

Luke 11 - Confidence to Pray

Prayer can be frustrating - "I need more" - not disciplined - unanswered prayers - "I give up"

A couple things we learned from the LORD's Prayer

- Prayer is centered in a **RELATIONSHIP** --- "**Our Father** who is in Heaven" (Luke 11:2)
- Prayer is more about the **ALIGNMENT** of my heart to His will (Luke 11:2-4)

He wants us to have CONFIDENCE as the ASKER - Ask and Receive)

Luk 11:5-10 ESV 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, 6 for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; 7 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'? 8 I tell you, though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, **yet because of his impudence he will rise and give him whatever he needs.** 9 **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.** 10 For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened.

He is teaching --- that we should have an expectation for asking

- The Father is more responsive than this friend
- The LORD wants us to come and ASK, SEEK and KNOCK
- He wants us to expect to RECEIVE, to FIND and have DOORS OPENED

Various intensities of prayer - God is not a candy dispensing machine

ASK - But "not doubting"

- Jas 1:5-6 ESV If any of you lacks wisdom, let him **ask** God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. 6 But let him **ask in faith**, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind.

SEEK - not a one time scan but diligent search (i.e. seek for lost coin Luk 15:8)

- 2Co 12:7-10 NIV or because of these surpassingly great revelations. Therefore, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a **thorn in my flesh**, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. 8 **Three times I pleaded** with the Lord to take it away from me. 9 But he said to me, "**My grace is sufficient** for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.
 - **Sometimes "NO" is a GOOD answer**

KNOCK - looking for a door to open

- Rom 1:10-13 NIV ... in my prayers at all times; and I pray that now at last by God's will the way may be opened for me to come to you. 11 I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong-- 12 that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith. 13 I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that I planned many times to come to you (but have been prevented from doing so until now) in order that I might have a harvest among you, just as I have had among the other Gentiles.
 - **Sometimes "WAIT" is the answer**

Message is - Keep asking - Keep seeking - Keep knocking

- *The Greek verb tense of “keep (on) asking, keep (on) seeking, keep(on) knocking” is the present imperative, which means continuous action ... do not stop.*
- 1Th 5:17 KJV Pray without ceasing.
 - without ceasing means **constantly recurring**
- Luke 18:1 NIV Then Jesus told his disciples a parable **to show them that they should always pray and not give up.**

George Muller - a great example of NOT GIVING UP

He was a man who set up orphanages - never asked for money, but prayed for it...He also prayed for people...Here is what he wrote about that in November 1844:

*I BEGAN TO PRAY FOR THE CONVERSION OF FIVE INDIVIDUALS. I PRAYED EVERY DAY WITHOUT A SINGLE INTERMISSION, WHETHER SICK OR IN HEALTH, ON THE LAND, ON THE SEA, AND WHATEVER THE PRESSURE OF MY ENGAGEMENTS MIGHT BE. **EIGHTEEN MONTHS ELAPSED BEFORE THE FIRST OF THE FIVE WAS CONVERTED. I THANKED GOD AND PRAYED ON FOR THE OTHERS. FIVE YEARS ELAPSED, AND THEN THE SECOND WAS CONVERTED. I THANKED GOD FOR THE SECOND, AND PRAYED ON FOR THE OTHER THREE. DAY BY DAY, I CONTINUED TO PRAY FOR THEM, AND SIX YEARS PASSED BEFORE THE THIRD WAS CONVERTED. I THANKED GOD FOR THE THREE, AND WENT ON PRAYING FOR THE OTHER TWO. THESE TWO REMAINED UNCONVERTED***

36 Years later he wrote that the other two (sons of one of Mueller's friends) were still not converted. He wrote:

“BUT I HOPE IN GOD, I PRAY ON, AND LOOK FOR THE ANSWER. THEY ARE NOT CONVERTED YET, BUT THEY WILL BE.”

In 1897 (52 years after he began to pray daily without interruption for these 2 men) George Mueller died. **1 Week later these two men** confessed Jesus as their LORD.

Why Some People Don't Pray - ie Ask, Seek or Knock

- Not sure how to do it --- feel insecure --- don't have the right words
- Too busy or too tired --- I've got better things to do - I'd rather be doing something else
- Mad at God --- or not sure it will make a difference --- lack of faith
- Pride - Prayer reminds me of how much I depend on God - but I got this
- Too lazy
- God has let them down somehow

He Wants us to Have CONFIDENCE Because of the ANSWERER

Luk 11:11-13 ESV What ***father*** among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; 12 or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? 13 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!**"

He is a Father and will give us good things

- Mat 7:11 ESV If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your ***Father who is in heaven give good things*** to those who ask him!

The fact is God Gives GOOD things...

Goodness seen from a Simple Act like giving rain - to the giving of His Son to die

Act 14:17 KJV Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.

One of Satan's tactics has been to call into question the goodness of God

- **Adam and Eve** - He is trying to keep something good from you - wisdom and good food
- **Job** - the only reason He serves you is all the GOOD things he has - remove them and see what happens
 - Thank God that Job understood something about the goodness of God and that this attribute is UNCHANGING regardless of his circumstances

HE IS GOOD

GOD = Anglo-Saxon word for "good," - God refers to the divine goodness or "The Good"
Word origin of our word God goes back via Germanic to Indo-European, in which a corresponding ancestor form meant "invoked one." -- in a sense God means **"to invoke the one who is Good"**

GOODNESS is the essence of His Glory

- Exo 33:18-19 ESV Moses said, "**Please show me your glory.**" 19 And he said, "***I will make all my goodness pass before you*** and will proclaim before you my name 'The LORD.' And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy.

Arthur Pink "The Attributes of God"

- "May God grant that His goodness becomes a truth we not only accept, but embrace, so that **it [His Goodness] becomes the perspective from which we view all of the events of our lives.**"

He IS Good and WHAT HE DOES is GOOD (perfect character - extreme kindness)

- Psalms 119:65-68 NIV ***Do good*** to your servant according to your word, LORD. (66) Teach me knowledge and good judgment, for I trust your commands. (67) Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I obey your word. (68) ***You are good, and what you do is good;*** teach me your decrees.
 - This speaks of His Character - You are good
 - This speaks of His extreme kindness - "What you do is Good"
 - This was spoken in the context of ***having been afflicted***

HE DOES GOOD

When it is MY my prayer - we determine what is GOOD from our perspective ONLY

Maybe part of our failure is not remembering that HE IS GOOD

- Job and his wife came down on two different sides of the same event
- The difference is Job was convinced of the GOODNESS of God - “though He slay me yet I will trust Him

Maybe part of our failure is not understanding what is truly good for us

In Scripture we say --- “NO” answers --- and “WAIT” answers.

- 7 yr old - Dad I want a ½ gallon of ice cream for dessert (**a”no” answered prayer**)
- 14 year old - Dad I want to borrow the car so me and some friends can go to the game together (**a “Wait” answered prayer**)
- **Remember He is a FATHER who gives GOOD gifts to His children**

In the midst of the trials and unanswered questions - we must never lose hold of this one truth --- **“God is good”** --- and our Good God causes all things to work together for good

- Romans 8:28 KJV And we know that **all things work together for good** to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

Until you settle the fact that God is good and what He does is Good - you will be hesitant to trust

- What if He doesn’t answer my prayer?
- What if something bad happens?

Psalms 145:9 NIV The LORD is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made.

Psalms 33:5 KJV He loveth righteousness and judgment: the earth is full of the goodness of the LORD.

Psalms 107:8-9 KJV Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! (9) For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.

Psalms 84:11 NIV For the LORD God is a sun and shield; the LORD bestows favor and honor; no good thing does he withhold from those whose walk is blameless.

Psalms 107:1 Oh give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; for His lovingkindness is everlasting

God will always do what is good - Anyone who questions this needs only to look at the cross

- Rom 8:28-32 ESV And we know that for those who love God ***all things work together for good***, for those who are called according to his purpose... ...If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 **He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?**

“May God grant that His goodness becomes a truth we not only accept, but embrace, so that **it [His Goodness] becomes the perspective from which we view all of the events of our lives.**”

