

Luke Ch11v5-13 - Coming to the Father in Prayer

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 05 June 2022

Preacher: Ryan Rippee

[0 : 00] Ryan Rippee. Ryan is from California and he's been here for the last week teaching at Munster Bible College, Biblical Spirituality, so helping us in our relationship with God and our communion with Him. So a really practical study and course. And so, yeah, we encourage you to come out tonight and Ryan will be preaching it in just a moment. So Ryan, just tell us a little bit very briefly about your own family back home in California. Sure. So my wife's name is Jennifer.

I have five children from 24 years old down to 13, three boys and two girls. And we grew up, born and raised there in the San Francisco Bay Area in California. And were you raised in a Christian home yourself? How did you come to faith in Christ? We started going to a Christian home when I was eight years old. So we, prior to that, we were not going to church. And the summer camp, youth camp, that our church held the following summer when I was nine years old, a dear, sweet woman named Luella Ross shared the gospel with me. And Romans 10, 9, and gave my life to Christ and never been the same.

Wonderful. And when you're back home, what do you do? What's your kind of bread and butter day-to-day life and work? It's kind of crazy. So I work multiple jobs. We started a church on April 17th, Trinity Church of Benicia, the city we live in. So I'm a church planter. And that's been going about seven weeks. So that keeps me busy. I also have the privilege of leading a Bible college and seminary there in the Bay Area that trains pastors, the Cornerstone Bible College and Seminary. And then I work for an engineering company doing project management stuff. So...

And you're a dad and a husband. And a dad and a husband, yeah. My word. You're doing well. And he's been teaching all week. And we look forward to him speaking today and this evening. So I'm just going to pray briefly for you and then hand over to you to speak so you can stay here with us. Father, thank you for Ryan. Thank you for his ministry to us over the week. And we thank you now for him being here today. Father, we pray for his church in California as they meet a little bit later on today that they would be encouraged, built up in their faith, and that they would go on in their walk with you. We pray for Ryan that you will give him strength and energy, but above all that you would be working through him this morning by your spirit, that his words would be your words, building us up in our faith. So we thank you in Jesus' name. Amen.

Amen. Thank you, my friend. Well, good morning. I bring greetings from California. And it was nice to get some rain. It was sunny all week and it felt like back home. So I actually am enjoying the rain today. So we're going to be in Luke chapter 11, verses 5 to 13. And I'll begin by reading the passage. Do you all stand up when you read the scripture at the beginning of the sermon? Not normally. I see Ralph shaking his head no over there. Okay, well, then I won't make you stand up. It's what we do typically, but when in Ireland, no, no, it's okay. Let's look at Luke. I'll be reading out of the English Standard Version, because that's the version my wife bought me with the large print as I've been getting older. So starting in verse 5, 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. For a friend of mine has arrived on a journey and I have nothing to set before him. And he will answer from within, do not bother me. The door is shut.

[4 : 25] My children are with me in bed. I cannot get up and give you anything. 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. 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. For everyone who asks receives and the one who seeks finds and to the one who knocks it will be opened. What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? 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? So I've titled the message this morning,

coming to the father in prayer. And when we pray, there's sometimes misunderstandings that we bring as we come to prayer. For example, is effective prayer the same thing as persistent prayer? Perhaps we see Elijah in first Kings pray seven times for rain, and it's not until he prayed the seventh time that the rain came. And so we think we have to pray the same thing over and over and over again until we get an answer. Is genuine persistence asking the same thing until it's eventually granted? Or perhaps does effective prayer require that we be emotionally urgent, that we have fervor?

Or even does repetitious prayer plus emotion put together equal an unstoppable force where God is just forced to answer our prayers? Well, this morning, I want you to see from this passage that persistence in prayer really is speaking about a life of continual prayer to the father, rather than simply repeating the same things over and over again. At the beginning, we didn't read it yet, but the Lord's prayer shows a model for the proper prayer. And the parables and teaching that follow that we're going to be looking at this morning shows the power of prayer to accomplish results. And I want to show you a profound reality here from this chapter. The disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray, and instead of giving them a method, he reminds them of who their father in heaven is. In other words, instead of giving them a method of this is the steps you pray that God will answer the prayer, he says, let me introduce you to my father in heaven. And so that's what we're going to see here.

And we begin with the parable in verse five. The householder represents the father in the parable. The friend asking for help is a picture of the one praying. And there's two important elements that when we come to this parable, we need to have the correct understanding about. The first is this word in verse eight, when he says, I tell you, though, he will not get up and give him anything because of his friend, yet because of his impudence, or you might have in your translation persistence. We need to look at the meaning of that word in the Greek and idea. Is it persistence or is it shamelessness? Is it persistence or impudence? Because those are not synonyms. And so why do we have English translations that give us two very different words? And then second, we need to see the identity of the one to whom this persistence or shamelessness applies. And so we have before us here this morning, starting in verse five, which of you has a friend? We'll go to him at midnight and say to him, friend, lend me three loaves. So the going at midnight, asking the friend there in verse five is the householder. And in verse six, six setting before him, I have nothing to set before him.

This is the traveler who's coming to ask. And in verse seven, we'll answer from within. That person is the householder. Don't bother me. And he will not get up in verse eight. That's the householder to give the traveler, the petitioner, anything because of his impudence, he will rise. And so we wonder who's the one being shameless or impudent. But then when we get to the end of verse eight, he will rise the householder and give the petitioner whatever he needs. Well, if you have an NIV or an ESV, like I do, you will have the word shamelessness or impudence. If you have a new American standard or a new King James or a Holman Christian standard Bible, you would have the word persistence. And if we go to a Greek dictionary, lexicon, we will see that it defines it as people who have no proper sense of shame and willingly engage in improper conduct. So synonyms of this word in English are immodesty, impudence, shamelessness, rashness, insolence, recklessness, wantonness, crudeness. So how in the world did we get the translation persistence? Where is this coming from? And this is in the King James and the New King James, so it has a long history. And it came in short through the Latin. The Bible was translated by Jerome in the fifth century into Latin. And the original word *improbitatum* was wickedness or impudence. But eventually, over time, it was replaced by a very near sounding word *importunitatum* or importunity or persistence. And in Jewish culture, this idea of hospitality was highly valued. A midnight visitor coming to this person to ask for bread, he wouldn't have been considered shameless or impudent in the culture. It would have been a very common occurrence. They didn't have grocery stores to go down and get bread if someone showed up at an unexpected hour. So why in the world would Jesus use this of the petitioner? He begins the parable with which of you in verse 5.

It's a question that lasts three verses. And it's actually expecting a negative response. Which of you would have this happen that you would go ask your neighbor for bread and he would say, I can't get out of bed. And my children are in bed with me and there's no way. And they would answer, no one. So the character, this householder, his outrageous, exaggerated behavior, they're not offered as realistic responses, but as dramatic components of a ridiculous story. Jesus is giving a classic

example of tongue-in-cheek.

[11:47] And the story is not meant to be comparison, but contrast. In other words, the sleeping householder is not like God the Father. He's precisely unlike God. And if the householder fails to respond out of friendship alone, which is outrageous and impossible, how much more may God the Father be counted on to respond promptly out of unfailing love and devotion? In fact, that's what verse 13 says.

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? Do you see what's going on here? In at least in American culture, we misunderstood this parable for decades. And we saw that it, we thought it was persistence in prayer. Like what we have to do is keep praying and praying and praying.

And God the Father in heaven is kind of like earthly fathers. When you take your kids to the store and they just nag you until you cave in and you buy the candy that's at the cash register.

Mommy, mommy, mommy, mommy, mommy, mommy, mommy. Okay, fine, I'll give in. Fine, you have the candy. But it's not because the mom really wants to give the candy. She's just wore out. But that's not what this parable is saying about God the Father. We don't have to twist His arm. We don't have to wear Him down with our continual prayers. He's our Father in heaven. And Jesus is saying to His disciples, let me tell you a bit about our Father. And He tells this ridiculous story about a householder that wouldn't exist in their culture. Or if it did, they would be the talk of the town because the hospitality was so important to them. The Father not only hears our prayers the first time and responds freely, but also our coming to Him is never shameless. There's no such thing as bad timing with God. There's no such thing. So then moving on to verse 9, Jesus, after He tells this parable and He says, this is who your Father in heaven is precisely unlike this householder or unlike human fathers, He gives a command to pray. I tell you, ask and it will be given you. Seek and you will find. Knock and it will be opened to you for everyone who asks receives and the one who seeks finds and to the one who knocks it will be opened. And so what's He getting at here? Well, in verse 9, what He's saying is, if your Father in heaven is precisely unlike this householder, you can ask with confidence knowing that your Father will give. The simplicity of the prayer is really profound. He doesn't give them a long-winded prayer that that's going to be what grants the prayer. He doesn't give them a formula, a method. He says, ask. Ask and it will be given to you. Seek and you will find. Knock and it will be opened to you. We simply need to ask, seek and knock. And Jesus, He says that when we ask and seek and knock, we're going to receive an answer. Why? Because we have the heart of the Father. Turn over to Matthew chapter 6, verse 25. You know this passage well. It's in the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus says, therefore, I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body. What you will put on is not life more than food and the body more than clothing. Look at the birds of the air. They neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Then listen to what He says. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you, by being anxious, can add a single hour to a span of life?

And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow. They neither toil nor spin. Yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore, don't be anxious, saying, what shall we eat or what shall we drink or what shall we wear? For the Gentiles seek after these things. Your heavenly Father knows you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. Therefore, do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient is the day for its own trouble. We have the heart of the Father. Our heavenly Father knows what we need before we ask Him. We don't need to have fancy, repetitive prayers, and we can be certain of the Father's response. Well, there's a misunderstanding, a misconception about prayer coming out of, for example, John 14, 14. And in John 14, 14, Jesus tells us that we need to ask in

[17:13] Jesus' name. If you ask anything in my name, I will do it. And the misunderstanding is that there's a secret, special way to repeat Jesus' name before success is eventually given from God in heaven. In fact, as we were growing up, we couldn't even, the food wouldn't be blessed unless we said in Jesus' name before we said amen. And it's become the sort of, this is how we hang up the phone. We have to say in Jesus' name, or the prayer might not even be over. But that's

not what Jesus is getting at here. He's saying confessing Jesus' name is equivalent to submitting to His Lordship. So asking in Jesus' name, particularly in John's Gospel, John's Gospel, involves praying according to the character of His one and only Son.

We're asking in line with what Jesus wants and desires. Well, back to Luke chapter 11, and in verse 10, he repeats what he said in verse 9, but in a slightly different way. The verse is more than simply a restatement of verse 9. It places the commands in further promises. For everyone who asks, receives.

And the one who seeks, finds. And to the one who knocks, it will be open. The Father's response is guaranteed. Your needs will be met. Your search will lead to solutions. This is incredibly important, right? Jesus is teaching His disciples, let me introduce you to your Father in Heaven. When you come to Him, you will find answers. You will have your prayers met. You will receive what you're asking for. Or something we're going to see here later in verse 13, something better than what you were asking for. And when we move on to verse 11, we see the certainty of the Father's response in these examples.

And it's almost as if Jesus, when He says, ask, or whoever asks, receives. And the one who seeks, finds. And the one who knocks, it will be opened. He's looking in the eyes of His disciples, as it were, and He sees the doubt.

You say that, but I'm not sure, Jesus. I'm not sure that's really true. Have you felt that way as a Christian? That sometimes when you pray, it almost feels like the prayers don't even make it to God. They just bounce off the ceiling and come back down. Or do you get the feeling sometimes that when you pray, that you're just not important enough for God to hear you? That there's other people more important that God listens to them.

[19 : 54] After all, He seems to answer their prayers, and your prayers don't ever seem to be answered. So Jesus, He gives these examples in verses 11-13 to talk about the certainty of the Father's response.

Verse 11, What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish, give him a serpent? Once again, outrageous behavior, right?

If he asks for an egg, you'll give him a scorpion. Cruel answers to legitimate requests. And Jesus is appealing to them, thinking that no human parent would be so cruel.

That's not even funny. There's nothing humorous about that. That is dangerous and potentially deadly, that your child would be asking for food, and you give them a venomous creature.

Now on the flip side, if even in our foolishness we ask for something dangerous, like a snake or a scorpion, the Father gives us what's best, not what we ask for.

[21 : 02] He gives us what we need. In fact, turn over a few chapters to Luke 18. There's another parable on prayer in the Gospel of Luke, the parable of the widow.

Luke 18, verse 1, he tells them a parable to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart. And he said, In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor respected man, and there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying, Give me justice against my adversary.

For a while he refused, but afterward he said to himself, Though I neither fear God nor respect man, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will give her justice, so that she will not beat me down by her continual coming.

And the Lord said, Hear what the unrighteous judge says, and will not God give justice to his elect who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them?

So, if you were reading the Gospel of Luke, and you had the wrong word persistence in your English translation, and you get to Luke 18, you might be tempted to think this parable is one where the judge is the father, and the widow is us, and we just have to be persistent until we wear God down.

[22 : 22] But again, Jesus isn't telling this parable to say, The judge is like the Father in heaven. In fact, we have real clear indicators he's not.

Verse 2, He neither feared God nor respected man. Again, in verse 4, same thing. And then in verse 6, Jesus says he's an unrighteous judge.

Unrighteous judge. So, again, it's by way of contrast, Jesus is teaching that the reason people are kept waiting is not because we need to get God's attention, or because he's uninterested, but that he's determined as heavenly judge that we need to wait.

So, it's not repetitious prayer in Luke 18, it's patient prayer. So, continual prayer, talking to our Father in heaven, telling Him what we need, is this idea of patiently waiting upon Him for the answer.

We'll turn back to Luke 11 again. And we see in verse 13, If then you 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?

[23 : 38] So, the Father, we saw, He gives what's best. He doesn't give a snake instead of a fish, or a scorpion instead of an egg, but what is the good gifts of God that He gives us in verse 13?

He gives us the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him. And Jesus says, If you being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, and He perhaps is thinking of Jeremiah 17, 9, that the heart is deceitful above all else, but even parents who don't know the Lord Jesus, they know how to give good gifts to their children, this evidence of common grace.

And what Jesus is stressing is, the goodness is contrary to their character, but God, who is perfectly good, and perfectly just, and perfectly righteous, and a Father in Heaven who loves us, how much more will He give us good things?

Well, what is the good thing that the Father has in mind for His children? The good thing is the Holy Spirit. The Father gives what's best. He gives Himself in the third person of the Trinity.

And Jesus, when He's coming in the Gospel of Luke, He's coming to bring in a new covenant, which is when the Holy Spirit will be given. And so basically, Jesus is saying, when you talk to your Father in Heaven, because of the new covenant, you have a new relationship with Him.

[25 : 02] He's now your Father. Back to verse 1. Jesus was praying in a certain place in Luke 11, and when He finished, one of His disciples said to Him, Lord, teach us to pray as John taught His disciples.

And He said to them, when you pray, say, Father, hallowed be Your name, Your kingdom come, give us each day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us, and lead us not into temptation.

Now, the most striking part of that prayer to His disciples would have been the first word, Father.

The Jewish people, prior to the coming of Jesus, would not have prayed to God as Father.

In fact, as we see this new covenant coming in, we see that the New Testament name for the first person of the Trinity becomes Father. It's the name Jesus used of God when He prayed to Him, when He spoke to Him.

For example, in the garden, He says, Father, let this cup pass from Me, but not My will, but Yours be done. And as Jesus goes to the cross, as He's crucified in our place for our sins, and He's buried, and He rises again, conquering sin in the grave, and seated at the right hand of the Father, now interceding for us, and ruling and reigning with the greatest authority, now by faith in Christ, we are united to Him so that we become children of God, Galatians 4 says, Romans 8, and the Spirit stirs up family affections in our hearts.

[26 : 39] Romans 5, 5, the love of God has been shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. And in Romans 8 and in Galatians 4, what does the Spirit teach us to cry? Abba, Father.

And we can now approach our Father in Heaven, and we can draw near to Him, Hebrews 4 says, and we can find grace and mercy to help in our time of need.

And what the Father has given us is He's given us His Son to be our Savior, and He's given us the Spirit to indwell us and be the seal, the down payment and pledge, Ephesians 1 says, of our inheritance.

That all of the Father's promises are yes and amen in His Son. He's going to make good on it. He's not going to abandon us. He's not going to forsake us. He's poured out His Spirit. And so He's with us always.

And He's going to be faithful to complete what He started in us. And He prepared good works that we would advance, walk in them. And so the good thing in Luke 11 that the Father is giving is the Holy Spirit.

[27 : 47] So praying to God, our Father, is a means by which the Father gives whatever He has decided is most necessary. And Luke knows that the Holy Spirit is the gift par excellence, making all others pale in comparison.

The Father is pictured as an ideal parent who hears every child's request the first time and promises to respond at the right moment in the best possible way.

Isn't this remarkable? The disciples wanted to learn how to pray like John taught his disciples to pray. And Jesus says, let me do something else. Let me introduce you to the character of My Father in Heaven who's not like earthly fathers, who will never disappoint you, who will never fail you.

He's going to give you what is best. And so what Jesus is teaching His disciples is just ask. You are always heard because you are always loved.

And that, dear friends, that will get you up in the morning tomorrow and draw near to God. That will get you up this week with whatever you have to face, whatever trials, whatever burdens, whatever temptations of sin, to know that your Father in Heaven loves you.

[29 : 09] And if you doubt it, look to the cross. Because God gave His best for you when you were at your worst. He gave His Son. And this is why Paul says in Romans 8, if He did not spare His Son, how will He not with Him freely give us all things?

James says, the Father is the Father of lights. Every good and perfect gift comes down from Him in whom there is no variation or shifting shadow. So you know what that means? The Father in Heaven who has been faithful to you so far in your life because He never changes, He will remain faithful for all eternity.

And even today, you can draw near to Him. You have His heart. He's proven it because He gave His Son for you. And if you believed in the Son, you have the heart of God.

You have His life. You have the Holy Spirit. This is why name it and claim it type of praying is just materialism made spiritual.

It's also why it's heretical because it tries to say basically that we control God. We pray and if we have enough faith and we claim it and we have enough faith then God is obligated to give us what we ask for.

[30 : 26] And if you don't get what you ask for, then your faith is not strong enough or big enough or great enough. But that's not what's going on here. The Father's given you His Son and He's given you His Spirit.

And He says with Him He's given you everything else. And so it's not about some vending machine in the sky that you put in the right amount of change and you get exactly what you wanted.

It's our Father in Heaven with whom we have relationship, with whom we draw near. The Father doesn't give us anything and everything that we ask for. He gives us what He knows is best.

I mean, think about this in the life of Jesus. As Jesus knelt in the garden and poured out His cries to the Father and said, Abba Father, all things are possible for Thee.

Remove this cup from Me, yet not what I will, but what You will. The incredible thing is that the Father's will to send the Son to the cross and crush the Son and have Him drink the cup of wrath on our behalf, it wasn't from a stern lawgiver threatening vengeance, it wasn't an impersonal force of faith from whom there's no alternative.

[31 : 41] The Father that Jesus addresses in the garden is one that He's known all His life. One He's found to be bountiful in His provision, reliable in His promises, utterly faithful in His love, and so Jesus can obey the will that sends Him to the cross with hope and expectation because it's the will of Abba whose love has been proved and now it can be trusted so fully and Jesus obeyed it so completely.

And He says, Father, into Your hands I commit My Spirit. Even as He's hanging on the cross, He's entrusting Himself to His Father in Heaven.

Dear Christian, you have boldness to enter the throne room because you have the heart of the King. Hebrews 4, with boldness we approach the throne of grace to find grace and mercy to help in our time of need.

Because of who we are to the Father in Christ by the Spirit, we can have confident access to His very presence right now. We don't have to go to Jerusalem anymore.

He's dwelling in us. He's here with us. In fact, if people want to meet God, where do they go now in the New Covenant? They come to the church. They come to us.

[32 : 59] This is the hope of our witness and our mission. The Spirit in the New Covenant enables us to draw near to the Father through a new and living way found in the Son, Hebrews 10 tells us.

And the author of Hebrews, when he talks about confidence and boldness, this is in stark contrast to the Old Covenant, the tabernacle, the temple, where there was clean and unclean regulations.

There were a priesthood. There was sacrifices. There was festivals. Only certain days. Sabbaths. Now, in the New Covenant, there's great confidence because our High Priest, the Lord Jesus, went before us and He left the way open.

The doors open any time. And the Spirit has washed our hearts clean. And it's why we can draw near. The Father has drawn near to us through His Son and made us to be a new temple.

The place where His glory dwells. And He invites us to draw near to Him as a perfect Father. Oh, beloved, you can come to the Father and your coming is never shameful.

[34 : 08] It's never inconvenient. It's never the wrong timing. Just ask. You are always heard because you're always loved.

Father, thank You for this Word this morning. Thank You for this teaching from our Savior. This is at the heart of what it means to be a Christian is that we have communion with You.

We can draw near to You and have relationship and fellowship with You. And Father, this wasn't only the plan of Jesus. This was Your plan from before the foundation of the world.

You so loved the world, You gave a Son. You are the One who in love predestined us to adoption. You are the One who set this plan into motion and gave us Your Son and poured out Your Spirit.

I pray for my brothers and sisters here that if they've been believing the lies of the devil, that You're against them or that You don't want to hear them or that it is an inconvenience or that they're not important enough or they don't have enough faith or they haven't asked enough times yet, Father, that You would dispel all of those misunderstandings, all of those wrong ways of thinking, that You would remind them through the Gospel of who You are, of Your heart towards them.

[35 : 36] You know everything they need before they even ask. And they can come and they can ask because they're in Christ and they have the Spirit and You always hear them.

And You don't always give them what they ask. You don't always give me what I want. But Father, You've always given me what I needed. You've always given me better than what I asked.

You're able to do exceedingly abundantly above all I can ask or think. Oh, bless Caragalline Baptist Church, Father. May You bear much fruit through them and in them.

May they say many come to Christ. Would You send revival here to this Cork Harbor area? Would You save their loved ones, their family members, their co-workers?

May these believers be so filled with Your love that they would confidently come to You and not shrink away, but that they would know that You are their Father in Heaven.

[36 : 42] I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.