

Knocking on Heaven's Door (Luke 11:5-13)

I. Introduction

A. *This Week in Clear Living*

1. An effective prayer life is a steadfast prayer life.
2. An effective prayer life is specific and full of faith.
3. An effective prayer life believes the Father will provide what is good.
4. An effective prayer life does not give up when the going gets tough.
5. An effective prayer life follows God's model.

Question: What events in Luke, chapter 10, show the heart of Jesus?

B. Several noteworthy events were recorded in Luke, chapter 10.

1. In Luke 10:1, Jesus sent out seventy people in groups of two to minister to the surrounding communities.
 - a. Luke 10:2-3 says, "Therefore said he unto them, ***The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few***: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest. Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves."
 - b. Notice that these workers were also instructed to not take any money.
 - c. The instruction to not salute anyone in the way showed the urgency of the mission.
 - d. The Lord wants to use each of us to minister to those around us.
 - 1) Our orders are to go (Matthew 28:19-20).
 - 2) Our instructions are to be led by the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:16-25).
 - 3) Our approach is to use the spiritual gifts that the Holy Spirit has developed within us.
 - 4) When the Holy Spirit is involved in what we are trying to do, then we will feel led to minister to others and our chores will not be burdensome.
 - 5) Luke 19:10 says, "***For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.***"
2. In Luke 10:30-37, Jesus told the parable about the Good Samaritan.
 - a) Luke 10:36-37 says, "Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise."
 - b) As the Good Samaritan cared for the injured person on the side of the road, the Lord would have us take an interest in the spiritual and physical needs of those that cross our paths.
3. In Luke 10:38-42, the account of Jesus, Mary, and Martha was recorded.
 - a) How do you respond to Martha's criticism of her sister?

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- b) How do you respond to what Jesus said? Luke 10:41-42 says, "And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." **Some things to consider.**
- 1) Jesus was at their house to eat. Someone had to be Martha, or they would have all been hungry.
 - 2) Jesus was not condemning Martha.
 - a. He was teaching her to balance her priorities.
 - b. Ecclesiastes 3:1 says, "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:"
 - 3) Mary was no more spiritual than Martha. Neither of the two had good spiritual understanding on the day that Lazarus was raised.
 - a) John 11:21 says, "Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died."
 - b) John 11:32 says, "Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died."
 - c) John 11:35 says, "Jesus wept." Why did Jesus weep?

Question: How does the Lord's Prayer influence the way you pray?

- II. Jesus taught His disciples how to pray.
- A. In Luke 11:1-4, Jesus taught His disciples how to pray.
1. Luke 11:1 indicates that John the Baptist had taught his disciples how to pray.
 2. What were some of the key parts to that prayer?
 - a. "Our Father" - a reference to our personal relationship.
 - b. "which art in heaven" - our understanding of where He is.
 - c. "Hallowed be thy name" - our understanding of Who He is.
 - d. "Thy kingdom come." - our understanding of His coming kingdom.
 - e. "Thy will be done" - our desire to be used by Him.
 - f. "Give us day by day our daily bread" - recognizing a dependence on Him.
 - g. "forgive us our sins" - understanding a need for a Savior and forgiveness.
 - h. "lead us not into temptation" - acknowledging our desire to not stumble.
 3. The Lord's Prayer has always been considered a model prayer. How does the Lord's Prayer influence the way you pray?
- B. What is prayer?
1. I Thessalonians 5:17-18 says, "Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."
 2. Pray (proseuchomai) - to offer prayers, to pray.

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3. Prayer is talking to God. Matthew 26:39 says, "And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt."
4. Based on I Thessalonians 5:17, was Paul advocating that we continuously pray according to the manner of the Lord's Prayer?
5. Prayer and supplication often go together.
 - a. Ephesians 6:18 says, "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;"
 - b. Supplication (*deesis*) - a seeking, asking, entreating, entreaty to God or to man, need, indigence, want, privation, penury.
6. Prayer and fasting often go together.
 - a. Matthew 17:21 says, "Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting."
 - b. Fasting (*nesteia*) - a fasting caused by want or poverty.
 - c. In Jonah 3:5-8, the people fasted because they were afraid that God was going to destroy them.
 - d. My Personal Definition of Fasting - our desire for a particular spiritual matter is greater than our desire for bodily nourishment. We are so moved by a particular situation that we do not even think about eating.
7. Valid prayers will always possess some or all of the elements that Jesus mentioned to His disciples.
 - a. "Our Father" - a reference to our personal relationship.
 - b. "which art in heaven" - our understanding of where He is.
 - c. "Hallowed be thy name" - our understanding of Who He is.
 - d. "Thy kingdom come." - our understanding of His coming kingdom.
 - e. "Thy will be done" - our desire to be used by Him.
 - f. "Give us day by day our daily bread" - recognizing a dependence on Him.
 - g. "forgive us our sins" - understanding a need for a Savior and forgiveness.
 - h. "lead us not into temptation" - acknowledging our desire to not stumble.
8. When we pray, our desire should always be for the Lord's will to be done in our lives.
9. Our SELFISH desires are usually a hindrance to successfully answered prayers (James 4:1-3).

Question: According to Jesus, what elements produce successful answers to prayer?

III. In Luke 11:1-4, Jesus outlined a model prayer. In Luke 11:5-13, He described how a person should pray.

A. Jesus implied that our prayers would be answered because God is our Friend.

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1. What a wonderful image of God --- Friend (and Father) instead of Policeman!
 2. Friend (*philos*) - he who associates familiarly with one, a companion, one of the bridegroom's friends who on his behalf asked the hand of the bride and rendered him various services in closing the marriage and celebrating the nuptials (like the best man or brides maid at your wedding).
 3. James 2:23 says, "And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God."
 4. **As spiritual Jews, we are counted friends of God just as Abraham.**
- B. Jesus implied that our prayers would be answered when we are persistent.
1. Luke 11:8 says, "I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet **because of his importunity** he will rise and give him as many as he needeth."
 2. Importunity (*anaideia*) - shamelessness, impudence.
 3. The word comes from a compound of (*a*) and (*aidos*) - alpha, first and a sense of shame or honour, modesty, bashfulness, reverence, regard for others, respect.
- C. Jesus told His disciples that God would answer their prayers out of a sense of honor and regard for His people.
1. We have been branded as God's property, so He takes responsibility for every aspect of our lives. Ephesians 4:30 says, "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."
 - a. He grows us into responsible, mature Christian adults because He takes responsibility for every aspect of our lives.
 - b. He takes care of our every physical need He takes responsibility for every aspect of our lives.
 2. Exodus 32:10-12 says, "Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation. And Moses besought the LORD his God, and said, LORD, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand? Wherefore should the Egyptians speak, and say, For mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth? Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people."
- D. Jesus told His disciples to ask, seek, and knock.
1. The visiting pastor's comment about God giving more light to those that have responded favorably to previous light illustrates this principle.
 2. Ask (*aiteo*) - to ask, beg, call for, crave, desire, require.
 3. Seek (*zeteo*) - to crave, demand something from someone, to seek in order to find.
 4. Knock (*krouo*) - to knock: at the door

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5. In verses 10-13, Jesus compared prayer to a son asking bread or fish of his father.
- E. *God is committed to us, and we need to ask (pray) Him to help us be more committed to Him.*

IV. Some realities about our prayer life

- A. When do people often pray?
 1. They usually pray when wanting something.
 2. They usually pray when in trouble.
 3. They sometimes pray because they want to get saved.
 4. They sometimes pray because they want to be better servants for the Lord.
 5. They sometimes pray because they want for better health and longer life.
- B. For what do people often pray? *In your opinion, are these VALID or INVALID prayers?*
 1. They often pray for the specific things that they want. In the 1960s, Janis Joplin sang a song that asked God why He had not given her a pink Mercedes Benz. --- **VALID or INVALID?**
 2. They sometimes pray for their favorite sports team.
 - a. "Oh Lord, please let Tiger make that putt." --- **VALID or INVALID?**
 - b. "Lord, please let the Redskins win one more Super Bowl." --- **VALID or INVALID?**
 3. They sometimes pray for job promotions and more money.
 - a. "Lord, if you give me that job, then I will serve you faithfully." --- **VALID or INVALID?**
 - b. "Lord, if you give me more money, then I will have more money to put into church." --- **VALID or INVALID?**
 - c. An exception to this hindrance: Romans 12:8 says, "Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness." --- **VALID or INVALID?**
 4. They sometimes pray to get saved. --- **VALID or INVALID?**
 5. They sometimes pray for others to get saved. --- **VALID or INVALID?**
 6. They sometimes pray to be better servants for the Lord. --- **VALID or INVALID?**
 7. They sometimes pray for better health and longer life. --- **VALID or INVALID?**

Question: What kinds of prayers usually get the desired answers?

V. How does the Lord treat peoples' prayers?

- A. What kinds of prayers do not get answered the way we would like?

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1. The Lord is never pleased when we pray selfishly.
 - a. I do not really think that He cares if I drive a Mercedes Benz or not, or if I live in a big mansion.
 - b. I do not think He cares if Tiger Woods wins more golf tournaments and breaks Jack Nicklaus' major golf championship record.
 - c. I do not think He cares who wins the Super Bowl or even if there is another Super Bowl.
 2. We sometimes get caught up in the day-to-day struggles of life and ignore the much greater significance of being eternally minded.
 - a. Luke 19:10 says, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."
 - b. James 4:1-3 says, "From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts."
- B. What kinds of prayers get answered the way we would like?**
1. While preparing for this lesson, I could not find the verse where Moses confronted the Lord about what others would think if God did not care for His people in the wilderness. A few moments later, one of my Bible searches turned up the verse (Exodus 32:10-12).
 2. When we dedicate ourselves to reaching the lost, the Lord will answer those prayers that work toward that end.
 3. When our prayers show our trust and dependence upon Him, He will answer our prayers and never let us down.
 - a. You never have to be worried about being left out on a limb by yourself because Jesus will always be with you (Matthew 28:19-20 and Daniel 3:25).
 - b. Psalms 37:25 says, "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."
 - c. Matthew 6:33 says, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."
 4. When our prayers show the right kind of praise and honor towards Him, He will hear and answer our prayers.
- C. The BOTTOM Line - while we care about so many different things in this life, the Lord is mainly interested in reaching the lost and growing His saints.

VI. Next week's lesson: "A Word to the Wise" (Luke 11:37-54)