



WHEN WE PRAY

Read Luke 11:5-13

⁵ 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, ⁶for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him’; ⁷and 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’? ⁸I 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. ¹¹ **What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; ¹²or 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!**”**

Getting Started

How do you keep track of what you are praying for?

What are some prayers that you have prayed for a long time?

Have you seen God answer a prayer in a way that was unexpected or even disappointing at the time? Give an example.

Digging Deeper

Kyle highlighted **four key teachings from Jesus** through this parable.

1. Jesus teaches us to approach God with *shameless audacity*.

- How did the cultural value of hospitality in the Ancient Near East influence social interactions and expectations?

- Why was hospitality so highly valued in the Ancient Near East, and how does this context enhance our understanding of the parable?
- How does the parable portray God’s attitude towards providing for our needs?
- In what ways does this parable highlight the contrast between human reluctance and divine readiness to provide?
- How does recognizing our deep need and God’s readiness to provide shape our approach to prayer and faith?

Jesus teaches us the importance of *persistent prayer*.

Read Luke 18:1-8

18 Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. ²He said: “In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared what people thought. ³And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, ‘Grant me justice against my adversary.’ ⁴“For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, ‘Even though I don’t fear God or care what people think, ⁵yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won’t eventually come and attack me!’” ⁶And the Lord said, “Listen to what the unjust judge says. ⁷And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? ⁸I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?”

- What lesson does the parable of the widow and the judge in Luke 18:1-8 illustrate?
- How does this parable compare to the one Jesus uses in Luke 11?
- How does the parable demonstrate the power of persistence?
- How is persistence in prayer related to aligning with God’s will?
- How can the principle of persistence demonstrated by the widow be applied to our prayer lives?
- How does understanding that God knows our needs before we ask influence our prayers?

Jesus emphasizes that God will *answer all our prayers*.

Read Luke 11:9-10

⁹And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ¹⁰For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened.

- What progression does Jesus highlight in the commands to ask, seek, and knock?
- What grammatical tense is used to describe the commands to ask, seek, and knock, and why is this significant? (Present Active Imperative = Ongoing Action)

- What are some of the reasons that you stop praying for certain things?
- How should we interpret Jesus' promise that those who ask will receive, those who seek will find, and those who knock will have the door opened?
- How can we reconcile the experience of unanswered prayers with Jesus' teachings on persistence in prayer?
- How does John Calvin's quote below help us to reconcile or manage the tension of God not answering prayers how we might want?

"Your father gives you what you would have asked for if you knew everything that he knows."

-John Calvin

Jesus promises that God will give us the Holy Spirit.

- What prayer does Jesus promise that God will answer in v. 13?
- Why is the Holy Spirit what we need most?
- What role does the Holy Spirit play in helping us see what matters most?
- Why is it important to continually ask the Father to fill us with His Spirit?

Pray Together

Spend some time in your groups sharing some areas where you have been persisting in prayer. Encourage one another by praying for each other, and then pray that your group would be filled with the Holy Spirit.