

A Survey of the Parables of Jesus
Lesson 4 – Parables Concerning Prayer
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Introduction: What is man's greatest need?

A. Men need God! But how is that need met?

1. Men need to believe in God. But what is the essence of faith? (**Heb 11:3, 6**)
2. Men need to see an invisible God so that he might trust God and be rewarded by Him.

B. Prayer is a product of faith in an unseen God that pleases with us to ask for help!

1. The battle between the world and God's blessings can be seen in how we pray. (**James 4:2-3**)
2. Did Jesus, the Son of God need to pray? What did the disciples see in His life?

I. The Parable of the friend at midnight (Lk 11:5-13)

A. Jesus told this parable while making His trip to Jerusalem that would result in His death. (**Lk 9:51**)

1. One of the disciples asked Jesus to "teach us to pray." (**Lk 11:1**)
2. What had they seen in Jesus? Jesus was pleased and responded to this request. When was the last time you asked to be taught on any Bible subject?
3. Jesus was a master teacher and they heard Him teach. They would give their lives teaching, but they did not ask Him to teach us to teach!
4. They saw that such a close relationship to God in prayer was the key to any teaching! (**Jn 12:49-50**)
5. You can see in Jesus' teaching an absolute confidence in God.

B. Jesus gives a model prayer like He gave in the Sermon on the Mount. (**Lk 11:2-4**)

1. This was not a formula but a set of priorities and principles.
2. Prayer should be an exaltation of God and a plea that His will be done!

C. We are to be persistent in prayer! (**Lk 11:5-8**)

1. In the homes in that region at that time, homes had a place for the animals and a place for the family.
2. Imagine the scene where someone has run out of bread and keeps knocking until he gets some food. Borrowing food like this was not uncommon.

D. Lessons about God. (**Lk 11:9-13**)

1. Be aggressive in asking God for blessings!
2. What we do in giving good gifts to our children pales in comparison to what God will do for us!

Questions

1. What is man's greatest need? How is that need to be met?
2. What is the lesson we should learn from the model prayer Jesus gave? What is an improper use of it?
3. What is being persistent in prayer? Can we seek to be persistent with a lack of faith?
4. What is the common truth that Jesus uses in His parable?
5. What might we lose if we fail to be persistent?
6. What is the proper motive for all prayer?

II. The Parable of the importunate widow (Lk 18:1-8)

- A. This parable had a sad commonly known truth behind it. Corrupt judges often run over the helpless to please the rich and powerful.
(Isa 1:23; Jer 5:28; Ezk 22:7; Mal 3:5)
1. Some “adversary” had this widow beaten. She would not stop trying.
 2. She hit him at the only point he was vulnerable, his own selfishness. Imagine the effort she made to break his will!
- B. Our God is not like the unjust judge. Imagine what a loving God will do!
1. One of our great problems in prayer is a lack of persistence.
 2. We are often limited by our faith and not by what God can do!
 3. What was the limiting factor for how much we might be blessed by God?
(Gal 6:9; 2 Thess 3:13)
- C. Some common truths about prayer.
1. We can be persistent about seeking that which is God’s will. There are some things which God will say NO! **(2 Cor 12:8-9; James 4:3)**
 2. Vain repetitions are not the answer for a lack of persistence! **(Mt 6:7)**
 3. We are to be persistent in praying to a God who will always answer prayer for our good in His time! **(1 Jn 5:14-15)**
- D. What are some common circumstances requiring persistence?
1. The need for God to “avenge.” What does this mean?
 2. Discuss other possible scenarios.
- E. What will the future hold? **(Lk 18:8)**
1. What is possible at the coming of Jesus?
 2. What is the best barometer of a living faith in us?

Questions

1. What was a common occurrence in the judicial system towards the weak and powerless?
2. What was the acknowledged character of this judge? What was his “weak” point?
3. What are some circumstances where a Christian might wrongly give up praying about a matter? What are the consequences of giving up?
4. What should we pray for? What should we not pray for?
5. What does the character of God teach us about prayer?
6. What is a possibility when Jesus returns? What does this mean?
7. How might you and I improve our prayer lives?