

Title: TEACH US TO PRAY, LUKE 11:1 – 13
(Chatham, NJ; 7/24/16, AM) [D – Exegesis]

Theme: The disciples ask Jesus to teach them to pray; he not only provides a prayer but also the attitude they must have in approaching the Father.

Purpose: To provide direction to our prayers and to remind us that God wants us to ask, seek, and knock.

Introduction:

1. We can't do much better than to remind ourselves just how important is a robust prayer life.
2. Great saints from the OT like Hannah, David, and Daniel have all exhibited determination to pray at all times.
3. The disciples sense the importance of prayer when they ask Jesus to teach them to pray just as John's disciples taught his followers to pray.

I. The Prayer – “A concise direction for the God-ward life of the soul.” (a road map for spiritual growth; prayers for healing and protection aside, Jesus reveals the most important things we should be praying about)

A. Addressing God

1. More than a formal address, this reveals the appropriate relationship to God
2. “Father” – the source of life, creator, and provider
3. “Hallowed be your name” – the character of God is holy, and it is incumbent upon us to recognize His holiness: he deserves to be worshipped and his name is to be honored, not blasphemed

B. Desiring the Kingdom

1. Matthew 6:33, “seek first the Kingdom of God”
2. Though the Kingdom has come in the form of the church, we still pray for it to advance and to rule all nations
3. Moreover in praying this we affirm our personal commitment to being obedient

C. A Series of Requests

1. Give us daily bread – sustenance
2. Forgive us – the focal point of the Gospel of redemption, Ephesians 1:7
3. Lead us – away from temptation; Matthew adds “deliver us from evil,” a desire to avoid sin and sanctify our behavior
4. Give, forgive, lead: the imperative nature of these seems too forthright to approach God
5. However, this suggests not only a strong desire to live a righteous life but also the confidence to approach God, which is what Jesus encourages next

II. Persistence

A. The friend at midnight

1. Put yourself in this story – explain
2. The person with the guest feels a sense of urgency and embarrassment; his friend is waiting at home
3. The neighbor – tired, aroused from sleep, and the kids are crying
4. Everything about this is a bother, an enormous inconvenience
5. Hospitality was important in that culture (it should be in ours)
6. 1 Peter 4:9 – practice it without grumbling; keep your doors open to friendship and good will toward all
7. Hebrews 13:2 – toward strangers as well

- B. Persistence drives the person with the need
 - 1. He just won't go away
 - 2. His neighbor gets up only because of this
 - 3. Because he persists everyone gets what he needs: the first man gets bread, the traveler gets fed, and the neighbor gets to go back to sleep

III. The Payoff

- A. Ask, Seek, Knock
 - 1. Will God refuse?
 - 2. Earthly parents versus God
 - 3. Does God need to be roused from sleep?
 - 4. God invites persistence in prayer

- B. He will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask
 - 1. This is the key to the whole passage
 - 2. Not about "what I want but what I need"
 - 3. It is about desiring God and his Kingdom
 - 4. The whole context of this teaching revolves around the prayer: God, His Kingdom, forgiveness, protection from evil, and obtaining necessities

Conclusion:

- 1. This all began with the disciples' request for prayer guidance.
- 2. It ends with the assurance that God provides both guidance and spiritual help.
- 3. How badly do you want what God provides?
- 4. How focused is your soul on God?
- 5. If you see your need, you only need to ask.
- 6. Your first need is redemption, and you get that through the Gospel.