

The sovereignty of God and 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: 16 January 2011

Preacher: Mark Fossey

[0 : 0 0] This morning's reading can be found on page 1047 of the Church Bibles. That's Luke chapter 11, beginning to read at the first verse.

Luke chapter 11. 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 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, 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.

[1 : 2 5] 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?

The sovereignty of God and prayer. Now, I don't know about you guys and how you find prayer, but one of the things that naturally I think many Christians struggle with is just trusting God when it comes to prayer.

It's hard to have faith. What if he doesn't want to answer my prayers? What if he doesn't want to? What if he can't answer my prayers? What if my motives are wrong?

[2 : 3 4] What if there's something in my heart that's a problem? What if my faith isn't enough? What if I didn't ask in the right way somehow? Or I didn't ask for the right thing? For some, I think prayer can feel like a lottery.

Hoping I ask for the right thing in the right way. And maybe, just maybe, I'll get what I ask for. I don't know if you find prayer like that. Some of the guys in our youth group have been applying for university recently.

And it struck me it's a bit like applying for university. So there they are. They fill out their written statements where they write about all their lives and all the things they've done, etc. And they hope when the person reads that, the examiner reads that, that he'll, oh good, yes, tick, oh, no, cross.

And then they've got to do some sort of little test and they just hope. I mean, they've no idea. Did I answer the questions right? And then they have one of these gruelly interviews with all these difficult questions. And that, you know, they're just trying to gauge by the examiner's sort of temperament, by his looks and by the way he's speaking.

Did I get it right? Did I say the right things? And they go away and they wait. And they wait. And they hope, not knowing. Did I say the right things? Did I say it in the right way?

[3 : 44] Who knows? Maybe the examiner just had a really nice lunch and he comes to look at their stuff or he just had interviewed them and he's in a good mood and they get in. Or maybe the examiner just had a headache that day and he had a nightmare.

He had a nightmare. Who knows? You never know. Prayer can feel a bit like that, I think. Because I wonder sometimes, have I said things in the right way? Maybe I made a gaffe in what I've said.

Maybe I didn't have the right intentions in my heart. And you sit and you wait and you wonder and you hope. Maybe it's yes, but I don't know. Do you feel like that with prayer sometimes?

I want to encourage you today that what Jesus wants to encourage us today, actually, not me. What Jesus wants to encourage us today is that God is not a university examiner. He's your dad.

If you're a Christian, God is your father and he loves you. And he wants to give good gifts to you. That's the thing that Jesus wants to teach us today. And although dad doesn't always give us exactly what we want, dad always wants to give us what's best for us.

[4 : 52] And in the case of your heavenly father, who is God, who is omniscient and omnipotent and has a perfect heart, he always knows what's best for us. You can absolutely trust he will always give you good gifts because he's your dad.

Now, a couple of weeks ago, we looked at how Jesus taught us how to pray. And in Matthew's gospel, looking around the passage of the Lord's Prayer, and this week we're looking at Luke. And I want to not really spend any time in the Lord's Prayer, but look at the parables that he teaches, the two parables after the Lord's Prayer from verses 5 down to 13.

And I've got to say, it's been quite an exciting week for me because I came to this text with my preconceptions about what this text meant. And actually, in my study, I've realised I was mostly wrong, actually.

I thought this was a text mostly for Christians. And I do think it is a text for Christians. I do think this encourages Christians to ask their heavenly father for good gifts. But I've realised, actually, that if you're here today and you wouldn't call yourself a Christian, and you're still thinking about things, this is really a text for you.

This is absolutely brilliant. If you're the sort of person that would describe yourself as a seeker, as someone who's open-minded to the idea of God, thinking about things, asking questions.

[6 : 04] If you think of yourself as someone who's standing outside the door and wondering whether I should knock, whether I should go in, this is absolutely the text for you.

Look down at verse 9 in the passage we just read. This is what Jesus wants to say to you today. I tell you, ask and it will be given to you. Seek and you will find.

Knock and the door will be opened to you for everyone who asks receives. And the one, everyone who seeks finds. And the one who knocks, it will be opened to you.

So the first point, and the thing that's really struck me most about this passage, is simply this. Ask the heavenly Father to let you into his kingdom.

Let me read again from verse 5. This is two parables, but I'll just do the first one for a start. Jesus said to them, which of you has got a friend, okay? And you go to him at midnight and say to him, friend, lend me three loaves.

[7 : 05] For a friend of mine has arrived on a journey. I've nothing to set before him. And he will answer from within, don't bother me. The door is now shut and my children are with me in bed. I cannot get up and give you anything.

Reminds me very much of the play we had at Christmas time. Go away. Nothing to do with me. And I tell you that we won't get up and give him anything because he's his friend, but because of his impotence, he will rise and give him whatever he needs.

And I tell you, ask and it will be given. Seek and you'll find a knock and it will be opened to you. For everyone who receives, who asks, receives. The one who seeks, finds. And the one who knocks, it will be opened. So let me modernise the story in the way I do.

So there's me. I'm at home one afternoon. Phone call comes through and it's, hi, hi, Mark. I was like, who's that? Hi, Mark. It's your cousin. We're at Heathrow. Where are you?

Oh, no. I thought it was next Sunday. I'm so sorry. So I jump in the car, speed down to Heathrow to pick up my American cousins who come to visit. And by the time we wangle our way back from Heathrow and get back to the house, it's gone midnight.

[8 : 12] It's very late. And of course, it's Sunday. So all night, Asda's closed. So we've got typically known food in the house, as you'd expect. And so I'm thinking, what am I going to do? You know, it's, and of course, in ancient Jewish custom, it's a massive shameful thing not to be able to feed your host.

I mean, it pretty much is today as well. But even more in their Jewish culture. So I've got this nightmare. What am I going to do? Well, of course, my mate Scott lives a few doors down. So I'll go and knock on his door and ask him. Bang on the door.

Nothing. Well, of course, it's one in the morning by this stage. Of course, it's quiet. But so bang a little bit harder, slightly nervous about all the other neighbours. And the intercom goes. Who is it?

Scotty, it's me. It's Mark. Sorry. I'm really sorry, mate. Can I ask you a massive favour? This is really out of order. I'm really sorry about this, mate. But I'm a bit desperate. My American cousins have arrived. And I've got no, have you got, I've got no food.

Have you got like a frozen chicken or something? Or just some bread. Whatever you've got, please. Can I have something? Okay. And Scotty goes, oh. I mean, this guy was my best mate, okay.

[9 : 17] Best man at my wedding, okay. But Scotty, who is a good mate, says, oh, mate, what time is it? It's one in the morning. Look, I'm sorry. We've just got the kids to bed.

We've been trying for hours to get the kids to bed. They've been up and down. We finally got them in bed. And the food, the freezer is in the larder, which is through their bedroom. And if I go through there, I'll just wake them up.

And so I'm sorry, mate, I just can't. I just can't. And that's how the story ends. Although it doesn't, does it? You went to your best mate with a desperate favour and he says no.

But at the end of Jesus' story, he changes his mind and he brings the food. What's the reason? It's not because he's a good mate. Did you notice that in verse 8? I tell you, though, he will not get up and give him anything because he's a friend.

So he doesn't get up and do it as a mate. He does it for another reason. And it's this word, yet because of his impotence. Now, I've been doing a bit of Greek research.

[10 : 16] I'm no expert, but I've been doing a bit of... And this word impotence is only used once in the whole New Testament. So it's a slightly odd word. It's a strange word. And when you read different translations, they translate it quite differently.

In some, it's persistence. Because of the... So it sounds like... Or... What's the word? Not boastfulness. Because of their sort of confidence and boldness is the word I'm looking for.

So it sounds as if... And this is the way I always used to read this passage. Because he knocks on the door and keeps knocking and keeps knocking, eventually he wears his mate down and he comes down and answers. But actually, apparently this word means, really, more accurately, because of shamelessness or because of shame.

Now, it could be because the guy, because of the shame of his mate, doesn't want to embarrass his mate. But actually, both of these parables aren't really about the prayer. These parables are about the one to whom we pray.

They're about God. And the God figure in this parable is the guy in the house, where the other guy is knocking on the door outside. So he doesn't come down and give me my...

[11 : 24] Scott, he doesn't come down and give me the frozen chicken. Because he's my mate. He does it because of shame. Because he knows that in the community, if he's known as the sort of tight-fisted person who doesn't get up and give the food, well, that's bad on his reputation.

Just as it was shameful for me that I haven't got any food for my American cousins that arrived, so it's massively shameful on him if he doesn't provide when he should be. It's an issue of his reputation.

Now, what is the point of this story? The point of this story, like many of Jesus' stories, is that it's a parable from the lesser to the greater. If a friend who is not willing to do it as a friend still does it because of reputation, how much more your perfect Father in Heaven who loves to give good gifts?

In other words, God is more willing than a friend. Do you see the point? If he won't do it as a mate, but he'll do it for his reputation, how much more the perfect God who loves to give good gifts, who loves to give bread to those who ask?

In other words, verse 9, ask and it will be given you. Seek and it will, you will find. Knock and the door will be opened to you. So, of course, this has massive relevance for all of us as Christians and as those who are not Christians.

[12 : 45] If you're a Christian, God is your Father. He's more willing than a friend. He wants to give you good things. So ask him for things. But I think this has even more relevance for you, like I said at the beginning.

If you're still someone who would think of yourself as standing outside and thinking about knocking on the door, shall I do it? Shall I go in? Who is this God?

What do I make of this God? Most often in Luke's Gospel, if you read it through, houses represent kingdoms. And in this case, the house where God would be would represent God's kingdom.

There's a parable later on, the parable of the narrow door, which describes a house with a man in the house and a door and it's wide open. But one day the door will be shut. So go in while you've got the chance.

Here's a similar parable, which is slightly different. Here the door is shut and it's knock. If you knock, will he answer? Will he be like, oh mate, I'm in bed, get lost, can't be bothered.

[13 : 46] And the point is, if you knock on God's door and say, I want to come into your kingdom, he will absolutely open the door. If you knock, the door will be open to you, whoever you are, wherever you come from, whatever your background, however good or bad you've been.

God is a God who's not distant or capricious or evil. Or abstract or you can't know what he's going to be like. God is a God that is longing for you to knock on his door.

Longing for you to seek him. Longing for you to find him. So if you think of yourself as someone standing outside that door, shall I knock? What's it going to happen if I knock? Will he let me in?

What's he like? Can I please encourage you? He absolutely wants you to knock. He's longing for you to knock. So go in. Why not knock? But he says another story that's very similar.

And it's not just that he's more willing than a friend. God is more caring than a father. Let me read from verse 11. What father among you, if his son asked for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent?

[14 : 49] Or if he asked for an egg, would give him a scorpion? Look, if you, who then are evil, know how good to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly father give his Holy Spirit to those who ask him?

Again, it's an argument from the lesser to the greater. Do you see? What father, if he says, Dad, Dad, Dad, can I have a fish? No, I'll give you a serpent instead. No father would do that.

Not even an evil father. I look at the parents here who've got even the most annoying and stressful kids. And even they love to give good gifts to their children, don't they?

Even at moments of the greatest, Oh, you're so annoying. You still want to give them good things because you love them, because they're your kids. Even evil dads know that. I'm not saying there's any evil dads here.

The argument, of course, is how much more the perfect, pure-hearted God in heaven. Now, it might be that you actually have a bad experience with your dad and your dad was either absent or maybe he probably was an evil dad.

[15 : 50] And I'd appeal to you, of all people, you might have a lot of pain in your heart about your father, but you, of all people, know what a good father should be like because your dad wasn't that.

And God is that father. God is the one who wants to give good gifts to you. Now, the application here, I think, for Christians is really obvious. We so fall easily into the trap of thinking that God is this sovereign king of the universe.

And you might either think, firstly, oh, why would he bother with little old me? I'm just this little tiny speck in a massive cosmos. God's got so many more important things to worry about than little old me.

You might think that way. Or you might also think, well, is God really good? Is he my good father? He might not have given you the perfect life. You might have had real troubles in life and you doubt God's goodness.

Or maybe he hasn't answered your prayers in the past. Maybe he's up there and he's not that bothered by you. Or maybe you've done something so terrible in your past that maybe you think, why would he answer my prayers?

[16 : 55] Why would he do that? And Jesus is telling us, don't you see that God is your dad? He's your dad. And even if a rubbish, evil dad instinctively knows to give good gifts to their children, don't you realise that your father in heaven is absolutely busting for you to ask him for good gifts.

He delights in giving his children good things. Does God want to give little old me good things? Oh yes. Oh yes.

Of course he wants to. Nothing pleases him more. But I think there's a massive also application again here for people, those of you, like I said, who feel like you might be standing outside and wondering whether I should knock on the door.

Did you ever think it was a bit odd the way Jesus says, what father among you, if his son asked for a fish, would instead of give him a fish, give him a serpent? It's a bit of a sort of weird, why a serpent and a scorpion?

It's a weird thing to sort of say. But if you turn back to Luke chapter 10 verse 17, the answer's there. Let me explain. In this bit, Jesus has sent out his disciples on a mission to tell people about Jesus, to tell them about his kingdom.

[18 : 09] And they've come back very excited and they've actually been able to cast demons out of people. So let me read from verse 17. The 72 missionaries return with joy, saying, Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name.

And Jesus said to them, I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven, because behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you.

Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven. So Jesus has given them the authority to tread on serpents and scorpions. And it's not literal, physical serpents and scorpions.

Did you see there, that the spirits are subject to you? In other words, serpents and scorpions represent evil things. The spirit of the devil, evil things.

Things of Satan's kingdom. And God, the question here is, is God the kind of God that likes to give evil things, like Satan does?

[19 : 12] And the point here is, that God is a God who loves to give good things to his children. He'll give fish, not serpents. He'll give an egg, not scorpions. If you're someone here who wouldn't call yourself a Christian, who's thinking about these things, like I say, standing outside the door, shall I knock?

You might be thinking, is God the kind of God that I want to get to know? Is he an evil God? Is he a capricious God? Is he a random God that does what he wants? Is he distant?

Is he the kind of tyrant that does what he wants when he wants? Playing chess with people. And Jesus wants you to know that God is not like that. That's what Satan is like.

That's the serpent, scorpion type of father. But God is a God who loves to give good gifts. He loves to give, verse 13 at the end there, the Holy Spirit to those who ask him.

Christians are people who have the Holy Spirit. You see, when you become a Christian, if you knock on that door and say, God, I want to come into your kingdom, he gives you his Holy Spirit. And that doesn't mean you have some sort of electric bolt go through or some ecstatic experience, although it might.

[20 : 21] But what it means more ordinarily is that God gives you the ability to know him. You can now know him as a father. You can walk with him. He helps you. He guides you.

He teaches you. He leads you. And he gives you the power to live according to his ways. That's what it means to have the Holy Spirit. That is the best gift that God could give to anyone. And we heard earlier, didn't we, with Clive talking about how he became a Christian.

Clive is a man who has the spirit. His tears were tears from the Spirit of God because God has given him the most wonderful gift. And that is the case with all who are Christians here today. So I'd encourage you, knock on that door because God loves to give good gifts.

He wants to give you his spirit. He wants to give you things of his kingdom. He wants to give you the bread, as it were, that the friend didn't give or did give in the end. So let me encourage you, if you're thinking these things through, why not come to our course, our Christianity Explore course that Simon talked about.

We're meeting again on Wednesday night. Come and speak to me. You'll really enjoy it. I think you'll really enjoy it. It's great to think about these things. God wants to give you good things. But secondly, and more briefly, I want to think about this idea of the sovereignty of God in terms of asking our Heavenly Father for things in his name for those of us who are Christians.

[21 : 38] In the Bible, there are extraordinary, confident assertions that God loves to give us. Well, anything that we ask in his name. Let me show you some of them. These are the words of Jesus in John 14.

Whatever you ask for in my name, this I will do, that the Father might be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it. Again, Jesus says, if you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish and it will be done for you.

Again, Jesus says in the very next chapter, chapter 16, truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. Until now, you've asked nothing in my name.

Ask and you will receive that your joy may be full. And look at the confidence John himself shows in his letter in 1 John, chapter 5. This is the confidence that we have towards God.

That if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us and if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the request that we ask of him. Now, those are very confident assertions, aren't they?

[22 : 46] Whatever you ask for in the name of God, in the name of Christ, you can know you'll have it. A few questions you might be asking. A couple of questions. Firstly, how do we know what God's will is?

How do you know what God's will is? I mean, if I ask for anything, would he give it to me? If I ask for a Porsche 911 or if I ask for England to win the World Cup, would he give me that if I asked him for it?

What does it mean to ask for things in his name or asking for things according to his will? I think some Christians, like I said at the beginning, think that prayer is like a lottery, firing requests up at God, desperately hoping that if I say the right things and it happens to match with God's independent will, if they happen to align, then brilliant, jackpot, I get what I want.

But I don't know, do I? I'm just firing up guesses, hoping that it might be according to his will. Or for others, they put off prayer completely because they think, well how can, I can't know God's will, I've no idea, so what's the point of asking him?

I just can't know, so I don't pray. But the thing is, brothers and sisters, we do know God's will, we absolutely know God's will because it's right here, it's in the Bible.

[24 : 01] What is God like? When we are wondering what God's will is, we're asking basically what kind of God is God, what's he like? And we know absolutely what he's like as the Bible tells us. He's a good God, he's a loving father, he wants to give us good things.

We know what God loves, we know what God hates, we know what God's plan is for the world, we know what God's plan is for the church. We know absolutely what God is like as a person, as a personality in his heart.

Okay Mark, you might say, but let me take an example, my job at the moment, I'm thinking about whether to leave my job and do a different job or change careers at the moment. Show me which chapter of 1 Corinthians it tells me which job I should take or where I should go.

How am I supposed to know God's will for my job situation? Well of course you're right, there isn't the chapter of 1 Corinthians on about your job because the Bible is about God more than it is about us.

But let's take that job scenario. When you pray before your Father in heaven who knows the depths of your hearts, he literally knows everything you think, he knows your instincts, he knows what you're about, there's no point in pretending before him.

[25 : 09] So the first thing I might be thinking as I'm praying to God about my job situation is this, why do I want this job change really in my heart? Because God sees my heart, he knows exactly what I'm thinking.

So instantly, before I'm requesting that, I know in my heart, if in my heart my job change is for selfish reasons or for petty reasons, well I already know what God's will will be.

It's don't be selfish, be honourable, be someone of integrity, be generous. So I already know God's will before I've even prayed. But maybe I want to change jobs for good reasons.

Say it's because I want to spend more time with my family, there's a good example. And I want to ask my good father in heaven for a good gift, that I have a different job so I can spend more time with my family. And I know that God is big on family, family is a good thing, and he himself is a father, and he has a son in Lord Jesus, he has lots of children in Christians, so I'm confident that I'm asking him for a good gift.

So the second and obvious question is, what about when he doesn't answer our prayers? Because I go to him thinking, well maybe he won't answer my prayer about the job, about this whole situation.

[26 : 21] It's true that we do sometimes ask for things that we perceive to be good things sometimes, and for some reason God says no to us, and the question is why?

Let me give you three answers and then I'll finish. First reason he might say no to you, and he may have said no to you, maybe about a job situation, maybe about a relationship, maybe about any number of things.

The first thing is because, well, even in this context, it's worth remembering that the vast majority of times we ask God for things, he gives them to us, doesn't he?

I don't know about you, but I actually, I tend to remember the times he doesn't answer my prayers rather than the thousands of times that he does. They just skip my mind, I forget, or I don't even notice.

In my life, more often than not, my prayers are answered. Even this morning, I go up this morning, I hadn't finished this sermon and there were things I needed to do, God, please help me, and he answered my prayers.

[27 : 18] Every day, God answers prayers. But one reason he might say no is because he's saying not yet. It might be that your father, your dad, will give you what you ask for, but just in the right time because for some reason it's not right now.

Or maybe he wants you to pray more and we'll think more about persistence in prayer next week. So I'm going to move on from that one because we'll come on to that next week. A second reason might be that what we think is a good thing actually isn't really a good thing.

I remember when I was a kid getting my 50p pocket money and being slightly jealous of my dad because he had this job and he had £10 notes in his wallet and I used to think, you know, if I could earn £30 a week like my dad, I didn't have a clue about money, if I could earn £30 a week like my dad, I wouldn't just buy five packets of football stickers, I could buy, well, I don't know, more than I can count, loads.

And the point of that illustration is that as Christians, we might be adults as people but as Christians we're learning all the time, aren't we? We're like children in one sense and so sometimes we're asking for good things that we don't realise are not good things.

They might be things of the flesh, they might be things of our heart that aren't actually right or good and so God who does know our hearts and does know what is good for us will always give things in accordance with his world which are good.

[28 : 49] God wants us to give us things which help us to know him more which help us to love him more to become more like the Lord Jesus. In fact, he's making us to be the eternal people who will be perfect with the Lord Jesus and loving him perfectly.

That's the end he wants us to become. So he won't give us serpents, he won't give us scorpions if we happen to be asking for serpents or scorpions. He will always give us bread, eggs, fish, he'll always give us things of his spirit.

Brothers and sisters, it might be that one of the reasons that he's saying no to us is because we're not asking for the right things. But the final thing, let me finish this, is that we might actually be asking for a good thing, we might be asking for a job change or something and it's a good thing and he says no because he wants to give us something better.

Remember the Lord Jesus himself once got a no in prayer, didn't he? The perfect son of God once got a no in prayer. Sweating drops of blood in the garden of Gethsemane, moments before he was going to be crucified, he asked dad for the best gift, a great gift.

He said, dad, don't let me die. Please protect me, I've done nothing wrong. Please don't pour out your wrath on me. Take this cup from me. Yet not my will but yours be done, Jesus said.

[30 : 14] Now I wonder how God felt when he heard that request. His boy, his beloved boy, don't let me die, dad. But God loved him so much as a dad that he didn't answer that prayer.

Actually he sent him to the cross because he loved him and because he loved us. God knows what he's doing and sometimes he gives us the better gift rather than the good gift that we ask for.

It might be that it takes weeks or months or years to understand that perspective but what I want to leave you with is to encourage you brothers and sisters that the devil would love you to give up praying because of negativity towards God.

He wants you to think God's evil. He wants you to think God is not caring or distant or not bothered or won't notice you. He wants you to think God is unknowable or unguessable or he just acts randomly.

Here's your father. Here's your dad. He's more willing than a friend and he's more loving than any father. So brothers and sisters ask him for good gifts.

[31 : 28] Never give up asking. He will always give you the best gifts. He promises that. And if you're here today like I said earlier and you're still standing outside that door thinking, shall I knock? Shall I go in?

God wants you to knock on that door and if you knock on that door he will absolutely invite you in and give you his spirit. He is a good God.

He is a great father. Let's pray. Our good and gracious father, we have many of us struggled in prayer and the reason we struggled in speaking to you is because we struggled about who we think you are and we've gone through disappointments in our lives.

We've had hard things happen to us. We've asked for things and you've not given them to us. We've asked for some things many times and you've not given them to us and the devil just tells us time and time again that's because he's not bothered or that's because he can't do it.

Father God, we want to thank you so much this morning for the encouragement that you give us in the Lord Jesus that you are a great father and you're more willing than any friend. What father would not give good gifts and you are the perfect father who loves to give good gifts.

[32 : 44] Forgive us our failings in our faith. Thank you for this encouragement and we pray that this week, this month and this year Father God, would you in our faith give us the faith to ask you for good and bold things because we know you love to give good things yet not our will but your will be done our good and gracious father.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you.