

Luke Chapter 11 v 1 - 13

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Preacher: Joel Metcalfe

[0 : 0 0] So on page 1042 in your Bibles, if you're using a church Bible. So the first 13 verses of Luke chapter 11.

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.

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. Then Jesus said to them, Suppose you have a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say, Friend, lend me three loaves of bread.

A friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have no food to offer him. And suppose the one inside answers, Don't bother me. The door is already locked, and my children and I are in bed.

[1 : 1 5] I can't get up and give you anything. I tell you, even though he will not get up and give you the bread because of friendship, yet because of your shameless audacity, he will surely get up and give you as much as you need.

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. The one who seeks finds, and to the one 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're 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?

Good evening. I'd say my voice is still a bit croaky, so just tell me to speak up. I don't know if I'm too quiet. Thank you.

[2 : 3 0] So we're looking today at prayer. And I wonder what you think of when you hear the topic prayer. Does it make you feel guilty? Perhaps you think, oh, I don't pray enough.

And I can think that sometimes. You might think, how do I pray? I don't know how to pray. Perhaps you've been in a situation where you're in a prayer meeting and someone prays this powerful prayer and you think, I don't want to be the next person.

I don't want to follow that up. Well, perhaps this is a similar situation that we're looking at. So one of the disciples has just heard Jesus praying.

And you can imagine the power which Jesus would pray, the intimacy that he had with his Father. And he asked this question. He says, Lord, teach us to pray just as John taught his disciples.

And perhaps the answer that Jesus gives is quite surprising. But actually, he doesn't rebuke this man for his lack of prayer.

[3 : 36] But actually, everything he says to this man is encouragement that we can come before the Father. And he gives many illustrations which we'll go into.

So I hope this sermon actually encourages you in your prayer life. I hope you don't go away just feeling guilty. But I hope it encourages you to want to pray because it is a great privilege, isn't it?

That hymn that we just sung, the first line, it's taken from Hebrews 4 and it describes what prayer is and it's coming before the throne of grace. And that's the privilege we have to come before the Father and speak to him.

And in prayer, we get to know God and also we're included in what he's doing on earth, aren't we? So it's a great privilege. Now, this prayer, the Lord's Prayer, it's a model that Jesus teaches to his disciples how to pray.

This isn't the only time in the Bible that it's spoken of. It's also in Matthew 6 and the Sermon of the Mount. And this is, in a sense, it's a shortened version of that prayer. But you get the sense that Jesus, perhaps he would have given this prayer often as a model.

[4 : 49] And so we can actually learn from this prayer. Perhaps we don't have to pray it word for word because this version is actually slightly different from the other version. It's shortened.

But it's a helpful model for us. There's something in it which teaches us how to pray. And one of the things which is surrounded by both of these prayers after the Sermon of the Mount and here is Jesus' emphasis on Father.

And that's the basis of our prayers. Jesus thinks this is really important, the fact that we call God Father. And that would have been quite a new thing to the people watching.

So in the Old Testament, God is called the Father of the Nation. But to come before God, the Maker of the Universe, and call Him Father, it's a very intimate term. And think of the terms that we, Jesus could have chosen.

He could have chosen Creator. We come before the Creator of the world. He could have said we come before the King as a servant. He could have said you come before the Judge. And all those things, all those things are true.

[5 : 52] But Jesus chooses this word Father. And He chooses to give teachings about what it means for God to be Father. So think of a child coming before their father when we pray.

It's a term of intimacy. It's a term of humility. That we're complete, as a child, we're completely dependent on our father, aren't we? It's also, in a sense, it's a term of boldness.

A child coming before his father can get away with saying things that no one else can. But that's the relationship that God has with us, that God chooses.

That's the word He chooses for us to come before Him when we speak to Him. It's Father. So Jesus gives two illustrations. And I want to look at these illustrations first and think of them in the context of Father, what they mean for us.

And then we're going to go briefly into the Lord's Prayer, into the structure of that. So the first illustration is about this man who a friend's come around on a long journey.

[6 : 55] It says it's midnight and I want you to think in that culture, perhaps it's 40 degrees perhaps outside. And so when people are traveling, they wouldn't do their traveling in the day, they do it at night time when it's cool.

So this is a normal scenario. And hospitality, it's a big thing in that culture. So this man, he's been caught unawares by his friend. He doesn't have any food to give him. So he decides to go to his neighbor and knock at the door.

But it says it's midnight. And think midnight in a culture where there's no electricity. So perhaps it's more like three in the morning for us. The houses are small.

All the children and the adults would sleep in one room. And it says they're in one bed. It says I and my children are in bed. And the last thing you want to do in the middle of the night is wake your children up, is it?

So you can imagine how annoying this person is knocking on this guy's door at three in the morning, well, midnight, when his children are asleep. So you can imagine this man's annoyance and you get the impression he ignores them first.

[8 : 06] But Jesus says this. I tell you, even though he will not get up and give you the bread because of the friendship. And I think the friendship is probably in question by this point, isn't it?

But he says, yeah, because of your shameless audacity he will surely get up and give you as much as you need. And these two words, shameless audacity, they're bold words, aren't we?

But Jesus is inviting us to come before the Father with shameless audacity. And I want you to compare the man. God isn't like this man who's asleep.

Perhaps we're similar to this man knocking on the door. But you know, God, the God of Israel, he doesn't slumber or sleep, does he? It says that in the Psalms. it's not an effort for him to give us any of our needs.

He's the one, he owns a castle on a thousand hills. Everything is his. He can say the word and he actually wants us to come to him. He's inviting us to come to him with shameless audacity. So he's not like this man.

[9 : 13] And God, in a sense, he's asking us to come to him and to bother him, in a sense, isn't he? He's saying, bother me whenever, in the middle of the night. I want you to come to me. There's not a thing that's too small for us to come to God with.

It says in Philippians 4, do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your request to God. So God wants us to come to him with every need.

He wants us to be dependent on him. You know, as a child to a father, there's nothing too small, there's nothing too great that we can't come before our God with. But shameless audacity, you might think, this isn't very reverent, is it?

No, God, he's the creator of everything. And he says, come before him with shameless audacity. And it made me think, the Old Testament, think of Abraham and think of Moses.

And their view of God, it was one of respect, wasn't it? And I think actually the Lord's Prayer gets it perfect when it says, our Father, hallowed be your name. And it puts these two things together.

[10 : 20] So there's intimacy, but there's honor as well. And I thought of Abraham when he's bargaining, in a sense, with God over Sodom and Gomorrah.

And God, obviously, he's including Abraham in this decision. But there's a boldness, isn't there? You know, we're bargaining with the creator of the world in his sovereign decision.

Moses, when God says, I'm going to destroy this people after they worship the calf. And Moses says, if you will destroy them, then block me out of your book also.

There's a boldness, which God actually invites us to come to him with. There's a boldness, but also a respect. Isaiah 62, verse 6, says this, you who call on the Lord, give yourselves no rest, and give him no rest till he establishes Jerusalem and makes her the praise of the earth.

And so the prophet, Isaiah, he's inviting Israel, God's people, to give him no rest until he establishes Jerusalem. And in a sense, that's what Jesus is inviting us to do here, isn't it?

[11 : 34] It's to give God no rest until he hears our prayers. And it goes on to say, knock and the door will be opened to you. Seek and you will find.

For everyone who asks receives, the one who seeks finds, and the one who knocks, the door will be opened. And if you look in the Greek, a better translation, because of the tenses, would be more like this.

Go on seeking and you will find. Go on knocking and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who goes on asking receives. Everyone who goes on seeking finds.

The one who goes on knocking, the door will be opened. So the first thing that Jesus is inviting us to do in our prayers is to seek God, is to pursue him, is to be bold, to be shameless before him in a sense.

But we've said that God, he's not like, he's not like this man who's asleep and he's annoyed at his friend. And the next illustration, it shows what our God is like. And again, it gets at this idea of father.

[12 : 38] So he gives an example of, he says, if you ask your father for bread, he won't give you a stone, will he? And you think a loaf of bread, it looks a bit like a stone.

And then he says, if you come to your father and ask for a fish, he won't give you a scorpion. And apparently, a scorpion wrapped up actually looks like a fish.

I haven't seen a picture, but apparently that's true. And so, what he's saying is, look, you are evil. It says, you who are evil know how to give gifts to your children.

God, he's not going to play tricks on us. We don't have to come before him and think he's going to play tricks on us. He's actually a good God. He's better than us. And we know how to give good things to our children.

So God wants us to trust him. His character is good. His character is, he's a father. He's a loving father. He wants to give us good gifts. And I realize I'm quoting the Matthew version.

[13 : 39] This version actually says, how much more will your father give you the Holy Spirit to those who ask him? And that's the best gift of all, isn't it? The Holy Spirit. So what does it mean for God to be our father?

What does it mean when we come to God as our father? Well, number one, he knows how to give us good gifts. He wants the best for us. So what does it mean when we don't get those things?

Well, we need to trust that God has something better in mind for us. He has the best in mind for us. Sometimes, perhaps, we have this, sometimes, perhaps, you can think of times when you've prayed and God hasn't answered as we thought, but he answers in a different way.

He does something different, which is better. God actually knows what we need. We need to trust him, but also he wants a relationship with us. Perhaps we don't get our answer because he's testing our faith, because he wants us to pursue him.

He wants his father and son relationship. And part of prayer, it's growing in this relationship with God. I want to read this verse in James.

[14 : 56] And it's about, you know, why don't we always get what we ask for? And James says this, you do not have because you do not ask God. So that's number one.

And I think we've covered that in a sense, haven't we? It's God wants us to seek him. God wants us to go on asking. So that's the first thing. Are we seeking God day by day or do we forget to keep on asking?

And the second thing is this, and when you ask, you do not receive because you ask with wrong motives that you may spend what you get on your pleasures. And so, in a sense, the second thing James is saying is there are appropriate things to ask God.

There are certain things which we should be asking God for and perhaps certain things we shouldn't. And what are our motives when we're coming to God in prayer? Are they selfish motives or are they glorifying to God?

And I want us to think about the things that Jesus lists that we're to ask him for. So in the Lord's Prayer here, it's give us today our daily bread. So it's give us our physical needs, give us enough, sustain us, forgive us our sins.

[16 : 18] So we're coming, we're confessing our sins before God. The third thing is this, and also forgive everyone else, sorry, that's the second part, forgive everyone else who sins against us.

The final thing is lead us not into temptation. So it's forgive us our sins and give us victory. Make us holy in a sense. Give us victory over our future sin.

And the final thing is the Holy Spirit. He says, how much more will your Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask? And I want to suggest that these things are said in the context of the first half of the Lord's Prayer.

So the second half of the Lord's Prayer are these requests to God. But they come out of the first half of the Lord's Prayer, which is worship and adoration of God.

And so these requests, they're in line with God's kingdom, with his name being honoured. So prayer, it's not merely about coming to God for our own needs, for our requests, that's part of it.

[17 : 24] But it's also a relationship with God. And I think the order of the Lord's Prayer is important. It starts with praise, it starts with adoration. Father, hallowed be your name.

May your name, the name in the Bible, it stands for the character of God, everything you stand for, everything you are. May your name, who you are, may that be glorified, may that be set apart as holy.

And the second thing is, may your kingdom come. I want you to be king in everything in my life, in every situation in my life. May you be first. And obviously, one day, the kingdom will come in its fullness, won't it?

And there will be no more pain, there will be no more suffering, there will be no more sin. But, there's glimpses of that now, isn't there? God brings his kingdom into our own situation.

And so, the requests, they come after a time of adoration with God. So, I'll go through these requests. It says, give us today our daily bread.

[18 : 34] And it's not extravagant, is it? It's not make me famous, make me rich. It's give me today my daily needs. It's expressing dependence on God. Proverbs 30, verse 8, says this, give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread.

Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, who is the Lord? Or I may become poor and steal and so dishonor the name of my God. And so, in light of who God is, in light of his kingdom and his name being glorified, we can say, God, we're content in you.

I'm not about my own kingdom in a sense. I'm not about my own riches. Just give me enough to keep me humble, to keep me dependent on you, but give me enough for my needs. the next thing, forgive us our sins as we forgive everyone who sins against us.

And I want you to think about that in the context of a father and a son. You know, we have assurance, don't we? We're not saying every day, God, I need you to forgive me again, I need you to forgive me again, I'm not sure that I'm getting into heaven.

But he says this, you know, you've got to think of it as a son coming before his father and confessing, confessing every day his sins. So, you know, not in a sense of coming before a judge, but coming before a father.

[20 : 06] In the, when Jesus washes his disciples' feet, he says to Peter, doesn't he, he says, you're clean, but I can't remember the wording exactly, but it's, but you know, there's dust on your feet and I need to, that needs to be washed.

Because Peter says, you know, not only my feet, but my whole body. But Jesus says, I've made you clean. But we pick up dust, don't we, every day in our daily walk.

And we need to come before the father and confess our sins. We want to be made holy. And last thing, lead us not into temptation. And it's, it's give us victory over our sin, isn't it?

It's, we want to be holy. We want to live lives in line with your kingdom, glorifying you, honoring you. So, as a summary, I'm going to read this verse.

So, John 15, verse 7, it says this, if you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish and it will be done for you. And so, our requests, they flow out of a relationship with God, don't they?

[21 : 29] And as we see the importance of the first half of the Lord's Prayer, you know, spending time having a relationship with our father, if we remain in him and his words in us, then our desires become God's desires.

And when our desires are glorifying to God, then those are the prayers that God wants to answer, doesn't he? The Psalms, it says this, delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart.

So, when our desires, when they become God's desires, then he's going to answer those prayers, doesn't he? He's going to give us our desires. So, how do we see our prayers answered?

I think it's twofold. It's, number one, it comes out of a relationship with him. When our desires become his desires, when we pray in line with his will, when our will, when we're, you know, we're so tightly knit with God, our will becomes his.

And that's one major aspect of prayer. It's this union with God and that's part of the privilege. It's getting to know our Heavenly Father. And number two, it's persistence and God wants us to be persistent.

[22 : 36] He wants to, he wants us to, our faith to grow in a sense. Think, every time I pray to God and that prayer hasn't been answered, every time I pray that again, you're exercising faith, aren't you?

Your faith, in a sense, is growing. And I've spoken to people in this room who've said, you know, they've prayed for family members for years and years and years and finally they've been saved but, you know, Janet says 40 years later.

But, you know, God is glorified in those situations, isn't he? So we don't know why God answers some prayers, why he doesn't answer some prayers. We don't understand God's timing but we can be assured that he knows what's best and he'll honour his own name, won't he?

We'll just finish with... We'll just set this room. to the man's name there and more we have is coming conhecida and we can...

to the woman's name QU-BOEIE