

Pursing God in Prayer

Luke 11:5-13 (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.¹¹ 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!”

Our Heavenly Father isn't a grumpy neighbor. He is completely opposite. If a drowsy neighbor eventually meets the needs of an annoying friend, won't our extravagantly kind heavenly Father listen and provide for His beloved children?

- Let's remember He wants us to know Him as Father!
- The Spirit urges us in that relationship. (Rom. 8:14-17)

Luke 11:5-6 (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’;

Luke 11:7 (ESV)

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’?

Christ explained that although the friend might not move for the sake of the friendship, He will!

Hebrews 4:15-16 (ESV)

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.¹⁶ Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

1 John 5:14-15 (ESV)

And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us.¹⁵ And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.

We do not pray in order to change His Will, but to bring our wills into harmony with His.

William Temple

Luke 11:8 (ESV)

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.

Prayer is not overcoming our Father's reluctance; it is laying hold of His highest willingness.

Phillip Brooks

Commentary - Boldness in prayer overcomes the praying person's apathy, not God's perceived insensitivity. To practice persistence changes the hearts and minds of those praying, and it helps them understand and express the intensity of their need. Persistence in prayer helps them recognize God's work. By praying persistently, believers are not trying to get a reluctant God to answer their prayers; instead, they are showing that they are very serious about their request.

- God is not slow to respond like the friend. (18:8)
- Here is Jesus point - if persistence worked on the door of a reluctant friend, how much more will persistence render blessings from our heavenly Father?

Luke 11:9 (ESV)

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.

- Why keep on asking, seeking & knocking? We get to know His heart, plan, priorities, Word, wants and desires.
- How do you respond to God's "no" and "wait"?
- Sometimes we have to make adjustment to receive what we are asking for!

Why do we do anything consistently and persistently?

- It's valued or important.
- It's critical or necessary.
- We have come to realize its benefits.
- Does your prayer life have these characteristics?

Jeremiah 29:13 (ESV)

You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.

Luke 11:10 (ESV)

For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened.

Commentary - All three actions are metaphors for praying. Sometimes God does not answer Christians' prayers immediately; sometimes they must keep on knocking, awaiting God's answer. However, if we continue to trust God through prayer, Jesus promised that we will receive, find, and have an open door.

Luke 11:11-12 (ESV)

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?

- How many dads if their son asks for a bit to eat will give them something that would bit them instead?
- So when we ask our gracious, loving, kind and merciful heavenly Father for things He has promised us what should we expect?

Luke 11:13 (ESV)

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!"

- Are you ever afraid of God's answer? He loves you and knows your needs and future.

Invitation

Prayer & Benediction