



A FRIEND IN NEED

This is part 12 of the PrayER – Learning From Jesus How To Pray sermon series

SUMMARY

God knew that as we make our way through life that there would be certain elements and circumstances that would come into our life that were simply greater than we are. His solution to the problems of our life was to make Himself and His resources available to His people. The means by which we can tap into the presence, the provisions, and the power of God is prayer, and yet, most of prayer lives are struggling to show any signs of life. In this series of thoughts, we are taking our prayer life to the emergency where we will learn from the Great Physician how to pray.

REVIEW

In this study, we're journeying through the model prayer and we're discovering how to pray. So far, we've considered the following:

We looked at the phrase "...Our Father which art in Heaven..." and we found that when we pray, we should pray according to our **ADOPTION**, according to our Father's **AUTHORITY**, and according to a right **AFFECTION**.

We looked at the phrase "...Hallowed be thy name...." and we found that our prayers should consist of two parts: the **VERTICAL** part (our relationship with God) and the **HORIZONTAL part** (our relationship with the world around us). Prayer is more than just a way for us to **GET**

SOMETHING FROM GOD; prayer is a way for us to **GIVE SOMETHING TO GOD**. We give God glory when we recognize the holiness of God when we enter into His presence.

We looked at the phrase “...*Thy kingdom come...*” and we found that it is an expression of the heart that desires for the **WORD** of God and the **WORK** of God to become a reality.

We looked at the phrase “...*Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven...*” and we found that the goal of our prayer life must be our surrender to the Lord’s will. There is nothing that we **WANT** that is more important than God’s **WILL** for our life – **NOTHING!**

This marked a shift in the model prayer from the vertical (our relationship with God) to the horizontal (our relationship with the world around us). We found that the latter portion of this model prayer is focused on the needs of our life: our **PROVISIONS**, our **PARDON** (forgiveness), our **PROTECTION**, and our **PRAISE-GIVING**.

We looked at the phrase “...*Give us this day our daily bread...*” and we found that God is a good God Who is ready and willing to give good things to His children. He cares about the **DESIRES** of our heart, the details of our life, and the day-to-day needs of our life, and we should bring **ALL** of them to Him in prayer.

We looked at the phrase “...*And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors...*” and we found that our prayer life is an **EXAMINATION** of what is going on in our mind, in our heart, and in our life and whether or not those things match up with what is pleasing to the Lord. We are to **CONSIDER** the sins that are in our life and confess them to our Father Who is ready and willing to forgive us restoring both our fellowship with God and our function before Him.

We looked at the phrase “*And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil...*” and we found that God often allows our faith to go through seasons of **INSPECTION** (to reveal weaknesses in our faith) and seasons of **IMPROVEMENT** (to strengthen, or temper, our faith), reminding us of the fact that God has the ability to **LIMIT** and to **DELIVER US OUT** of our temptations.

We looked at the phrase “...*For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen*” and we found that we are to “*Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise...*” (Psalm 100:4). God **HAS BEEN GOOD**, God **IS BEING GOOD**, God **WILL BE GOOD**, and I should praise Him greatly and often for the **GRACE**, the **GREATNESS**, the **GOODNESS** that God pours into my life.

We looked at the phrase “...*when ye fast...*” and we found that faith is the fuel to a strong prayer life and fasting is the means by which strong faith is produced.

We looked at the words “...*ask...seek...knock...*” and we found that we are to pray, and we are to pray **FREQUENTLY**, **CORRECTLY**, and **EFFECTIVELY**. We must **PRIORITIZE** the **PRACTICE** of prayer and we must **PASSIONATELY PURSUE** the **PROMISES** of prayer.

MESSAGE

Luke 11:5-13 says, *“And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him? And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth. And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?”*

If you're in the habit of marking things in the Word of God, I'd like to draw your attention to verse 6 where Jesus says, *“...a friend of mine...”*

For a few moments, I'd like to consider this thought: **A FRIEND IN NEED.**

I remind you that when we come to Luke chapter 11, Jesus has once again been observed and asked by one of His disciples to teach them to pray. So, once again, Jesus does just that. He begins to teach them the model prayer saying...

Luke 11:2-4 says, *“...When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.”*

This time, however, before including the doxology portion of the prayer (*“For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.”*), Jesus includes what has become known as the parable of the friend at midnight. Now, I'm not opposed to referring to this teaching as a parable, but I don't believe that Jesus is simply illustrating the principles that He has just taught on prayer. I firmly believe that Jesus is building upon the teaching that He had just given on prayer.

Let me briefly recap: Jesus taught on the **FORM** of prayer, Jesus taught on the **FUEL** of prayer (faith that has been increased through fasting), and Jesus has taught on the **FREQUENCY** and the **FERVENCY** of prayer (we are to ask, to seek, and to knock frequently, correctly, and effectively).

As I considered this particular portion of Scripture, I find that Jesus attached another word to prayer that we might not often connect. That word is the word *friend*. We find here the **FRIENDSHIP** of prayer. This parable can best be described this way: it is a friend going to a friend about a need for another friend.

In John 15:15, Jesus makes this statement: *"Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you."*

Proverbs 18:24 says, *"A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother."*

When Christ established the church, we find that God did so in order for His family to do life together and to tackle life's problems together. We are to **WORSHIP** together, we are to **SERVE** together, we are to **REJOICE** together, we are to **WEEP** together, and we are to **PRAY** together.

In Matthew 21:13, Jesus said, *"...It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer..."*

Let me say it this way: we are to pray **WITH** each other, we are to pray **FOR** each other, and we are to pray **ABOUT** each other.

In 1 Samuel 12:23, Samuel makes this statement: *"Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you..."*

If we had the time to go through the writings of the Apostle Paul, we find that Paul did not consider it **AWKWARD** to pray for his friends, and he did not consider it **SHAMEFUL** to ask his friends to pray for him. The greatest thing and the most helpful thing that we can do for our friends is to pray for them.

1) This friend prayed **PERSONALLY**

Luke 11:6 says, *"For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him?"*

When this friend went to his friend about this need, we need to understand that he wasn't just recognizing the need of his other friend, but he was acknowledging his own inability to aid his friend in this particular need. During that time, hospitality was a must. When someone showed up at your house, you were to be hospitable towards them. You were to feed them. In this particular moment, the friend who had a responsibility to demonstrate hospitality was not equipped to meet his friend's needs, but he knew where he could find what was needed for his friend's needs.

Philippians 4:19 says, *"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."*

2) This friend prayed **PRECISELY**

Luke 11:5 says, *"And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves."*

Did you notice how specific this friend's prayer was for his friend? I need three loaves of bread for my friend. If we're honest, much, too much, of our prayer life has been reduced to

generalities. Bless me, bless them, forgive me of all my sins, etc. Our prayer life should be precise. It should be specific.

When we consider the praying that the Apostle Paul did for his friends, we find that Paul was very specific in how he prayed for them.

- (1) He prayed that his friends would know the will of for the need that they were confronted with
- (2) He prayed that his friend would respond to the troubles that they were experiencing and that they would make daily decisions to live in such a way that pleased God.
- (3) He prayed that his friends would stop participating in sinful behaviors.
- (4) He prayed that his friends would engage in service that was profitable to the Lord.
- (5) He prayed that his friends would make noticeable progress in the walk with the Lord.
- (6) He prayed that his friends would receive the strength that the needed from the Lord
- (7) He prayed that his friend would have patience to endure the hardships and the hurst that they were facing
- (8) He prayed that his friends would be filled with praise and thanksgiving.

3) This friend prayed **PERSISTENTLY**

Luke 11:8 says, *"I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth."*

This was not a one-time prayer. This was a frequent and consistent practice of prayer for their friend.

Ephesians 1:15-16 says, *"Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers."*

4) This friend prayed **PROFITABLY**

Luke 11:8 says, *"I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth."*

Sometimes the greatest thing that we have to give to our friends is what God gave us in our moments of prayer for our friend.