

What Drives Us to Keep Praying?

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: 24 November 2024

Preacher: Bill Story

- [0 : 0 0] Luke chapter 11. Pew Bible 850 something or other. I looked it up and I already forgot. If you have your Bible, please take it out.
- Turn it to Luke chapter 11. And we come one final time. Well, actually, we'll do one more time next week as a review. But one more time exegeting these verses.
- We come to the second half of Jesus' teaching on prayer. He teaches us how to pray or what to pray in verses 2, 3, and 4.
- And now in verses 5 through 13, he teaches us partly how but mostly why to pray.
- So, please stand as I read, if you're able, from Luke 11, the first 13 verses. Now, Jesus was praying in a certain place.
- [1 : 0 9] 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 or when you are praying, say, ask, speak to the Father.
- Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Give us each day our necessary bread. And forgive us our sins for we ourselves are forgiving everyone who is indebted to us.
- And if possible, 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.
- [2 : 3 3] 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 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?
- So it reads, let us pray. Father, guide us today. Cause your name to be set apart. Cause your kingdom to come. Cause your will to be done. Give us today what we need.
- [3 : 4 7] Forgive us. Our debtors. As we forgive. Oh, forgive us our debts. As we forgive.
- Those who are still indebted to us. And please today don't lead us into that realm of temptation.

Testing. But deliver us from the evil that's still in us. That's all around us. And the one who personifies all evil.

Who seeks to seduce us. Rescue us. Feed us today, father, we pray with these words in Christ's name.

Amen. Please be seated. Amen. Tenacity. Tenacity.

[4 : 53] It's a good word, isn't it? I like that word. Tenacity. To be determined. To hold fast. To persist. A doggedness.

Tenacity. Have you ever seen tenacity up close? You ever known a bulldog? Ever had a bulldog?

You ever played tug of war with a bulldog? If you play tug of war with a bulldog, you will know tenacity up close. I had a bulldog. And we'd had a rag, you know.

He'd bring the rag over and he'd take the end of the rag. And I had the part of the rag that had a knot on it. And he'd take the rest and he would slowly gobble it up toward my hand. So we'd do this and do this.

And pretty soon I could do this. He would not let go. The only way that rag would be mine is if his teeth would come out.

[5 : 58] Tenacity. What drives a bulldog to hold on with all that he has? Instinct, I guess, right?

It's just inside of him. It's the same thing that drives a Malamute to always pull. You ever tried to walk a Malamute? And he wouldn't take your arm off.

Even with a choke chain. We know. We've had Malamutes. I used to run with my Malamute. It was fun.

Same thing with a border collie to herd. Try to stop a border collie from herding. Just try. Can't do it.

It's just his nature. It's what is in him. So what drives us to keep praying?

[6 : 56] To not give up praying. What keeps us praying when God is silent and stays silent?

What keeps us praying when there are long delays in the answer? And we know it's a good prayer. What keeps us praying when it seems there is no answer and maybe won't be an answer?

What keeps us praying when it seems to be an answer? What keeps us praying when it seems to be an answer? What keeps us praying when it seems to be an answer? What keeps us praying though we fear losing heart? I think this is what Jesus is talking about in Luke chapter 11.

He's been teaching us the pattern of prayer. He gives us three prayers about God. We pray about God's name, his reputation, that his name and reputation would be set apart.

We pray for God's word to come and invade and change and intervene in lives.

[8 : 12] That's the kingdom coming. And then we pray for his will, that his will would be done. We're praying not that God would do the will that he's going to do anyway. We're praying that we would be involved in that will, that that will would be clearer to us.

That we could be part of embracing that will. He teaches us to pray for things about ourselves. There's three things about God and three things about ourselves.

We pray for our bread, our relationships, our temptations. We pray for our bread that's necessary for just today. Physical things. We pray for relational things.

Both forgiveness between us and God the Father and between us and others. And those impact each other. You can't just do one of those. And then about our temptations.

Our battle against sin. And those six areas, three about God, three about us, cover everything. I can't think of anything that wouldn't relate to any of those.

[9 : 16] And some things relate in many of those things. So he teaches us that path. That's how, that's what to pray. And it's a daily prayer.

And it has a pattern. And it's not about reciting the words. We know that because the words recorded in Luke are different than the words in Matthew, though they're essentially the same.

But it's not about reciting the words in a certain way and just repeating those words. The words are categories for us. That's why Matthew, the fuller version, says pray in this way.

Not in these words, but pray in this way, this manner, this pattern. I think that's how Jesus prayed and that's how he teaches his disciples to pray. So now, so we've looked at that.

Okay. And next week we'll spend some time looking at the last three. We can talk about how that relates to us, how that works, as well as these verses. So now he comes in verses 5 to 13.

[10 : 19] And I had thought this was going to be all about how to pray. You know, with persistence, with tenacity. Because it's in there, but that's what I thought it was really all about.

And I've discovered it's bigger than that. It's not about the how, but the why. I think it answers the question I brought up at the innig. What drives us to keep praying?

What helps us to keep praying even when we're discouraged and we're depressed and we're fear of losing our heart?

We're tired and we haven't heard an answer and God is delayed. And it's a good prayer. Not asking for a Lamborghini.

Who wants a Lamborghini? Ferrari. Right? It's not a self... We're not praying for selfish things. We're praying for things we see others pray for in the Bible.

[11 : 27] Praying for the lost. So, how do we keep praying in those delays? When we're... When I don't have the tenacity.

When I'm not the bulldog. I'm just the... What? Chorky? I don't know. What's the... What's the breed that doesn't?

Hmm? A lab? One time, my Malamute met an Irish Setter. This Irish Setter is just this really sweet dog.

Just comes down. Wants to meet the Malamute. And he's like licking me and I'm petting him. And I turned around. And a second later, I heard this growling. I turned around.

And Ralphie or whatever the Irish Setter is just laying flat on the ground. And the Malamute just... Just like this. Like, you don't touch my boy. I'm like...

[12 : 33] But the Irish Setter is like, okay. I'm fine. Sweet, sweet dog. If you have Irish Setter, I'm not making fun of that. It's just the nature of the dog.

Malamutes and Irish Setters are not the same temperament. Anyway. We're different temperaments. There are folks that God has created and given a nature where they will just persist.

They have an inner strength, a strong will. He didn't make me like that. So, what will do that?

So, here's what I see in these verses. Verses 5 to 11. Jesus gives a couple of scenarios. He asks a couple questions.

In verse 5, he asks a question. Who of you has a friend that is like this? When you go to him at midnight, he says, no. Who has a friend like that? Which of you has a friend that would deny you at midnight?

[13 : 44] Right? That's the question. And then the second question is in verse 11. Then he says, okay, let's change the scenario. What father among you would do this?

What father among you? And he's just asking the people he's talking to. He's disciples. What father among you would give a scorpion when your child is asking for bread or whatever?

Who would do that? Right? So, two questions. So, what the questions do is set up a contrast. We can see it in the second one easily. What father among you?

Well, of course, if you fathers who are evil would never do that to your child, how much more the father, the heavenly father?

You earthly fathers, right, can make mistakes, but you still would give a good gift to your child. How much more the heavenly? So, it's a contrast. And I think the first one is the same thing.

[14 : 44] Who among you has a friend who would ever treat you like that? A friend who would treat you like that? Deny you.

Especially in the first century, Jewish first century, where that would be the most shameful thing you could ever do. That would be horrifying. That's unthinkable.

Hospitality is about the highest virtue in ancient cultures, let alone the Jewish culture. Where God says, no, you treat people well.

Even the stranger that comes, let alone your friend and your neighbor. Right? So, each question is actually kind of expecting a no.

Not kind of. It's like, you know. So, it sets up a contrast. So, again, we have another contrast between a friend that you ask for something.

[15 : 44] And then Jesus then says in verse 9 and 10, so keep on asking, keep on seeking, keep on knocking, and you will get, you will receive, you will, the door will be open.

Who are we asking, seeking, knocking? Who's the scenario change, right? We're not asking a friend, we're asking our father. He's just taught us to pray to the father.

Keep on asking. So, let's dig in. So, there's a little confusion on this friend one. Because this one changed, it changed my understanding of this whole text.

Like I said, I thought this was going to be all about tenacity and persistence and, and it flipped on me.

It's not about the how we come, it's about the why we come. So, the first contrast is with a shameless friend. He's going to contrast the father who we ask in prayer with these other scenarios.

[16 : 53] What if you asked a friend at midnight for three loaves of bread and he wouldn't give it to you? Anybody had that experience? And I would imagine all of his disciples going, no, I don't have any friends.

I wouldn't be a friend if it was like that. Right? So, so which? So, so the picture in verse 5, which of you has a friend? And as I said, the cultural expectation would be to give that to somebody that came to you.

You would not refuse it without being shameful. So, in verse 7, we see, so he goes to the friend, he asks him, I need three loaves of bread. Why?

Verse 6, because a friend of mine has come on a journey and I have nothing to set for him. So, it's a little bit of a mercy situation. I wasn't set up. But I know that you are cooking bread all day because I could smell it.

Right? And live right next door to you, buddy. So, could we borrow some bread? And by the way, he talks about lend it. I will pay you back. It's not about just giving it away. And verse 7.

[17 : 57] So, here's the key verse. And he will answer from within. Do not bother me. The door is now shut and my children are in bed with me.

I cannot give up, get up, and give you anything. Question mark. See it? End of verse 7? Question mark. The question mark is all the way at the end. Who is a friend that you would experience this with?

So, are those good excuses? Go to a friend at midnight. Okay. Yeah, it's inconvenient. All right. Timing is not best. Yeah, you're already in bed.

Yeah, but the door is shut. Okay. Take the thing off and open the door. Well, the mat's in the way because we're all sleeping in the same room. You know, it's a little room.

It's going to wake up the kids. If I have to get up and move the mat back to open the door. Okay. Good excuse. Legitimate. What's going on here?

[19 : 03] So, what about in our culture? What if that happened in our culture? Would you deny a friend that woke you out of bed? Woke up your kids in the middle of the night and you got to get up and you got to answer the door and then you got to give them three loaves of bread.

Would that be? No, you might not be happy. What would cause you to say no, right?

I mean, selfishness. So, what would be a scenario today? Well, you know, probably wouldn't go for some bread in the middle of the night.

There's convenience stores we can go to if we had to, right? In that little village, no. But maybe, let's say, we have an emergency.

We need to get to the hospital. The car won't start. I go over to Rick's house and knock on his door and say, can I borrow your car? My car won't start. Could you imagine Rick saying that? No, you know, the keys are, you know, the dog's sleeping on the keys.

[20 : 03] I don't wake up the dog and, you know. No, it just wouldn't. But that would be kind of similar. You know, we could imagine, okay, yeah, my car would just, I don't know, it's a winter.

It won't start. Or I can't shovel it out. I don't have four-wheel drives. I, you know, can I borrow yours? And our friend says, no, it's too late.

You just bleed out. You'll be fine. So here's the question. When Jesus says in verse 8 now, he says, I tell you, though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend.

So friendship doesn't mean enough. Yet because of his impudence, he will rise and give him whatever he needs. His impudence. Well, first of all, what's impudence? Well, it's always negative.

There are some translations that translate it as persistence. It was never persistence in the old culture, the language of where this word comes, lexical study of this word.

[21 : 13] It was always shamelessness, disgracefulness. It would be a disregard for others. Shamelessness.

Impudence. I don't care what you're going through. I ain't moving. I ain't doing anything. It would just be this kind of a negative tenacity. There has been a popular trend, and I had thought of this as being a positive thing.

In fact, there's translations like the New American Standard I know doesn't translate it as impudence. It translates it as persistence. King James is more faithful.

It keeps it as impudence. ESV, RSV to keep it as impudence, which shows it's negative. But I do have a footnote that says, oh, or persistence. No, it never meant that.

Unless you mean a persistent impudence or persistent rudeness, selfishness.

- [22 : 18] So, who's the his? Because of his. He won't do it because he's a friend, but he will do it because of his impudence. Whose impudence?
- Is it the impudence of the one knocking on the door? Or, so even though my friend says, no, I keep knocking, I get real rude about it, maybe. So, that's how I've always looked at it. I'm persistent.
- I'm just to the point of rudeness. Well, no, that's not what Jesus said. Not to the point of rudeness. He says, no, you go beyond it. You are disregarding what's proper.
- You are disgraceful. So, would it be standing out there just knocking, knocking, knocking, and would that really qualify as a disregard for what is proper?
- I think you'd be hard-pressed to make that. I think it doesn't apply to the one who's knocking.
- [23 : 19] I think it applies to the friend. Even though he, because he's the subject of the whole thing. He's the one who says all these things. Verse 7, he won't do all this.
- Verse 8, I tell you, though he, your friend you went to, will not get up and give him anything because he is the friend, yet because of his impudence, he will rise, and he will give him as much as is needed.
- So, grammatically, you could say, you could go to your Greek professor and say, would it be legitimate to make it the his, the friend?
- And you say, well, technically, yeah, you could do that, but it's clear that's not the way. The his impudence is he who's doing everything.
- He who's in control. Because even as Jesus tells the scenario, you going to your friend, you're not going and knocking and knocking. You just go, you knock, and you ask.
- [24 : 26] There's no sense of persistence there. There's no sense of rudeness there. Unless you want to push it and say, oh, even though he won't, then you're going to keep knocking and keep knocking and keep knocking until that's possible.
- Could mean that. I don't think it does. Because I don't think it's about that. I think it's about the nature of the person. Because Jesus asked the question, who is a friend that's like this?
- Who is a friend that's like this? So, why would he do it then? So, what does he mean? Yet, because of his impudence, he will rise and give him anything. Because by morning, it's going to spread around what you did not do in that little village.
- Are you going to act like that? That's going to get out. Do you want to be shamed? It was a shame culture. It was a shame culture.
- You understand that, right? You were driven to things so that you won't be shamed. If you won't keep the law for any internal reason, you'll keep the law because you don't want to be shamed.
- [25 : 39] That's the way it was. If you're in a legalistic system, that's just part of the system. It wasn't God shaming anybody.
- It's just you're shaming. Okay. But it's possible. It's possible. It could be. But I don't think it's about the persistence.
- I think it's about the person. Because then Jesus says, verse 9, Now, I thought this is what made it about how we go. Because now he talks about it.
- So I tell you, ask. In other words, present active imperative. Keep on asking. Not just ask, but keep on asking and it will be given.
- Seek. Again, present active imperative. Keep on seeking and you will find. Knock. Present active imperative. Keep on knocking and it will be open to you. Verse 10.

[26 : 36] Because, here's the reason. Everyone who keeps on asking receives. And the one who keeps on seeking finds. And to the one who keeps on knocking, it will be open.

Now, verse 9, 10, that's persistence. Right? That's persistence. So it's ongoing.

It's continual. It's just not giving up. It's continue to ask. And then he says, seek. And then he says, knock. So what does that mean? Is that just different ways of praying? Is that different kinds of praying? Is asking one kind of praying and seeking another kind and knocking?

Or is it about what I'm looking for? Is I'm asking for an answer and I'm seeking for something? And then I'm knocking for a certain opportunity? A door to be opened?

And that, it's clear in the Bible, Paul uses that phrase that way. That, you know, pray for us, for a door for the word to be opened. Right?

[27 : 34] And then he asks, he asks his people to pray for him that way. So knocking could relate to, you know, areas where we pray for an opportunity. We're praying for an open door. We're praying, you know, grant something to be open for me.

Seeking might be about seeking salvation. It might be seeking God. We know he tells us to seek his kingdom. So it might be about seeking his kingdom. Seeking an answer.

Seeking understanding. I don't know. But it's interesting that he puts it in those ways. It probably just refers to different kinds of praying.

Different ways of praying. So then verse 10 is the promise. You know, the one who asks, receives.

And the one who seeks, finds. And the one who keeps on knocking, it will be opened. So there's a promise. The persistency will get results.

[28 : 38] But here's my question. Is persistence, is the asking and seeking and knocking, is the persistence, the cause and the guarantee of the answer?

If I ask long enough, if I knock hard enough, is that what he's saying? It would be simple to take it that way.

I could see that. It's tempting to take it that way. But then the non-bulldog part in me doesn't want it to mean that. Because I can give up too easy.

I can get overwhelmed. I can lose heart. Is it if I pray enough?

Is it about persistent prayer? The how? Or is it about persistent prayer? How persistent prayer is driven?

[29 : 45] Why I become persistent in prayer? Is it more about I pray persistently because I'm driven by the promise? Let me rephrase it.

I'm driven by the promiser. The one who will answer. Because he's not like that friend. He's not like that friend.

He's not selfish. He doesn't get bothered. He doesn't have to be worn down. And the guy said, the guy had the gall to say in verse 7, I cannot get up and give you anything.

Literally, I'm unable. Seriously. You're unable to get up and give me some bread. God's not like that.

Maybe more specific. The Father. The Father. He's not like that. Remember, we spent one Sunday just looking at what makes him our Father.

[30 : 58] Why Father? Why does Jesus want us to call him Father? Why does he want us to pray to the Father? Who's the Father? He changes all terminology for prayer because the prayer in the Old Testament was always Lord.

Which is good. Lord. Sovereign. And now it's Father. So much more intimate.

And then when we get to the next contrast in verse 13, it's like now it's the evil Father and the heavenly Father. So I think it's more about the contrast.

I think it's about the why. Let me give you another. I love this story. Let me give you another example of persistence. Tenacity.

This persistent woman. And what drives her? What drives her? Because she's got some major obstacles. Okay?

[32 : 00] You know the story. It's in Matthew 15. A Canaanite woman from that region. Jesus was withdrawing away. And a Canaanite woman from that region came out and was crying out to Jesus.

And the word is like screaming. She's making a scene. Have mercy on me, O Lord, son of David. My daughter is severely oppressed by a demon. Okay?

That's pretty serious. That's not a, you know, I want a Ferrari. That's serious. How much more serious do you get? My daughter. Right?

And it's a demon. And I've heard about you. Right? So, you know, have mercy. But he did not answer her a word.

Okay? So the Lord is silent. And then his disciples chime in. They're really helpful. His disciples came and begged him saying, send her away. She's crying out after us.

[33 : 02] She's annoying the heck out of us. She's making a scene. Would you get rid of her? Would you? I love those guys. Not their best moment.

He answered, I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Okay. What? She's a Gentile.

She's a Gentile. He says, I'm just for the lost sheep. I don't, I'm not here for you. Ow. I didn't come for you.

I came. I was sent only for the lost sheep of the house of Israel. My hands are tied almost. You know, it's like, really? Does this sound like Jesus, by the way? Yeah. Not right. So, if you ever prayed in the Lord's silent.

Okay. And then you pray. And then the church, the disciples of Jesus who are supposed to be encouragers, they discourage you. Yeah, you need to stop. God's not going to answer your prayer for healing.

[34 : 11] Just don't, you know, don't pray. Don't pray for that. Obviously, God doesn't, you know, you're not praying right. Or some have, some Christians have the gall to tell you, you don't have enough faith.

Oh, my. Get out of here. You don't even, okay. Okay. So, okay. So, he says, I was sent only.

So, but she. Okay. But she came. And she knelt before him saying, Lord, help me. And he answered, it's not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs.

Okay. He's been silent. And then he's been kind of, you know, I'm not for you. And now he's just downright rude. Calls her a dog. Which is how Jews felt toward Gentiles because they ate unclean things.

But instead of being offended, she's inspired. Yes, Lord, she says. Yes. Yes. It's kind of like maybe he said it to her with a twinkle in his eye.

[35 : 24] Yes. And then she smiles. Because he doesn't use the normal word for dog. He uses the dominion of word for doggy. You know, the little puppy.

You know, that you let come in and eat under your table. So, and she says, yes, Lord. Yet, even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table.

And that would be good enough for me. Then Jesus answered you. Oh, woman. Great is your faith. Not tenacity.

Because she's come through the boundary of silence. She's come through the boundary of the church. She's come through the boundary of theological, maybe not for you.

She's come through the boundary of humility, humbleness. Yes. Why?

[36 : 27] Why? What keeps her coming? Oh, woman, great is your faith. Be it done for you as you desire. And her daughter was healed instantly.

Did she say the right word? Why did she keep coming? Was she just really strong-willed? Was she just one of those people that you just can't stop?

You know, was she had this inner tenacity? Right? She's just that kind of woman that you just can't turn her away. That's probably what the disciples thought.

Was she desperate? Oh, yeah, she was desperate. There's definitely a desperate. But what Jesus identifies as faith. A faith. It was messy faith.

And look at it. It was desperate. It was humiliating, humble. So great faith. She's one of only two people that Jesus said had great faith.

[37 : 31] The disciples all had little faith. Even Peter walked on the water. He had little faith. For those people that say you don't have enough faith, well, Peter had a little tiny bit, tiny, eensy, eensy bit, and he walked on water, so don't give me that.

Not about the size, about the length. She had great faith because she kept coming. But faith in what?

What is it that she believed? Did she believe that if she just kept coming, she just kept coming, he'd finally wear her down? She'd finally wear him down? No.

But she knew something about him. She knew he was the Lord. She knew he was the son of David. She knew something about him. Why would she even come with this request?

She's heard about him. She's heard about him. She had a trust in Jesus.

[38 : 37] However fragmentary it was, she had a belief about him. Didn't matter what he said. Certainly didn't matter what his disciples said, because, you know, those guys, which who represented the church.

Don't let the church discourage you from coming to Jesus. Okay? It's Jesus.

And so what drives me to keep praying? It's the same thing. It's faith. What drives me to keep praying? It's a belief about the Father, about who he is, what kind of Father he is, that he's not bothered by my prayers, he's not irritated, he wants to hear my prayers, he wants to listen to me, he's willing to listen to me.

In fact, he doesn't just want to hear my checklist. Hmm. He wants to hear me. He wants a relationship.

Because he already knows what I need. Maybe he just wants me to talk to him. Oh, yeah, give the checklist. Absolutely.

[39 : 48] What's on your heart? Absolutely. But don't read through the list and you're done. Okay, talk to you later, Daddy. Because it's about him.

Is your prayer about him? Is your prayer seeking him? That's what keeps you coming. Even when you're weary, even when you're worn out, and even when your heart is aching and your soul is broken, Who is he?

What do you really believe about him? Do you trust him? Will it keep you coming to him even though there's barriers?

There's another contrast we see in verse 11 now. Contrast of the evil father and the heavenly father. Contrast of the evil fathers, the earthly fathers, who give good gifts.

They know how to give good gifts. They recognize the need to give good gifts to our children. We're not going to give them a scorpion instead of bread or a serpent instead of an egg or however he put it.

[41 : 04] Again, he asks a question. Verse 11, what father among you would do this? What father among you would treat your child like this?

What father among you, if your son asked for a fish, would instead give him a serpent? You know, no. So, evil fathers, which of you would do harm?

Would you trick your children? No, that's the uncle that does the tricking. You know, it's not that the father wouldn't trick the child. Wouldn't substitute or withhold. So, verse 13, so if you then who are evil know how to give good gifts to your children.

So, thank you very much. What does he mean evil? You who are evil. He's talking to his disciples. If you are evil. He doesn't mean thoroughly wicked.

He doesn't mean the worst that you can be. He means you have evil in you. You will always have evil in you. You will always have the old nature in you. That's why it's a battle.

[42 : 10] Otherwise, overcoming temptation would be really easy. But we have this proneness. We have this weakness. We have this natural tendency to do what my soul wants to do, which is whatever's easy and satisfying and quick.

I don't want to go the long road. I don't want to go the hard road. I want to go the easy. I just want to eat ice cream all day. I had fun with diperticulitis again this week, so I found out, okay, I got to do the diet thing again.

I don't want to go the same. So, how much more? Verse 13. So, the contrast.

So, how much more the Heavenly Father? If you being evil can give good gifts, if you who are corrupted could give good gifts, how much more the Heavenly Father?

The Heavenly Father doesn't share your corruption. He's not polluted by sin. He's not selfish. He has a holy love. He's not an earthly father who has limits, who gets tired, who has weaknesses.

[43 : 24] Right? Who can have bad days and bad weeks where we're not really wonderful toward our children. We can have those, right?

Because we get mixed up and we get overwhelmed and we make bad choices. But at the end of the day, we're not totally, you know, we can come back and get it and make things right.

The Heavenly Father doesn't have to come back and make things right. Right? So, I... He has a love that has a...

He can love us with a constant purity. I can't love with a constant purity. I don't have a constant purity. I have to get that renewed and I have to get...

You know, I have to depend on Him to be able to do things with a pure heart. And then, here's the surprise, right? The end of verse 13. How much more the Heavenly Father will give to you?

[44 : 24] Now, we would have expected the rest of that, the Heavenly Father will give you, you know, anything you need. That's what we would expect. And He says, He will give you the Holy Spirit.

Where did that come from? Jesus doesn't do a lot of teaching on the Holy Spirit until He gets to the upper room. He mentions the Spirit, but when He gets to the upper room, He gets real serious with these guys because this is what they're going to need and they're going to have to start praying in His name because He won't be there directly.

They have to pray in His name and they're going to need the Holy Spirit. Right? And the Holy Spirit is how Jesus will not leave them orphans or abandoned because He gives to them the Holy Spirit who will be with them forever, who will teach them.

He's a Spirit of truth. He will teach them truth. He's a helper. He's a comforter. He's an encourager. Right? So He's just like Jesus and He does things just like Jesus.

He does things, in fact, to glorify Jesus. He does not do things to glorify Himself. He does, just like Jesus did things to glorify the Father, the Spirit does things to glorify Jesus, to always point to Jesus, never to point to Himself.

[45 : 39] So if you find a ministry that's always pointing to the Holy Spirit, that ain't the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit points to Jesus. Find a ministry that's all about Jesus. There you go. But what does the Holy Spirit do?

What does that mean? He will give us, He will give to those who ask the Holy Spirit. He's the greatest gift of all. We learn later in the apostles, because we don't have a lot of teaching on the Holy Spirit in the Gospels.

Most of it comes, well, Acts, big time, right? The Holy Spirit comes, right? And things start happening. Everything changes. And then from Romans on, we start getting teaching about what does the Holy Spirit do?

He's the Spirit of truth. He's the Spirit of life. He's the Spirit that bears out fruit, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, right? He's the one through whom those things come.

He produces. We bear, right? We bear. He produces. We're just the branch, right? We're the branch connected to the vine and the Holy Spirit's the power and the, what is it, the sap?

[46 : 46] I don't know how trees work. Anyway, you know, the life that comes through us to bring the fruit. He's the producer of the love.

When I can love, He's the producer. When I have joy, He's the producer. When I have peace, He's the producer. That's why Paul said the kingdom of God is the righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.

That's something I produce. The endurance. So what am I praying for? Well, if I'm praying to be more loving, I'm praying for the Holy Spirit. If I'm praying for joy and peace, I'm praying for the Holy Spirit. If I'm praying to endure trials, I'm praying for the Holy Spirit.

If I'm praying for power, I'm praying for the Holy Spirit. If I'm praying for the kingdom come, I'm praying for the Holy Spirit. If I'm praying to know His will, I'm praying for the Holy Spirit.

If I'm praying for forgiveness in the context of forgiving others, I'm praying for the Holy Spirit. To enable me to let go of those things.

[47 : 56] And I'm praying about temptation. I'm praying about testing. I'm praying about the Holy Spirit. So one more example of this whole persistent prayer, but noting again the reason for the persistency.

So Luke 18, Jesus told them a parable to the effect that they ought, watch this, here's the purpose of the parable, that they ought always to pray.

So praying persistently. To keep praying, right? So the parable is about teaching that. And not lose heart. Oh, okay.

It's not just about keeping, keep praying, but it's about keeping prayer that doesn't lose heart. So here's the parable. He said, In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor respected man.

Sound familiar? There, okay. There was a widow in that city who kept coming to him saying, Give me justice against my adversary. For a while he refused, but afterwards he said to himself, Though I neither fear God, I don't care what God thinks, nor respect man, I don't care what man thinks.

[49 : 09] Yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will give her justice, so that she will not beat me down by her continual coming.

So again, the parable we see showing the picture of that persistency. She keeps coming, she keeps coming, she keeps coming. Okay. What moves him is her persistence.

Then the Lord said, Hear what the unrighteous judge says. So listen to the story. Listen to the parable. Hear what he said. He said, It's about her persistency. Okay. Okay.

It's all about persistency. Then he says, And will not God. So contrast, Will not God give justice to his elect who cry to him day and night? So you have an unjust judge, an unrighteous judge who won't do things because they're right.

He's only moved by that annoying woman. And then we have a just God. Will not God give justice?

[50 : 13] To his elect who, what? Cry to him day and night. Who keep praying.

Will he delay long over them? Well, apparently he's delaying a little bit because they're praying day and night. But his view of delay and our view of delay is different.

I know, right? Yeah. I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily. Nevertheless, when the son of man comes, will he find persistency, tenacity?

Nope. Will he find what? Faith. Will he find faith? So it's about faith again. It's about what I believe again.

It's not about my tenacity, my strong wilderness. Remember, this parable is about always praying and not losing heart.

[51 : 19] So I can lose heart if I'm praying real tenaciously and then I run out of gas. I run out of reason. I guess he's not going to answer. So it's a contrast between an unrighteous judge and a holy, just God who does not need to be bothered and beat down.

In fact, Jesus says he will not delay long. He does delay, but he doesn't delay long. And he will give justice speedily to who?

To those who have faith. To those with faith. To those who trust. To those who know him.

See, what drives us to keep praying? Do we keep praying in order to show God how earnest we are? Do we keep praying to show God we really, really, really, really mean it?

Do we show, do we persist to demonstrate something? Is it about our persistence? No.

[52 : 40] Do we think if we pray long enough, hard enough, sincerely enough that God will finally answer our prayer? I mean, if that's what drives us, forget it.

Forget it. We don't earn anything with the Lord. We don't earn, we don't prove anything to him.

He knows us. He proves us. He knows us. So what keeps me praying without losing heart?

What's faith? Will he find faith? It's faith. It's people who have faith in the Father. They trust in the Lord who promises answers.

See, notice Jesus gives us a promise. Those who keep asking, receive. Those who keep seeking, will find. Those who knock, it will be open. There's a promise. It will happen.

[53 : 48] But what makes that happen? The Lord is the one that decides when. So in the meantime, as I keep asking and I keep praying, it's not about that I just keep diligent at, that it's about who I'm talking to.

Who am I talking to? And what do I think about him? How do I look at him? Yeah, he's a mirror. He could change things in a, if I could snap, I would do that.

You know that. We've even seen that. Miracles don't happen very often. That's why they're miracles. They're rare. But they are acts of God when he so chooses.

Even in the New Testament, you see a whole bunch of them and then as it tapers off, they taper off. By the end, Paul's telling Timothy, yeah, drink a little wine for your upset tummy. He didn't say, go to the healer.

He didn't say, he doesn't say, you know, just pray for healing. I mean, it's fine, but he says, you know, it's tapered.

[55 : 03] But yeah, he does miracles. Absolutely, he can do that. Every time he saves someone, that's a miracle. That is a radical changing of someone's nature. That is a changing of who they are.

It's a transformation. It is being born from above. Right? Right? And miracle every time we love our neighbor as ourself.

We trust the Lord who promises that we have a belief in his word. So, what do you believe about the Father? I mean, just think about this.

What do you believe about him? How do you view him? Do you think of him as near or far? I mean, it's probably different times, right?

If I go by my feelings, if you're a real feeler, you go by your feelings and okay, man, he's pretty far away. We just sang, draw me close to you. I want to feel your closeness.

[56 : 07] That's just, that's a very human call. Theologically, where is he? He's right here.

He hasn't moved. Psychologically, where is he? Well, it turns out my soul. My soul is disturbed. He feels, doesn't feel near.

But I love to feel him near. So, we sing that kind of song. We want, we want him and we need help. So, draw me, help draw me. Because I got all this corruption here. How do you view him?

Can you hear him? When you pray, when you come with your list or you come with your heart, when you come with whatever you come with, and we are to have lists, I think, but when we come to him, how am I thinking of him?

Am I thinking of him, of someone to give me all these checklist items? Is he the answerer of the checklist? Is he a person when I pray to him like that?

[57 : 23] Rick talks about the vending machine. You know, we go, we click it in and we get the... Sometimes, my prayers can be like that. Walk away realizing, what if I was on the other side of that?

How would I feel? Thanks for the list, Bill. Yeah, great. Jesus is going, watch, watch, watch. I'm going to do something.

We're going to wake him up. Watch. Maybe he needs a little diverticulitis. It's the easiest thing, I think, to lose is that personal walk with him and remembering that he is my father.

He is my father. He is a person. He feels. He weeps. He wants. He seeks.

He waits. He waits. Hmm. You know, do I go? Do I just talk to him?

[58 : 34] Bring your list. Absolutely. Jesus gave us categories for our list. And our list can grow because we have more concerns about various things. And maybe find a way to divide that up through the week.

I don't know, whatever, however you want to do, whatever you do. but in your prayer, is there time where you just talk to the father? And maybe listen.

You're laughing. Oh, no, we don't do that. We don't know how to do that. I did the first sabbatical I took. I'm like walking through the woods trying to be, you know, just hear God. It's like, somebody kept interrupting.

Meditate. Right? Someone kept interrupting. I realized it was me. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Some idiot kept talking.

It starts by talking. A lot of times he speaks to me as I'm talking. It's like all of a sudden they get something.

Hmm. He might have a list. I got that before. I had a list. One of the first times I didn't got it. One, two, three. Okay, that was crystal clear. Go talk to this person.

[60 : 49] Do you believe he wants to hear from you? Do you believe he's a father that just wants to hear you? Your list is important, but he already knows your list.

It's good for you. It's good for us to think through that. But even as we do that, remember, we're talking to our daddy. Our daddy.

If you've got daddy issues, maybe just call him Jesus. If that helps you get over that hump so you can talk. I don't. I don't know. It's not wrong to call him Jesus.

Help us to remember, especially when it's hard, especially when it feels like you're not answering. At least you're not answering the ones we really want answered. Help us to pause and remember who you are.

Help us to reflect. When we're losing heart, help us to reflect. How much you love us. That you would send your son to experience what he experienced, what no king should experience, what no lord should experience for us.

Help us to remember that you love us that much. And you give us a new name, and you give us a new identity, and you give us a new nature. You give us so much.

And then Jesus says, you give us the Holy Spirit. What more could we want? But you care.

[63 : 34] You know we need other things. You know we need encouragement. You know we fall. You know we're frail. You know we lose heart. And so show us yourself.

Show us how you're not like an earthly father. So that we keep coming.

Because the ones that keep coming, those are the ones that please you. Not because we've earned anything, but because we please you, because we come to you. Because we see who you are.

This we pray in the name of our Lord Jesus. Amen. Amen. Oh.