second, he is not a magician working sorcerers' tricks; his power comes from God. The disciples asking Jesus to teach them to pray does not mean they did not know how to pray but that they are impressed with the example of Jesus' prayer life and convinced of its effectiveness because of the results they could clearly see.

As we study this passage, there are a few things to note as you begin. This passage begins and ends with God pictured as Father and serves to teach his disciples that God is a loving Father who desires to give good gifts to those who have faith. All of Jesus' teaching in this passage—three examples and one exhortation—were in response to a disciple asking Jesus to help them pray better. It is unreasonable to think that the disciples did not know how to pray at all. Rather, the powerful effectiveness of Jesus' prayers were what this disciple sought in his request. Jesus' devotion to prayer becomes their model—and ours—to emulate.

Sermon Response Question:

1) In the sermon, Pastor J.D. said that lots of religions teach people to pray but that Christian prayer is fundamentally different (Matthew 6:7). From the sermon, how is Christian prayer different than prayers of other faiths?

- Christian prayer is effective not because of length or skill but because of the relationship between the believer and God.
- God is attentive to believers. They do not need to do anything to get God's attention.
- There is no reason for anger or anxiety over seemingly unanswered prayers, because God's love is unswerving toward believers.

Read Luke 11:1-13.

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Bible Study Questions:

2) Jesus teaches his disciples an outline or model of the things that God loves to hear his children pray. What did Jesus teach his disciples to say? Discuss how we should understand each one.

3) How do the petitions for daily bread and forgiveness in the Lord's Prayer free believers to live more committed and surrendered lives for Christ?

4) Review the parable of the persistent widow from last week's study (Luke 18:1-8), and read Jesus' parable about the neighbor in Luke 11:5-8. How are the parables similar? How are they different? What do we learn about prayer from Luke 11:5-8?

5) What do the actions commanded in verses 9-10 teach us about the relationship we have with God?

6) How do verses 11-13 help us understand the Lord's Prayer, the parable of the neighbor, and God's command to come to him with our requests?

7) Thinking over this passage, why is the Father's gift of the Holy Spirit the ultimate gift that can be received by those who ask him for anything?

Application Questions:

8) The Lord's Prayer is more of a model than something that should be recited verbatim. How do the prayers you normally pray (during devotion times, before meals, at bedtime, in your small group, etc.) neglect how Jesus taught us to pray?

9) How has studying these 13 verses made you want to pray and helped you with what to pray?

ASK

Prayer:

- Break up into groups of three to five.
- Using the template of the Lord's Prayer, take turns praying your version of this sample prayer.

Think about this:

The book of Luke often mentions that Jesus was praying or teaching on prayer. Luke records that he often went to pray alone (4:42); that he was praying when he withdrew to the wilderness (5:16-17), when he was about to choose his disciples (6:12-16), and when he asked his disciples, "Who do you say I am?" (9:20); and offered a prayer of thanksgiving when the 70 returned from their mission (10:21-22). Only Luke records that Jesus was praying when the heavens opened at his baptism (3:21-22) or that at the transfiguration he was taking Peter, James, and John to the mountain to pray (9:28-29). Jesus prayed for Peter when Satan asked to sift him (22:31-32) and encouraged the disciples to pray like him that they would not enter into temptation at Gethsemane (22:40, 46). Luke also records Jesus' two prayers on the cross (23:34, 46). Three parables related to prayer appear only in Luke: the neighbor in need of bread (11:5-8), the persistent widow (18:1-8), and the tax collector and the Pharisee (18:9-14).

Luke 11:13 concludes one of Jesus' teachings on prayer (our passage for this week) with the assurance that the best gift the Father can and will give is the Holy Spirit. Luke's other work in the Scripture is the book of Acts. Throughout the book of Acts, the power of the Holy Spirit is put on display (1:8; 2:1-4, 38; 9:31; 11:15; 13:52). In Acts 8:15-17 we see the Holy Spirit given in response to prayer. It is the presence of the Spirit that propels the disciples to be bold witnesses to Christ's coming kingdom. Everything that we are commanded to pray in the Lord's Prayer (Luke 11:2-4) is enabled, accomplished, and secured through the coming of the Holy Spirit.