

## **Parable of the Friend at Midnight**

*Luke 11<sup>1-13</sup>*

### **Warm Up Question(s)** – Choose one

- What have you tried to do in recent memory that you needed to get help or advice for? Who/where did you turn to and why?
- Recall a time when you were awakened at an “ungodly hour” to attend to a need. How did you respond?

### **Introduction**

How should we pray? The disciples asked Jesus to teach them to prayer. He responded to their request with a simple prayer and a few short stories that illustrated how prayer is more about revealing our hearts to God and having the faith to ask for what we need than it is about persuading a reluctant God. In today’s lesson we learn about the heart and character of the God to whom we pray.

### **Discovering the Word**

- 1) **Read Luke 11:1-13.** What prompts the disciples to ask about prayer at this point (v.1)?
- 2) What are the various aspects/parts of Jesus model prayer and how would you label them?
- 3) What scope and flow do you see in Jesus’ prayer that could be applied to our own prayers?
- 4) What does Jesus’s short story in verses 5-8 contribute to his lesson on prayer?
- 5) Compare the various translations of verse 8 (next page) and you will notice that translators differ on whether Jesus is referring to the “persistence” of the asker or the “shame” of the one being asked (if he doesn’t help). These very different translations are rooted in different cultural differences.<sup>1</sup> What difference does it make if we believe that answered prayer is a result of God’s love or answered prayer is a result of our persistence?
- 6) What gives you confidence to believe that God will respond to your prayers?
- 7) What do you do with prayers that seem to go unanswered (*cf.* 2 Cor. 12<sup>7-10</sup>)?
- 8) In what ways is the Holy Spirit a “good gift” (*cf.* Acts 1<sup>4-8</sup>)?
- 9) How would your thinking and acting change if you embraced the point of this parable?

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<sup>1</sup> What is unimaginable in western culture is waking a neighbour up such an ungodly hour. But what is unimaginable in middle eastern & many Asian cultures (who place a high value on hospitality), is someone not helping a friend provide good hospitality—to neglect doing so would be shameful to him, to the host.

Luke 11:1-13 (NIV2011)

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.”

<sup>2</sup> He said to them, “When you pray, say: “‘Father,<sup>[a]</sup> hallowed be your name, your kingdom come.<sup>[b]</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Give us each day our daily bread.

<sup>4</sup> Forgive us our sins,

for we also forgive everyone who sins against us.<sup>[c]</sup>

And lead us not into temptation.<sup>[d]</sup>”

<sup>5</sup> 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; <sup>6</sup> a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have no food to offer him.’ <sup>7</sup> And suppose the one inside answers, ‘Don’t bother me. The door is already locked, and my children and I are in bed. I can’t get up and give you anything.’ <sup>8</sup> *I tell you, even though he will not get up and give you the bread because of friendship, yet because of your shameless audacity<sup>[e]</sup> he will surely get up and give you as much as you need.*

<sup>9</sup> “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. <sup>10</sup> For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

<sup>11</sup> “Which of you fathers, if your son asks for<sup>[f]</sup> a fish, will give him a snake instead? <sup>12</sup> Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? <sup>13</sup> 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!”

**Footnotes:**

- a. [Luke 11:2](#) Some manuscripts *Our Father in heaven*
- b. [Luke 11:2](#) Some manuscripts *come. May your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*
- c. [Luke 11:4](#) Greek *everyone who is indebted to us*
- d. [Luke 11:4](#) Some manuscripts *temptation, but deliver us from the evil one*
- e. [Luke 11:8](#) Or *yet to preserve his good name*
- f. [Luke 11:11](#) Some manuscripts *for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for*

Luke 11:1-13 (alternate translation)<sup>1</sup>

He was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.” <sup>2</sup> He said to them, “When you pray, say:

Father,<sup>[a]</sup> hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come.<sup>[b]</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Give us each day our daily bread.<sup>[c]</sup>

<sup>4</sup> And forgive us our sins,

for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us.

And do not bring us to the time of trial.”<sup>[d]</sup>

<sup>5</sup> And he said to them, “Suppose one of you has a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; <sup>6</sup> for a friend of mine has arrived, and I have nothing to set before him.’ <sup>7</sup> And he answers from within, ‘Do not bother me; the door has already been locked, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything.’ <sup>8</sup> *I tell you, even if he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, in order to avoid dishonor he will get up and give him whatever he needs.*

<sup>9</sup> “So I say to you, Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. <sup>10</sup> For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. <sup>11</sup> Which father among you whose child asks for<sup>[e]</sup> a fish, will give a snake instead of a fish?

<sup>12</sup> Or if the child asks for an egg, will give a scorpion? <sup>13</sup> If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit<sup>[f]</sup> to those who ask him!”

**Footnotes:**

- <sup>1</sup> Translation by Joel B. Green, [Luke](#), p.445.
- a. [Luke 11:2](#) Other ancient authorities read *Our Father in heaven*
- b. [Luke 11:2](#) A few ancient authorities read *Your Holy Spirit come upon us and cleanse us*. Other ancient authorities add *Your will be done, on earth as in heaven*
- c. [Luke 11:3](#) Or *our bread for tomorrow*
- d. [Luke 11:4](#) Or *us into temptation*. Other ancient authorities add *but rescue us from the evil one (or from evil)*
- e. [Luke 11:11](#) Other ancient authorities add *bread, will give a stone; or if your child asks for*
- f. [Luke 11:13](#) Other ancient authorities read *the Father give the Holy Spirit from heaven*

Luke 11:1-13 (ESV)

Now Jesus<sup>[a]</sup> was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.” <sup>2</sup> And he said to them, “When you pray, say:

“Father, hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come.

<sup>3</sup> Give us each day our daily bread,<sup>[b]</sup>

<sup>4</sup> and forgive us our sins,

for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us.

And lead us not into temptation.”

<sup>5</sup> And he said to them, “Which of you who has a friend will go to him at midnight and say to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves, <sup>6</sup> for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him’; <sup>7</sup> and he will answer from within, ‘Do not bother me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed. I cannot get up and give you anything’? <sup>8</sup> *I tell you, though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his impudence<sup>[c]</sup> he will rise and give him whatever he needs.* <sup>9</sup> And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. <sup>10</sup> For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. <sup>11</sup> What father among you, if his son asks for<sup>[d]</sup> a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; <sup>12</sup> or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? <sup>13</sup> If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”

**Footnotes:**

- a. [Luke 11:1](#) Greek *he*
- b. [Luke 11:3](#) Or *our bread for tomorrow*
- c. [Luke 11:8](#) Or *persistence*
- d. [Luke 11:11](#) Some manuscripts insert *bread, will give him a stone; or if he asks for*