

Jesus Teaches How To Pray

Luke 11:1, "*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."*

There was nothing, formal or ordinary about Jesus' praying. Imagine the groaning, the tears, the child-like faith, the urgency in Jesus' prayers. His disciples marveled at His praying and asked, "*Teach us to pray!*" Jesus' disciples needed to be taught to pray. We need to be taught to pray too!

Verses 2-13 gives Jesus' response to their request.

Verse 2, "*He said to them, `When you pray, say: Father, hallowed be Your name, Your kingdom come. (Verse 3) Give us each day our daily bread. (Verse 4) Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us. And lead us not into temptation.'"*

In verse 2, Jesus shows that, in prayer, we are to enter into God's presence with praise and in verse 3, Jesus tells us that we are, then, to pray for our needs. We are to present to God, our simple, common everyday needs, such as: food, cloths, shelter and job. We are to pray for our physical necessities, realizing our dependence upon God. Like a child who comes to his father, or mother, for his everyday, such as our, "*daily bread.*"

In verse 4, Jesus shows us the prayer of confessing. We must sincerely ask God to, "*forgive us of our sins.*" Then, verse 4 continues with showing that our praying must be asking for God's guidance, "*Lead us not into temptation, but deliver from evil.*"

Jesus teaches us that daily praying is, after offering praise to God, is: asking for four different things: bread, forgiveness, guidance, and protection

Note that there is no "Amen" after verse 4. Jesus' lesson on prayer not over, but, rather, Jesus has only dealt with the simple *elementary* prayer. Beginning with verse 5 Jesus goes further into the marvelous realm of intercessory prayer. He shows the broken hearted burden, pleading *for a friend!*"

Verse 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, (Verse 6) because a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have nothing to set before him.'*

Blessed is the man who has a friend! The man Jesus mentioned has two friends. Every Christian has two friends: First, every Christian has God as a Friend, nearby, with plenty of bread. Second, every Christian has a friend, "*without, asking for bread.*" The Christian is the channel between these two friends.

Jesus taught us to pray, "*As a man who desperately needs bread for his friend, and so he goes to another friend and pleads, until he gets all he needs!*

THERE ARE TWO EXTREMES IN CHRISTIANITY

First, Christians who never separates from the world and lives like the world, Second, Christians who separate themselves completely from the world and has no love for sinners. However, Jesus taught that Christians are to be the link between two worlds: The spirit world of God and the earthly world of man.

We are to pray as Moses prayed for the children of Israel, when he prayed, "*God, do not blot out their names out of the book and, if You blot out their names . . . blot my name out also.*" I can't say that I understand all that was going on here when Moses made this request to God, but, I do believe that this is exactly the kind of burden, determination and concern that God wants us to have for our friends on earth.

We are to pray as Ester prayed when she pleaded with God for the salvation of the Jewish nations from hands of Haman. We are to pray as Daniel prayed, when he "*By prayer, supplications, with fasting, prayed for his people.*" We are to pray as Paul prayed, when he with "*great heaviness and continual sorrow in heart*", prayed, "*I could wish myself accursed for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.*" We are to pray as Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, when He "*began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then said unto them, `My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.*"

1. CONFESSION (Verse 6) "*A friend of mine in his journey is come to me and I have nothing to set before him.*" What is Jesus teaching here? Jesus is teaching that we must admit our responsibility and confess, "*Here is this friend who has come my way and I have nothing to give him!*" We have a responsibility to our friends, and associates. God expects us to give them "*The Bread of Life!*"

Many Christians barely mention Christ Jesus to their friends because they are too timid to invite to church. We must confess, "*God, I don't have what it takes.*" Prayer is seeking God for help for a friend. We must have power of Holy Spirit, the boldness, the concern, the travail of soul, the burning words and tears, which the Holy Spirit will bring. We must be honest and pray this, "*Prayer of Confession: `A friend is come to me AND I HAVE NOTHING TO GIVE HIM. Oh, God, I confess my failure, my barrenness, my shallowness and my lack of fruit-bearing.*"

Alibis and excuses will not do. God has bread! His compassionate heart will provide a wedding table full of delightful bread for all men, but Christians must carry it to others!

Jesus is teaching to Christians is, "*You get bread which He has in abundance and give it to those who have none!*"

To get this bread it takes IMPORTUNITY Verse 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.'*" (Verse 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.*"

Jesus teaches us that we must "*pray until the answer comes.*"

Here it was mid-night. This kind of praying will break up the ordinary routine of life. It

must be willing to take extraordinary measure, if necessary. This kind of praying is inconvenient.

Does God always answer?

Note that there is no favorable answer *at first!* In verse 7 the man with the bread says, "*Don't trouble me.*" Why would Jesus picture God, our heavenly Friend, as being unwilling to answer our prayer at first?

The answer: Would you give a young child an electric saw to just play with? Would you give your 6 year old daughter an electric sewing machine to play with? Would you give your 10 year old son the automobile to go out and play with? No, of course, because these high-powered machines are not for infants.

How foolish it would be to expect God to place the dynamite of heaven in careless hands of Christians who do not know how to travail, carry a burden or have a sense of shame for sin. God will not give this power to a light hearted Christian simply because he casually asks for it. This mighty power to defeat Satan and transform lives is the same infinite power that raised Jesus from the dead. God will only give this power to those who are diligent about their "*asking*" and concerned enough to be persistent.

Jesus tells us that, because of the man's persistence (importunity) his "*nearby Friend*" will get up and give him as much as he needs!

As a Christian, you have the right to pray, "*Our Father which art in heaven give me bread, forgiveness, guidance and protection,*" BUT, HERE IS A

LESSON ON INTERCESSORY PRAYING

This *friend* was provided for because of importunity, pleading and insistence! There are some blessings that will not come unless there is pleading, waiting upon God and praying through until the answer is received.

Anyone is saved the moment they come to God, but they can receive God's POWER only after they take the time and effort to show Him that they mean business with Him.

"How to pray?"

The kind of praying, Jesus is teaching about here, is like rattling heaven's door, being persistent and incessant with God in obtaining an answer to our prayer.

GOD'S "NO" DOES NOT ALWAYS MEAN NO!

This message from Jesus should be an encouragement to everyone longing to win souls: "*Simply keep on asking.*"

Verse 9-10, "*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.*"

The Greek word here translated as "*ask, seek and knock,*" involves: "*continued asking, seeking, and knocking.*"

Don't be afraid to ask God, because God never give BAD gifts:

Verse 11-13 "*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!*"

Jesus, in answering His disciples request, "*Teach us how to pray,*" waited until the very last words to emphasize, "*Pray for the Holy Spirit!*"