

PM Luke 11:1-13 The Lord's Prayer 2

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Preacher: Mr John Rawlinson

[0 : 00] If you'd like to follow along with the Bible reading tonight, turn with me to the book of Luke and to chapter 11.

If you're using the Church Pew Bible, that's on page 1047. Luke chapter 11. We're going to start reading at verse 1.

Now Jesus was praying in a certain place. And when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, Lord, teach us to pray as John taught his disciples.

And he, that's Jesus, 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. 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.

[1 : 16] 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 now shut and 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?

[2 : 29] Amen. So reads God's word. What shall we pray? Our Lord and Heavenly Father, as we come to look at your word now, we pray that you would help us.

We pray that you would open our eyes to new things from your word. We would learn more of Christ. We would learn more of you. We would seek to be more filled with your spirit.

And we ask that you would help us now, as we consider your word. These things we pray, in Christ's name. Amen. So turn with me then, this evening, to that passage we read earlier, from Luke 11.

And you'll remember this morning, we were considering Matthew 6. And we're going to be referencing Matthew 6 a little bit as well tonight, as we look at this passage. Luke 11, in many ways, is a parallel passage to Matthew 6.

It's different, it's different, however. Matthew 6, as we said this morning, as Saul this morning, comes right in the middle of the Sermon on the Mount. And in the context of the Sermon on the Mount, of Christ's teaching there, in Matthew 6, about hypocrisy, and about motives, and about the relationship that we have, with God as our Father, we have this teaching on prayer from Christ.

[3 : 59] Here in Luke, circumstances are different. We can read from the passage, the beginning of the passage, tells us that Christ was praying. And one of the things that we know is, one of the themes of Luke's Gospel as a whole, is prayer.

At every point in Luke's Gospel, that things are happening in the life of Christ, we find Christ praying. Every key point in his life, that Luke records, Christ we find at prayer.

And it's a reinforcement to us, that the Christian life, should be a life of prayer. It was for Christ, it should be for us. And as I said, Luke 11 that we read, starts off with Christ at prayer.

And he's giving an example to his disciples. And as they observe Christ praying, they observe his example, his disciples then say to him, well, teach us how to pray.

So Christ does. And he does that in this passage, in three different ways. He starts off with, what we might call a model prayer, which we often refer to as the Lord's Prayer.

[5 : 06] Although, I sometimes think, we shouldn't call it the Lord's Prayer. We should really call it the Disciples Prayer. Because if you think about it, it actually isn't a prayer, that Jesus himself could pray.

Forgive me my sins. Christ never sinned. But as disciples, we can pray that, because we are sinners, and we do sin. He follows after, a little bit of teaching, specifically on prayer, he follows then with a parable.

And it's a parable really about praying, and that's verses 5 to 10. The first part is verses 2 to 4. And then he goes on, verses 11 through to 13, to give another example.

It's an illustration, which seeks to reinforce, the point that Christ has been making. So that's the structure, really, of this section of Luke 11.

Christ here is responding, to a specific request, from his disciples, on teaching for prayer. It's not part of a larger thing, like the Sermon on the Mount, in Matthew 6, that we were looking at this morning.

[6 : 08] It's not dealing directly, with things such as, where and when we should pray. It isn't dealing with our motivations, for praying, as we were looking at this morning, in Matthew.

And it isn't part of Christ's teaching, on the father-son relationship, that we should have as believers. What it is really, is a little module, of teaching, on prayer.

That's what we've got here, in Luke 11. Now some commentators, have suggested that Matthew and Luke, are recording the same event. I don't think that stands up, to examination.

And I think it actually detracts, from the message, of both passages. I think it detracts, from the message, of the Sermon on the Mount, and the picture that we've got, of Christ, delivering that, almost an aside, as we said this morning, during the longest sermon.

And it detracts too, from the picture, that we have here, of Christ, interacting directly, with his disciples, at their request, to teach them, how to pray. Now this morning, we looked at, the context of the Lord's Prayer, in Matthew.

[7 : 15] We talked about, some general observations, about the prayer. And then we looked more specifically, at one particular petition. Hallowed be your name. And I want to do something, a little bit similar tonight.

I want to look at, the teaching of, Christ on prayer, generally, that surrounds this. So the whole structure, in the passage that we read there, in chapter 11.

And then, again, I want to pick up, one particular petition, from the Lord's Prayer, to look at, in a little bit more detail. So the first point, then this evening, is to do with, prayer itself.

And to consider, the question, is there a contrast, is there a difference, between, Christian prayer, and heathen prayer? And to consider this, we're going to take, a bit of a trip back, to Matthew 6, to help us.

And this morning, we talked about, and dealt with, the need for correct motives, in prayer. And Christ's teaching, here in Luke, and also in Matthew 6, also deals with, the form of prayer.

[8 : 22] And it contrasts, what Christ is saying, is the correct form of prayer, with, the prayers, of the Gentiles. That's particularly, in Matthew 6. And if you remember, we read this morning, Matthew 6, 7 to 9, and when you pray, says Christ, do not heap up, empty phrases, as the Gentiles do.

For they think, they will be heard, for their many words. Do not be like them, for your father knows, what you need, before you ask him. Pray then like this, and he goes on then, to deliver, what we call, the Lord's Prayer.

You see, prayer isn't unique, to Christianity. If you look it up, in the dictionary, what is prayer? Prayer, the dictionary says, is the act, of communicating, with a deity.

Other religions, have their deities, don't they? They have their idols, their images, and they pray to them. Even Buddhists, who don't believe, in a creator God, have prayers.

They say mantras, that they believe, in some way, if you say them often enough, and in the right way, will raise you, to a higher level, of consciousness, of the mind. Catholics, pray to Mary, Muslims, to Allah.

[9 : 29] Some people pray to spirits, and to mother nature, and so on. But you see, the Bible teaches, that there is only one, true God. One true God. And he is the creator God.

He's the God of Israel. He's the God, whose son Jesus, came to earth. He's the God, whose son Jesus, came to earth, to die upon the cross, for the sins, of men, and women.

He's the only, one true God. The only, one true God, who is worthy, of our prayers. He's the only, one true God, who is able, to hear, our prayers.

He's the only, one true God, who's able, to answer, our prayers. And there is only, one way, one true way, to pray, to this one, true God.

All other prayers, you see, the Bible would have us, know, are worthless. Are worthless. Are worthless. One of the major, characteristics of, non-Christian prayer, could be summed up by, as Jesus did really, by vain repetition.

[10 : 39] Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, Muslims, Catholics, all use what? Well, they all use prayer beads. Helps them count off, the repetition of their prayers, that they're saying.

It's mindless repetition, is what's going on there. It's not a prayer from the heart. It's mindless repetition. It's repetition of their duty, that they believe they have, to say their particular prayer.

Another characteristic of, of godless prayer, is, is the use of repetition, to bring about some kind of, trance-like state, or enhanced state of mind, as the Buddhists do, with their mantras.

It's a greater consciousness. It's, it's an opening, an emptying of your mind, and opening it to, new, other realities. But the trouble is, it's no reality at all.

It's actually a very dangerous thing. Bringing about some kind of, ecstatic state, is what they're trying to achieve. And I think, we should just take a word of warning, about that, in Christian circles.

[11 : 48] Something we need to be, very careful of. There used to be a saying, some years ago, you still hear it now and again, in Christian circles, of, let go, and let God.

This was the mentality, that was being promoted. Let go, and let God. And people would, close their eyes. They would tip their heads back, and they might, raise their arms, and their hands to the heavens.

And they would often sway, as they're doing this. And they would repeat things, usually in a soft, affected tone. And it might be things, such as, thank you Jesus, or some other phrase.

I don't know if you've been, in meetings like that. I have. It isn't a biblical form, of prayer you know. Anything but. It's not how Christ, here, in this passage, or in Matthew 6, teaches his disciples, to pray, is it?

He taught them, to pray with intelligence. He taught them, to pray with their minds, engaged in the process, of prayer. True prayer, you see, is not some way, of creating, an ecstatic, emotional state.

[12 : 57] That's not what Christ, is teaching his disciples, here. But then, another form of, non-Christian prayer, is the use of, a particular form of words, over and over again, as a mantra, such as the Buddhists do.

We've already mentioned that. But, but there's more than that. It's a mantra, that we believe, or the person doing it, believes, if they, if they can, keep repeating it, in some way, it has some kind, of spiritual, power.

Repeating it, will in some way, force an outcome, to take place. And again, as Christians, we need to be careful, with this. Be careful, we don't fall into this, trap of thinking, that in some way, continual repetition, of our prayers, is somehow, going to achieve, a magical outcome.

Is maybe somehow, going to force God, to do something, just because, we're repetitive. It's a few years ago now, but there used to be a book, and it swept, the world, of the Christian booksellers.

And it was a book, called the prayer of Jabez. A better title, would have been, the mantra of Jabez, because in the book, the author, was encouraging people, to pray this prayer.

[14 : 14] It's a prayer, you can find in, 1 Chronicles 4. It's a prayer that Jabez, this man Jabez, pronounced, or said. And the author, encourages people, to repeat this, as a mantra.

The book called it, the prayer, he called it, a daring prayer, that God always answers. He set out, in that book, a 30 day, program.

A 30 day, program to do what? Well, to incorporate, the prayer of Jabez, into your daily life. And not just that, but to re-read his book, by the way, every seven days.

By the end of it, he said, and I quote, you'll be seeing, significant changes, in your life. He talks in that book, about people, asking each other, how many times, have you prayed, the prayer today?

And the more times, you prayed the prayer, the better you are. This isn't, this isn't how Christ, taught his disciples, to pray. That's a mantra, and it has no part, in Christian prayer, has no part, in Christian life, and experience.

[15 : 27] Apart from anything else, he forgets to mention, the one other reference, to Jabez, in the scriptures. which is that, God, looked on him, because he was a man, who was righteous, in God's eyes.

Well, Matthew 6, verse 7, Christ tells the disciples, that prayers, mustn't be like, the heathen. And he presents, the Lord's prayer to them, in contrast, to these, heathen prayers, and the way, heathen pray.

It's interesting, he doesn't say to them, that pray like the heathen, but also, do this. No, he says, don't pray like the heathen, but, do this.

Because this is, prayer that is acceptable, to God. Just one final word, on this. And it's a, a note of warning, in a sense.

Something I said this morning, was that I think, sometimes it can be beneficial, for us to use, the Lord's prayer. Not just as a pattern, but, as something that we repeat, in corporate, worship.

[16 : 32] But we need to be careful, that we don't fall, into the trap, if we do that, of praying like the heathen. Praying the Lord's prayer, in vain repetition. It's just something we do.

Just something we say. When we use the Lord's prayer, it needs to be said, with thought. It needs to be said, with faith. It needs to be said, with honesty.

So when we pray, for instance, forgive us our sins, as we forgive those, who sin against us, it's nothing other, than an empty form of words, if we don't do that. So if we don't forgive others, it's nothing but empty words, is it?

And it shouldn't be, a recital of a form of words. No prayer, ever should be, should it? It should be a prayer, with mind engaged, heart engaged, and, we mean what we say.

So Christ then teaches us, that there is a difference, between Christian prayer, and heathen prayer. But, what else do we know, from this passage in Luke?

[17 : 35] There are some lessons for us, and for Christ's disciples, as he gave them to them. The first lesson, I would suggest to you, is the lesson of persistence. And we can get that, from verses 5 through 8, where we have the parable there, about the importance, I would suggest, of persistence in prayer.

Here we've got a man, who has a friend arrive, late at night. But he's got a bit of a disaster, on his hands. He hasn't got any food, to give to his friend, when he gets there.

And in Eastern culture, that's a problem. Hospitality was a big deal. And if your friend comes, you need to be able to give them, food and drink. But he's got none. He can't give proper hospitality, to his visitor.

So, a man has a friend, who lives next door. Another friend. And so he goes, and knocks on the door, and says, please will you lend me, some bread, to give to this friend, who's arrived at my house.

But it's late. The man next door, is already in bed. His children are in bed. And in those days, often they would be, in the one room. So if he gets up, he may disturb his children.

[18 : 48] Perhaps it took him a long time, to get those kids down to sleep. It does with sometimes, doesn't it, with kids. Perhaps he doesn't want, to disturb the children. He doesn't want to get up. But the passage tells us, that our man, is impudent.

Our man, is persistent, to the point of, rudeness maybe. And because of that, eventually his friend, helps him out. Gets up. Gives him bread, so he can be hospitable.

So what's Jesus teaching, the disciples here? What's he teaching us here? Well, it's persistence, in prayer, isn't it? Now this is a parable, so we have to be careful, not to try and push, the meaning, too far.

We have to bear in mind, other things that we know, from other parts, of scripture as well. So for instance, we know from other parts, of scripture, that God, as our heavenly father, wants to hear his children, pray.

He wants to hear us pray. And he also wants to bless us, his children. He wants to give good things, to his children. So when we look at this parable, we shouldn't interpret, all of the motives, and thoughts, and so on, of the man who's in bed, to God.

[20 : 00] He was unwilling to help, until he's pestered. That's not God. God isn't unwilling, to help his children. God is more than willing, to help his children. You see, what Jesus here is teaching, is not a, not something about God as such, what he's teaching, is something about us, and the importance, that we should place, upon persistence, in prayer.

You see, if this neighbor, despite his unwillingness, is eventually persuaded, to help by the persistence, of the friend, how much more, will our loving, heavenly father, who wants to help us, who wants to help us, who's willing, who's willing, to help us, how much more, will he answer our prayers, if we're persistent?

You see, that's the point, of the parable, is to encourage, our persistence, in prayers. It's not to paint, the picture of God, as unwilling to help. Because God is willing, to help.

So we should be persistent, then. Now, I wonder, for instance, is there something, that you have prayed about, for a long time? Maybe it's the, conversion, of a family member, or a close friend.

Maybe it's, to relieve, some sin in your life, to get relief, from something, that continually, drags you down, in your life. Maybe it's something, to do with the church.

[21 : 28] You've been praying, for a long time, for this thing. Well, be encouraged. Brothers and sisters, be encouraged. Because Christ says, persist. Persist.

Don't give up. Keep praying. But remember too, that, Christ has just given, the disciples, a pattern, for prayer.

And, so, persistence in prayer, means what? What it means, is persisting, in that pattern, of prayer. Persisting, in the prayer, for the glorification, of God, for the hallowing, of God's name.

Persisting, in prayer, for the coming, of his kingdom. And, only following that, following the pattern, as we talked about, this morning, following the pattern, only then, do we persist, in prayer, for our needs.

And, for the things, that we are asking, God to do. And, of course, we're persisting, in prayer, for those things, because we want, to bring glory, to his name, don't we? So, when we pray, for instance, about the work, of this church here, we're not praying, so that we can go around, saying that God's, doing great things.

[22 : 40] Have you been down, to the free church recently? Come along in, you're going to find, the place is packed, to the rafters. God is visiting, in an amazing way, and we've done it. No, we're praying, that God will be glorified, and if it's his will, to fill this place, that he'll do that, for his glory, not for ours, not that we can boast, but that we boast, in God.

Persistence in prayer, then. Persistence in prayer, means in the pattern, of Christ. It doesn't mean, in making our prayers, a mantra.

Again, we're back to this word, mantra, aren't we? In other words, what I mean by that, well, in other words, what I'm saying is, persistence in prayer, doesn't legitimize us, to make any prayer, that we want to make, and keep doing it.

No, persistence in prayer, is persisting, in that pattern, that Christ has given us, and glorifying God. We pray in faith, don't we?

We pray in faith, and knowing that God, has the ability, has the power, to answer prayer. prayer. And so, we pray with, persistence, and we look to God, for the answer, to our prayers.

[24 : 03] But there's more, and this brings us on, to the next point. And the next point is, ask, seek, and knock, verses 9, and 10.

Ask, and it will be given to you, seek, and you shall find, knock, and it shall be opened to you. So what does this mean? It's following straight on, from Christ, telling a parable, that's encouraging, persistence.

But the tense of Jesus' words, is interesting. He uses the present, continuous tense. If you go to the Greek, that's what you'll find. And what does that tell us?

Well, what it's indicating, is this. He's not saying, ask, seek, knock, just once. What he's saying is, there's an ongoing sense, in which you have to do these things.

As he says, keep asking, and it will be given to you. Keep seeking, you'll find. Keep knocking, it'll be opened to you. What does Jesus mean?

[25 : 05] What does ask, seek, knock, what does that mean for us? Why is he telling us, to do these things? Well, when we pray, we ask, don't we?

But you see, we have a responsibility, more than just asking. We ask, yes, but we have a responsibility, to seek.

To seek what? Well, to seek the answer, to the prayers, that we've asked. We have a responsibility, to do that. What else? Well, we have a responsibility, not just to seek out, God's answer, when we've asked, but we have to seek out, the possibilities.

And that's knocking, isn't it? We sometimes talk about, you know, is an opportunity right? We knock on a door, of opportunity, see if that door opens, whether that opportunity, develops, and progresses, into something, more.

You see, what Christ is telling us, is that praying, is not a passive thing. It's not something, we do, and sit back, and do nothing about. When we pray, for something, we should also, be seeking, to see God's answer, to those prayers.

[26 : 15] Let's think about this, let's take an example. Let's say, we've been praying, for a friend, to be converted. A close friend, we've got a concern, for them, not a Christian. We've been praying, maybe for many years, for them to be converted.

But I suggest to you, that if we pray for that, and we do nothing, well that's not, what Christ is talking, about here. That's not, biblical prayer. We should pray, for them, for their conversion, then we have to, act accordingly.

What does that mean? Well, it means taking opportunities, to witness to them, doesn't it? It means taking, any opportunity, that we have, to talk about our faith, to talk about, the love of God, to talk about Christ, what he's done for sinners.

Perhaps, we take the opportunity, to invite them along, to church. Perhaps, we give them, a little book to read. You see, we don't just pray, and sit back. We pray, and we seek, and we pray, and we knock.

Maybe we're, out of work. Perhaps, we're praying to God, that we would find a job. But if we pray, and then sit in the house, all day long, doing nothing, that's not, asking, seeking, and knocking, is it?

[27 : 32] That's just asking. And that's not, true, biblical prayer. You see, when we ask, and then we go on, to seek God's answer, and we go on, to knock on the opportunities, that may present themselves, then what happens, is that, that our prayer, becomes an ongoing, conversation with God.

It becomes, an ongoing relationship, with God. And that ongoing relationship, is something, that God will, honour. Well, before we move on, from this, we just need to address, what Jesus says there, when he says, ask and it will be given, seek you will find, knock and it will be opened.

Because it seems there, at face value, that Christ is giving us, a guarantee, of prayers, being answered. So the question is, does God always answer prayers?

And the answer, to that question is, yes, he does always answer prayer. we have a responsibility, to seek the answer, to work out the answer, in our lives, yes, God does always answer.

But in a sense, that's not really, the motivation, for that question, is it? Because the motivation, for the question, does God answer prayer, is really, from us saying, yeah, but does God give us, what we want?

[28 : 54] The answer to that, is a different one, isn't it? And so the answer, to that is, no, he doesn't always give us, what we want. You might remember, the apostle Paul, the apostle Paul, wrote much of the New Testament, but we know, the apostle Paul, prayed for something, and it was the thorn, in his flesh, we don't necessarily, know what it was, but there was a problem, Paul had a thorn, in his flesh, he endured it, and he prayed, that God would remove it, and did he?

This is the apostle Paul, did God remove that? No he didn't, but God answered the prayer, how did he answer it? Well he gave Paul, the grace to endure, that's what happened, that was the answer, to Paul's prayer, remove this please God, remove this from me, and God said, I hear your prayer, I answer your prayer, I'm going to give you, the grace, to endure this trial, that you're going through, that was the answer, and you see, it wasn't the answer, that Paul initially wanted, when he prayed, it wasn't perhaps the answer, even Paul expected, when he prayed, but it was God's answer, and in God's will, and God's purposes, it was the perfect answer, see God's answer, to us when we pray, might be no, it might be wait, it might be, that he's testing our faith, perhaps he's testing, our determination, and our persistence, might be he's preparing us, for an answer, that is utterly unexpected, to us, you see,

God's view, is different to our view, and he may well see, answers to our prayers, that we couldn't even dream about, or think about, things that we can't see, because you see, God's ways, are not our ways, we have man's ways, God has God's ways, so we need to be persistent then, but we also need to be active, in seeking out God's answers, and working out God's answers, in our lives, but Christ goes on, verses 11 to 13, to further expand, on these themes, and what we've got then, is our fourth point tonight, and it's this, praying means trusting, in our Father's goodness, and asking, for the Holy Spirit, you see, verses 11 to 13, we've got, another example, given by Jesus, of, God the Father's goodness, towards us, and he illustrates it, by looking at, the relationship, between an earthly father, and, their children, and, he parallels that, with the relationship, between,

God the Heavenly Father, and his spiritual children, that's believers, as I trust, we are here tonight, you see he says, a good father, takes care of his kids, and if the kids, ask him for some food, he doesn't give them something, that's going to harm them, he looks after them, he, he doesn't give them, the scorpion, or the serpent, when they're asking, for bread and eggs, that would be irresponsible, wouldn't it, any father, listening to Christ, I think would agree, no father, would dream, of putting their child, into that kind of danger, well says Jesus, if you wouldn't behave, like that, then, how do you think, that God, will behave, towards his children, how do you think, that, a gracious, sinless, perfect, heavenly father, will act, towards his children, and the answer, is it won't be, to give them a scorpion, it won't be, to give them a serpent, judgment, you see, because, when God answers prayer, he answers from his goodness, he answers from his mercy, he answers, prayers in the way, that is best, for us, and when we pray, we therefore pray, trusting God, in his mercy, and in his goodness, and that he will answer, as Jesus, finishes his teaching, on prayer, he tells us, that the supreme, good gift, that the father, bestows on his children, is what, well it's the Holy Spirit, he says, the Holy Spirit,

John 14, says what, to us, it tells us, about the Holy Spirit, it tells us, the Holy Spirit, will teach us, all things, through the Spirit, people come to know, the Father, and the Son, 1 Corinthians 2, 12, we're told, the Holy Spirit, helps us to understand, everything that God, freely gives to us, and through the Spirit, Paul tells us, Romans 5, 5, we come to enjoy, the love of God, in Christ Jesus, for us, the Holy Spirit, is a wonderful gift, to God's people, and it's God's supreme, gift to us, his people, Jesus not only, says this, and intimates this, but he also says, we should ask, for the gift, of the Holy Spirit, in our lives, ask our Heavenly Father, to give us, this ultimate gift, and again, this isn't a one-off thing, and we know that, because of the language, that Christ uses, again, Christ here, is using the present, continuous tense, so he's saying, you keep asking, you keep asking, you keep asking, he's saying, we could maybe, even better, translate the verse, to try and capture this, to say, how much more, will the Heavenly Father, continue to give, the Holy Spirit, day by day, to those who, continue to ask him, for the Holy Spirit, day by day, because that's what,

[34 : 40] Christ is saying here, keep asking, day by day, and God will keep giving, day by day, you see, it's right, and it's proper, to continue, day by day, us, asking for the gift, of the Holy Spirit, in our lives, and we ask, for what, well for the, the Spirit to help us, to understand more, more of the Father, more of the Son, to ask the Holy Spirit, to help us, to understand more, of the goodnesses, that God gives to us, day by day, every day, of our lives, to ask the Spirit, to help us, to come, to a greater understanding, and greater enjoyment, of the love of God, towards us, that's displayed to us, through our Lord, and Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, so ask, says Jesus, ask for this, good gift, from the Father, and he will send, his Holy Spirit, he'll fill us, with his Spirit, so praying, then it means, trusting, in our Father's goodness, and it means, asking, for more of the Spirit, in our lives, so we've looked then, it's, some more of Christ's, general teaching, on prayer, here in Luke 11, and now I'd like to spend, the remainder of our time, this evening, in looking at, another of the, petitions in the Lord's Prayer, just as we did, this morning, now again,

I'm not suggesting, this petition is somehow, greater, or more important, than others, in the Lord's Prayer, but I do think, that it's a petition, that in our modern world, needs to be emphasized, and we need to, give some thought to, and needs attention, and so what is it?

Well, it's the givers this day, our daily bread, now, if you remember, this morning, I said, there's a structure, to the Lord's Prayer, it opens up, with a focus on God, and his glory, and only then, does it come back, to man, and his need, and there's an obvious, reason for that, because God, and his kingdom, must always take priority, and they must take priority, over man, and man's needs, but also, we mustn't divorce, this truth, from another, biblical truth, which is that, man was made, for the glory of God, that's why we were created, for God's glory, and because of that, we can never be, what God intended us to be, until, our lives are focused, on the glory of God, unless our vision of life, is properly focused, the whole of life, will be more or less, distorted, get the focus right, get it focused on God, our life falls, into, a godly pattern, you see, we'll always malfunction, if we fail, to live for the purpose, that we were made for, it's like a car, it doesn't work, if you try to make it, do something, it wasn't made to do, so if you take a little mini, and try and put it across a field, pulling something as a tractor, ain't gonna work, because it wasn't made to do that, so in the light then, of praying for God, to be glorified, we're told by Jesus, to pray for our daily bread, pray for our daily bread, now it might sound, really basic, it might even sound, trivial, but it's not, you know, because this petition, is ultimately related, to the glory of God, what it's telling us, is that, that even our eating, our drinking, everything we do, should be done, for the glory of God,

Paul writes in, 1 Corinthians 10 31, so whether you eat, or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God, but you know, I think it's true, that in the world today, there's a sense, in which many people, feel that, this petition, is somehow, a bit lacking in impact, we live in affluent society, by and large, don't we, I doubt, there's, anyone of us here tonight, who hasn't eaten, something today, and can't go home, and get something tonight, if you want to, eat something tonight, I realize, there's farmers, in the, in the congregation tonight, but you know, there's many people, in society, who are far removed, away from the processes, of farming, by which we start off, getting food, on our tables, seed time, and harvest, have very little meaning, to a lot of people, lambing, and carving, have very little meaning, to a lot of people, about as much meaning, as these things, tend to have, is that, we sometimes notice, that at different times, of the year, we can go to the supermarket, and there's different things, on the shelves, although even that's changing, actually, but it used to be the case, that soon as you got, at Christmas, new potatoes, you got in the autumn, we didn't get those, in April, and whenever, that's a problem, you know, that people don't, understand these things, because, we maybe feel, we don't need to pray, for our daily bread,

I mean, you probably got, a week's worth, of shopping back home, going to keep you going, for the next week, we don't need to be praying, for daily bread, then do we? But you see, when we think like that, what it tells us, is that we've lost, a biblical view, of life, and what life should be, you see, the fact of the matter, is this, the food that we have, whether we understand, it started off, on the farm or not, the food that we have, we only have, because God, upholds our universe, because God, continues to uphold, seed time and harvest, God continues, to uphold, the sun and the rain, God continues, to uphold the fact, that animals breed, and create new animals, the fact, that we eat, we receive nourishment, and sustenance, that too, is a blessing, from God, you see, the bodily functions, that process our food, are a blessing, from God, they sustain us, they were designed, by God, to do that, they're maintained, by God, our continued, good health, which allows, such things, to function, is a gift, from God, we need to pray, for that, day by day, we all too often, take these things, for granted, you know, the minute, you can't eat, because of an illness, and the minute, you start to lose, serious amounts, of weight, because of an illness, you suddenly realize, actually,

[41 : 15] I've taken that, for granted, all my life, in modern society, we've got, healthcare, we've got, health clubs, gyms, diets, good foods, bad foods, whatever seems, to be the latest thing, the latest fad, we've got super foods, but we need, to be reminded, that our daily bread, really is a gift, from God, we need, to be reminded, that we should, ask for that gift, and thank God, for that gift, every day, of our lives, you see, the fact is, that for us, in the western world, it's not true, for everybody, in the world is it, but for us, in the western world, God blesses us, in abundance, but that doesn't, mean to say, we should not, continue to pray, to thank him, and to ask, for his provision, but there's some other things, we can learn too, from this petition, and the first thing, we're told to ask for, is our daily bread, for each day, for each day, and this,

I would suggest, tells us, we need to be careful, of the boundaries, of what we ask God for, when we pray, we're not to be asking, for things we don't need, bread for today, is what we need, not bread for tomorrow, not bread for a week, not barns full of wheat, so we can make bread, for the next five years, but bread for today, you see, when we come to God, in prayer, we need to recognize, that God has promised, to give us what we need today, not what we want, we might want, cake, as well as our bread, but what do we need, we need bread, we don't necessarily need cake, as we pray, as we ask, as we seek, as we not, to discern the answers, to our prayers, we need to learn then, something else, and it's called contentment, contentment, we need to be content, to subject ourselves, to the will of God, and to his answers, to prayer, we need to be content, with what God supplies us, that he supplies, our needs, contentment, it might not be, what we think, we want, or even, we might not be, what we think, we need, but God knows, what's best for us, and we need to be content, in his provision, for us, now there might be times, when God may test us, he might make us, wait for answers, to prayer, there are times, when he would do, far more, than we could ever imagine, in his answer, to our prayers, but you see, whatever the answer, we can be certain, of the fact, that God is wise, we can be certain, of the fact, that God knows, what is best, and we need to learn, to be content, with that answer, from God, now of course, our daily bread, we can legitimately say, is representative, of all our material needs, all our bodily needs, and the lessons, of contentment, and the lessons, of what's legitimate, for us to ask for, that our daily portion, each day, things that are sufficient, to our needs, it's as relevant, to all our other, legitimate needs, as it is, to our daily bread, when we're praying, to God,

God, but then one final lesson, remember back, this morning, and we saw, there were different ways, to divide up the structure, of the Lord's prayer, well, another way, would be to see, that the Lord teaches us, to pray for two types, of things, one type of things, is spiritual, and the other type, of thing, is material, and we need to learn, that there is a difference, in the way, that we pray, for these things, see when we pray, for spiritual things, we're praying, for absolute matters, we're praying, for certainties, we could say, so when we, when we pray, that God's kingdom, should come, God's will be done, we can pray that, with definitiveness, your will be done, because we know, it will be, when we say, and pray, for God's kingdom, to come, we can pray that, definitively, because we know, that God will, build his kingdom, and God's kingdom, will come, that there's no, ifs and buts, about that, is there,

God will have, his will done, God will have, his kingdom come, but you see, when we, when we pray about, material things, not spiritual things, when we pray about, material things, when we come to, the necessary, and legitimate things, that we can pray about, that are daily, and everyday gifts, from God, then we're no longer, dealing in absolutes, we're no longer, dealing in definitive things, we have to pray, in a conditional manner, what do I mean by that, you see, God may choose, to withhold from us, in his purposes, and to fulfill his will, he may choose, to withhold from us, daily, and everyday gifts, things that we think, we need, things that we think, we'd like to have, he may not, give us good health, as we get older, our health often, deteriorates, he may not, give us good health, he may not, give us great finances, we're not all, driving Rolls Royces, around here, are we?

He may allow, persecution, and testing, in our lives, he may allow that, to happen to us, for our good, and if we're praying, for the removal, of such things, it must be conditional, must be conditional, what do I mean, well conditional, on what, conditional, on the will, of God, because that's a definitive, no conditions, on that, in other words, when we pray, for material, and physical blessing, it must be prayers, that are subjected, to the will of God, give me healing, from infirmity, please Lord, if it's your will, give me respite, from persecution, please Lord, if it's your will, you see conditionality, is an important principle, that we need to remember, in prayer, because if we don't, we run the risk, of being presumptuous, in our prayers, and presumption, provokes what, well it provokes, the wrath of God, we should never be, presumptuous, on God, well as we close,

[48 : 18] I'm very conscious, that today, it's been a rather, brief look, at Christ teaching, on prayer, we've not been through, the whole of the Lord's Prayer, we've tended to, have a slightly different view, of the Lord's Prayer, looking at it from, perhaps a slightly, wider perspective, rather than just looking, at the individual, petitions, and in many ways, I think we've only, really scratched, the surface, of what we could do, and, we certainly haven't, had the time, that, a full consideration, of the Lord's Prayer, would warrant, but I trust, you know, that even this evening, we've come to a better, understanding of things, I trust that, God has spoken to us tonight, and has given us, a greater understanding, of what exactly, Christian prayer is, what it should be, he's perhaps opened our eyes, to a new understanding, of the need for, for persistence in prayer, perhaps we've got, a new understanding, of what it means, to ask and seek, and to knock, to have that ongoing, praying relationship, with God, as we look, to God's answers, to our prayers,

I trust that, we've taken to heart, that the need, to trust our Father's goodness, to pray to him, asking for the gift, of the Holy Spirit, perhaps we've got, a better understanding too, of what it means, to pray for our daily bread, I trust that, to be the case, so that you know, in our Christian lives, we can be content, with what God provides, Christian contentment, is a great gift, from God, we could pray for that too, that God would give us, contentment, in our Christian lives, all our circumstances, the circumstances, that we are in, is God's circumstances, he's put us in, and we need to be content, in those circumstances, whatever they may be, we need to be able to, and willing to submit ourselves, to the will of God, and so as we pray, we should pray, that the Lord's will, would be done, and we need to submit, to that, and so we learn then, to pray, as Jesus would have us pray, and what is that ultimately, well ultimately, that is that we would pray, to the end, that it would be, for the glory of God, that it would be, for the glory of God, and for the advancement, of his kingdom, here on earth, the day will come, when,

God will have the victory, when Christ will have the victory, when, Christ comes again, and we won't need to pray, anymore then, and we'll be in his presence, all our prayers, will have been answered, fully answered, perfectly answered, and won't that be, a glorious day, Amen.