

2nd & 3rd Quarter 2021 Bible Study Outline



THE PARABLES OF JESUS CHRIST - STUDY 21

The Friend At Midnight - Lk.11:1-13

INTRODUCTION:

1. In studying the parables of Jesus, we have seen how He used the parabolic method of teaching on different subjects....
 - a. Mostly on the theme of the kingdom of heaven
 - b. But also in response to questions by His disciples and even His enemies
2. One such parable was told in response to a question related to prayer...
 - a. Jesus had been praying in a certain place - **Lk.11:1**
 - b. When He ceased praying, one of His disciples asked: "**Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples**"
3. In answering that request, Jesus did three things...
 - a. He first told them "how" and "what" to pray for
 - b. He then told a parable to stress a crucial element in "how" to pray
 - c. He followed up by elaborating on what the parable was designed to illustrate
4. The parable is known as "**The Friend At Midnight**"
 - a. It is recorded in **Lk.11:5-8**
 - b. In it we find Jesus illustrating the importance of "**persistence in prayer**"

I. JESUS' PRAYING PROMPTS A REQUEST:

A. He Had Been Praying In A Certain Place - Lk.11:1a

1. In the gospels we see glimpses into the prayer habits of Jesus
 - a. Rising early to pray in a solitary place - **Mk.1:35**
 - b. Often withdrawing into the wilderness to pray - **Lk.5:16**
 - c. Praying all night in preparation to selecting His apostles - **Lk.6:12-13**
 - d. His beautiful prayer recorded in **Jn.17**
 - e. His agony in the Garden of Gethsemane - **Matt.26:36-44**
 - f. His prayers on the cross - **Matt.27:46; Lk.23:34,46**
2. Undoubtedly His example had an impact on those who saw Him praying

B. A Disciple Wants Jesus To Teach Them To Pray - Lk.11:1b

1. Even as John had taught his disciples
2. Certainly this Jewish disciple knew how to pray in some sense, but understood that Jesus had so much more to teach him

So it is we may know how to pray, but we can always learn more from the Master of prayer...

II. JESUS ANSWERS BY TEACHING A MODEL PRAYER:

A. Commonly Referred To As "The Lord's Prayer"...

1. Recorded here in **Lk.11:2-4**
2. Also in His sermon on the mount - **Matt.6:9-13**

B. This Prayer Serves As An Example...

1. The words "**in this manner**" (**Matt.6:9**) suggest that "The Lord's Prayer" is a PATTERN and not a liturgy that must be recited every time we pray
2. Here we begin to learn the "how" and "what" of prayer
 - a. "**How**" to pray would include "simplicity" in prayer
 - i) The word "**therefore**" in **Matt.6:9** connects what follows with what was said before - **Matt.6:7-8**
 - ii) Jesus' pattern for prayer is an "illustration" in contrast to the "many words" used by the heathen
 - iii) In the prayer itself, note the brevity of words - **Lk.11:2-4**
 - b. We learn the "**what**" of prayer should include such things as:
 - i) Reverence for God and His "Name" (i.e., His Being and Character) - **Lk.11:2**
 - ii) Praying for the progress of God's Kingdom and Will on the earth - **Lk.11:2**
 - iii) Asking for physical necessities - **Lk.11:3**
 - iv) Also, our spiritual needs...
 - a) Forgiveness of sins as we forgive others- **Lk.11:4**
 - b) Protection and deliverance from evil - **Lk.11:4**

In His sermon on the mount, Jesus chose to follow His pattern prayer with an emphasis on forgiving others (**Matt.6:14-15**). But on this occasion, He has a different concern in mind. So He follows with a parable...

III. THE PARABLE OF THE FRIEND AT MIDNIGHT:

A. The Parable Summarized...

1. You find yourself with company and inadequate provisions
2. Yet you know that you can go to your friend's house and borrow some food
3. Even if it is late at night, and...
 - a. He and his family are already in bed
 - b. He would normally not help you, even though you are a friend ...yet you know that if you "persist", he will help you! - **Lk.11:5-8**

B. The Point Of The Parable Is Simple, But Important...

1. Jesus is illustrating the importance of "**persistence in praying**"
2. One does not know "how" to pray, then, unless they learn to be persistent in prayer!

The importance of persistence is stressed even further as we consider...

IV. JESUS' APPLICATION OF THE PARABLE:

A. The Importance Of Persistence - Lk.11:9-10

1. It is those who ask, seek, and knock, who will receive, find, and have doors opened
2. The element of persistence is implied even in...
 - a. The present tense of the verbs for "ask", "seek", and "knock" (literally, "keep on asking", "keep on seeking", and "keep on knocking")
 - b. The progressive relation between the words:
 - i) One normally starts out by "asking"
 - ii) As they learn more, they begin "seeking"
 - iii) As they arrive close to their destination, they start "knocking"
3. Failure to persist in prayer, then, may be one reason some prayers go unanswered!

B. Remembering Who It Is You Are Asking - Lk.11:11-13

1. To encourage persistence in prayer, Jesus speaks of earthly fathers and their sons
 - a. If a son asks his father for bread, will he give him a stone?
 - b. If he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead?
 - c. If he asks for an egg, will the father offer him a scorpion?
- Each of these rhetorical questions imply a definite "No!"
2. Then how much more will our heavenly Father give us that which is good?
 - a. If earthly fathers, though evil, know how to give good gifts to their children
 - b. How much more will our heavenly Father give the Spirit to those who ask Him?
 - c. This reference to the Holy Spirit may relate to the promise of the Spirit
 - i) A promise made by Jesus on another occasion - **Jn.7:37-39**
 - ii) A promise offered by Peter on the day of Pentecost - **Acts 2:38-39**
3. Jesus' point seems to be this:
 - a. If persistence with a friend will prove fruitful...
 - b. If earthly fathers know how to give good gifts to their children...
...how much more will persistence prove fruitful with our heavenly Father!

CONCLUSION:

1. We may know "how" to pray when it comes to saying the right things, but from this parable we learn that we do not know "how" to pray until we have learned to pray with "persistence"
 2. So important is this quality of prayer that Jesus taught another parable on the very same theme! (compare with "**The Parable Of The Persistent Widow**" - **Lk.18:1-8**)
 3. But for now, let's remember what we have learned from Jesus at "the school of prayer"...
 - a. That we have a heavenly Father who knows how to give good gifts to His children
 - b. That this should motivate us to ask, and to ask persistently!
- Have you received the gift spoken of in our text? The Father gives His Spirit to those who obey Him in faith, repentance and baptism... - **Jn.7:37-39; Acts 2:38; 5:32**