

God Wants to Hear Your Heart

Luke 11.5-13; 18.1-8

“Praying for you!” Christians say those words to each other, but do we pray? Let’s be honest: In our busy lives it’s easy to go for days without prayer. Jesus’ parables about prayer reveal that God *wants* to know our heart-cry and give us good gifts...and He never tires of us!

‘Back-story’: What Theology Tells Us

- *Deity of Christ: Jesus is Divine – He is ‘Mighty God’ (Isa. 9.6)!*
- *Trinity: God is three persons-in-one essence.*
- *This = eternal, unbroken, absolute unity and fellowship.*
- *If Jesus needed to pray, how much more do we?*

The Friend at Midnight (Lk 11.5-10)

A persistent friend pesters a neighbor for food at midnight

The Judge and the Widow (Lk 18:1-8)

A persistent widow pesters a wicked judge for protection

The Father and His Son (Lk 11.11-13)

A father gives good things, not bad, to his son

The Moral of the Stories: *Make time to pray, and don’t be coy!*

just pray

1. It is often said that Jesus was a man of prayer, and that is true, but what does that mean? Before we address Jesus’ teaching on prayer, let’s observe His practice. Read the following verses: Matt. 14.23; 19.13; 26.36-46; Mark 1.35, 46; 14.32-41; Luke 3.21; 5.16; 6.12; 9.18a, 28-29; 11.1a; 22.32; 22.40-46; John 11.41-42; 14.16; 17.1-26 (Jesus’ High Priestly Prayer). How would you characterize the way Jesus prayed? Perhaps you noticed that Jesus spent more time in prayer before critical times in His ministry (baptism, calling His disciples, His arrest and crucifixion); what does this suggest about the importance of prayer as we face spiritual attacks in life?
2. Some may wonder *why* Jesus prayed so much – after all, He is God the Son, eternally existent with the Father and the Spirit! Wouldn’t that negate the need for prayer? It is true that Jesus is God, and as part of the Trinity He has unbroken fellowship with the Father and the Spirit. But Jesus became human (Jn. 1.14; Phil. 2.6-8; Hebrews 2.14-18), and as a human being, experienced the same temptations and trials we do. Still, considering that He was God-in-the-flesh, it is amazing that He recognized such a great need for prayer!
3. Luke 11.1-13 is all about prayer. It begins with the disciples asking Jesus to “teach us to pray;” Jesus gives a brief model prayer (2-4), then tells the parable of the friend at midnight. In the culture of the day, it was considered rude to have nothing to give a guest, even a late-night unexpected one! This explains the stubborn persistence of the man asking his friend for bread. Jesus’ parable of the judge and the widow (Luke 18.1-8) also highlights the effect of relentless requests. How are these two parables similar? How do they differ?
4. Jesus’ exhortation in Luke 11.9-10 is explicit: *Ask...seek...knock!* Compare James 4.2. What is Jesus imploring us to do? He follows this with a parable-illustration of a father and a son (11-13). What is Jesus saying about how God answers prayer? Some ‘health-and-wealth’ ‘name-it-and-claim-it’ phony preachers abuse this teaching; how would you describe how Jesus wants us to pray, and what we should expect God to do in response to our prayers?