

A. Foundational Elements

1. Sermon Title: I Want To Pray Like That!
2. Text: Luke 11:1-13
3. Subject: Prayer
4. ETS: Upon request, Jesus taught his disciples how to pray.
5. ESS: Jesus calls you to learn how to pray.
6. OSS: Hearers will understand the basics of prayer. They will learn a model prayer to emulate (contents of prayer) and meaningful points to embrace (concepts of prayer).

B. Formal Elements

Introduction

1. Who knows how to run? Everyone knows how to run. Right? Well, yes, but running is also something you ought to learn. There once was a little boy, who had track and field day at his school. He was signed up to run the 4x4 relay. In this race, each person on the relay team runs one time around the track. The little boy was pumped. He couldn't wait to show his friends what he was made of. The whistle blew, and he took off. The boy ran his heart out, but when he was just meters away from passing off the baton something happened. The boy cramped up and was winded and could not continue to run. From his knees, the young boy watched the runners, which he once was in front of, pass him up. Then, crawling to the next person to pass off the baton, he realized he was not taught to run like this. Yes, he knew how to run, but he did not know how to run like this.
2. Sometimes, we think we know how to do something, but we are sorely mistaken. Jesus's disciples grew up as Jewish boys learning all their life how to pray. Yet, when seeing Jesus pray, they wanted to learn how to pray like that.
3. Background to the Series: Today, we will continue our series titled "Draw Near". We pray through this series God will help us understand and practice the spiritual disciplines in such a way that they would produce a connection with God in our lives and the character of God in our hearts. Pastor Larry began this series with a message on meditation. He made very clear that meditation is essential for drawing near to God. Now, we turn our attention to prayer. Another spiritual discipline that is essential for drawing near to God.
4. Background to the Text: In Luke 11, we find Jesus teaching on this discipline. Who better to teach on talking to God, than the only begotten son of God, Jesus the Christ? At the beginning of the text, you will notice that Jesus chose to pray in a certain place. You see, Jesus did not leave talking to God up to chance. No, instead Jesus made talking to God a priority and even picked a certain place where prayer would occur in the most beneficial way. Jesus took praying seriously. We also should think of prayer seriously. Upon seeing Jesus pray, one of his disciples, assumedly impressed with the quality of Jesus's prayer life, desired to talk to God like Jesus talked to God. Therefore, he makes a simple request: teach us to pray. Let's take a look at what Jesus taught his disciples on prayer. Join me in Luke 11:1-13.

Luke 11:1 Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples."

Luke 11:2 And he said to them, "When you pray, say: 'Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come.

Luke 11:3 Give us each day our daily bread,
Luke 11:4 and forgive us our sins,
for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation.”
Luke 11:5 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,
Luke 11:6 for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him’;
Luke 11:7 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’?
Luke 11:8 I tell you, though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet
because of his impudence he will rise and give him whatever he needs.
Luke 11:9 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.
Luke 11:10 For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who
knocks it will be opened.
Luke 11:11 What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a
serpent;
Luke 11:12 or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion?
Luke 11:13 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!”

This morning, I want to highlight the teachings Jesus gave his disciples on prayer in two
categories: contents of prayer and concepts of prayer. First, let’s take a look at the contents of
prayer.

I. CONTENTS OF PRAYER (v. 1-4)

God Was Addressed as Our Father

EXP: First, we must note that Jesus told his disciples to address God as Father in their prayers.
Jesus set the example for his disciples to pray to God within the intimate relationship of a child
to his dad. Notice, here, that his audience is indeed his disciples. Every human is not able to call
God their Father. The Bible says this is the special privilege of followers of Jesus. For John 1:12
says, “But to all who did receive him [King Jesus], who believed in his name, he gave the right
to become children of God.”

Requests in view of God

Next, we notice the initial requests Jesus told his disciples to make were that of holiness for
God’s name and nearness for God’s home. We see Jesus telling the disciples that they ought to
pray for God’s name to be hallowed. The name of a person in this time period is equated to the
whole person, or in other words his character. This request is asking for God to show himself as
hallowed, holy, or set apart from the rest of all creation. Jesus here told the disciples to petition
God to reveal himself. The believer should long for God to be known. We should long for this in
such a way that we request for God to reveal himself to us and others more fully.

ILL: Magnifying Glass vs. Telescope

In addition, we see that Jesus told his disciples to present a request for the nearness of God's home. Jesus said, "Your kingdom come." In some sense, Jesus, when he came to earth, began the coming of God's Kingdom. Jesus, the God-man, comes to win the victory for God's Kingdom once and for all. Satan, evil, and all enemies of God will not win in the end, because of Jesus's work on earth. It was Jesus's incarnation (coming to earth and taking on flesh), crucifixion (dying on the cross for the sins of the world), and resurrection (raising to life defeating the consequences of sin and the grave) that established the victory for all believers. However, Jesus's petition in his prayer longs for the fulfillment of that victory to be experienced. The victory has been won, but the Kingdom has not been established in its fullness on earth. Therefore, Jesus told the disciples to request continually that God's home, his Kingdom, would come soon. The believer longs not only for God to be known, but for him to reign completely here on earth as he does in heaven.

If you are a Christian, God's kingdom should already reign in your heart. You should regularly, daily, say to God, have your way in my heart and in my life. Yet, this request for God's kingdom to come is for God to have his way in all creation. This request is for God to come and make all things right. This request reveals the end goal of Christianity which longs for God to be King on earth as he is in heaven.

Requests in View of Man

As we continue to look at Jesus's prayer we notice a transition from the two requests in view of God to the three requests in view of man. The following requests are for God's children. Jesus told his disciples to pray for daily food, daily forgiveness, and daily freedom. Jesus said, "Give us each day our daily bread." While some might argue that this request suggests the disciples must pray for spiritual nourishment from Jesus, this does not seem to be the meaning supported by the context. Jesus seemed to be telling the disciples, "Pray for your daily needs of provision." In other words, pray for food, water, shelter. Pray for your daily, basic needs to live. Jesus soon transitions into spiritual needs, when he discusses praying for forgiveness. But, here Jesus told the disciples God cares about your physical needs in life. God knows your needs. He created you, and he cares for you. Jesus here showed the disciples that there is no need too small to bring before the Lord in prayer. God cares for you, all of you, even your needs that do not seem directly related to spiritual things.

Next, we see Jesus telling his disciples to pray for forgiveness. The Bible says, "Forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us." Jesus helped the disciples realize they should regularly request forgiveness for the ways they fail the Father. Again, remember that Jesus began his prayer with Father, because he is teaching his disciples how to pray. These people are saved people, who already have a relationship with God. Therefore, the forgiveness Jesus told the disciples to request is not forgiveness for salvation, or entering a relationship with God. Instead, Jesus told those in a relationship with God to ask for forgiveness of the sins they might commit when saved.

ILL: Here, you should think of forgiveness occurring in the family room rather than the courtroom. The courtroom setting is often a picture used to describe God's judgment of our sins. In the courtroom, God, as the cosmic judge, should sentence sinners to eternal punishment, his wrath forever in hell. However, in salvation, God as the judge declares for the one who believes

in Jesus, “Your sentence has been paid by Jesus on the cross. All the punishment you were due has been paid in full.” Then, God, the judge, gets down off the bench and takes you home to be his daughter, or son. Now, the request for forgiveness as a Christian happens in the family room. The picture is one of a child coming to God as her father in the home asking for forgiveness where she has failed him. The request for forgiveness here desires that disobedience would not spoil their relationship. The daughter is not in fear of becoming an orphan, the daughter is in fear of displeasing her dad.

Interestingly, Jesus added a note to this request. No other request in this prayer has a note, therefore we would do well to pay attention to this emphasis. Jesus said, “Forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us.” Jesus recognized that our attitude toward forgiving others can be a direct obstacle of joyful fellowship with the Father. Jesus said if you are unforgiving toward others, then your lack of grace toward others will affect your experience of grace from God. In other words, you could not be experiencing the great joy offered to you in a relationship with God presently, if you are withholding forgiveness from those who have sinned against you.

Lastly, we see Jesus tell the disciples to ask for daily freedom. Jesus said, “Lead us not into temptation.” Surely, we realize as Christians temptation is everywhere. Temptation comes from our flesh, Satan, and the world, but temptation does not come from God. James told us as much when he said, “God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one” (James 1:13). Therefore, Jesus was not saying: “God will tempt you unless you ask him otherwise.” Rather, Jesus was telling the disciples to request for God to sustain them when they faced temptation. The Bible says, “God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it” (1 Cor. 10:13). Jesus said you should request that God would help you be faithful. God will always provide you with a way out. Pray that you would take it, when you are tempted.

The Order of the Contents

Before we move on, we cannot miss the order of the contents. Jesus did not begin prayer in view of man, but in view of God. All of the contents are important, but the emphasis of his order is significant for our self-centered, sinful hearts. The order is shown in the pronouns of the prayer. The first pronoun is “your” used in “your name” and “your kingdom”. Both times “your” is referring to God. Then, the pronouns change to “our” and “us”. These pronouns refer to humans. The order is first God, then humans.

Jesus was not implying that you must always pray with these exact words, or with this exact order. The evidence for this is found in the prayers of Jesus recorded throughout the Gospels that are different from this prayer. Instead, Jesus intended for this prayer to be seen as the model, or ideal prayer. Therefore, the order here is intentional and significant. I believe this order is to be the regular or typical order of our prayers today. In other words, we should use this order more often than not.

APP: We should start our prayer by viewing God, and then turn to viewing our needs. This is not in any way to try to put ourselves in the good graces of God so that he would feel obligated to answer our requests. Nor, is this order presented because God needs us to prop up his ego. By

contrast, God is worthy of such praise and your recognition of this truth only benefits you. He cannot be in a better place than he already is. You complimenting him, does not lift his spirits. He is always in the most joyful, royal, and content position possible.

This order is for your benefit. You see, we have a problem where we can begin to believe that our life issues are so big that we are in a hopeless place. At some points, we might become emotionally flooded, where our anxieties and worries take over the way we view the world and therefore behave in the world. Jesus said come to God in prayer and view him first. In doing this, your problems do not go away, but they begin to shrink to their actual size. Regardless of how big the problem truly is, in comparison to God and his power that problem is infinitely small. Therefore, go to God in prayer, view him as he is in all of his holiness, then with confidence pray that your needs would be cared for by the all-knowing, all-powerful, all-present, God of the universe, who is your Father.

TS: Now, we turn from the contents of prayer to the concepts of prayer Jesus taught his disciples.

II. CONCEPTS OF PRAYER (v. 5-13)

You Are Welcome to Ask

EXP: After the model prayer, Jesus taught the disciples some simple truths they ought to know to help with talking to God. First, Jesus taught that God welcomes you to ask him for help with boldness.

Jesus gave an illustration, where a man comes to his friend at midnight. His friend is already asleep, but the man knocks anyway because he needs bread to give to a traveler. You see, in this time period if a traveler comes to your town you were supposed to provide for them, especially a traveler who is your friend, as Jesus noted is the case in this story. In fact, it was the responsibility of the individual addressed, and the community as a whole, to provide for this traveler.

However, the traveler came at midnight so the man had no food to offer to him. The man then goes to his neighbor in the community and asks for help. The humor of Jesus's story is brilliant here. I hope you know that Jesus was funny. Picture the humor in having to go to a neighbor's house in the middle of the night to help one of your friends out. Your neighbor is asleep, and his kids are in bed with him. (In this context, all the family sleeps in one room near the house's heat source.) Yet, you go ahead and knock on the door anyways waking him up and probably his family. Yet, the man says, "I am not getting up. We are in bed, and I do not want to disrupt my whole family's needed sleep."

The humor is heightened by the plot twist in this parable. Again, in parables the point is usually in the plot twist. The neighbor ends up coming to the door, but not because the man is his friend. You would think the neighbor helps out because his friend is asking. However, this is not the case. In fact, I would say at this moment he does not view this man as his friend. The picture is that this man comes to the door begrudgingly because of the impudence, boldness, or audacity of this request. The friend asked his neighbor to fulfill the responsibility that the friend should already have covered.

Then, Jesus explained further the point of the parable. He said simply, “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.” A lot of times we will want to clarify these statements with things like: you must ask like this or God will not answer. Or, you must be at this level of spiritual maturity to ask this request. Yet, Jesus made no clarification. In fact, he said everyone who asks will receive. Jesus invited, or welcomed, you to ask God for help as his child. Unlike, the neighbor in the story God is always awake, always ready, always excited to hear your prayers.

God Is Willing to Answer

The second concept Jesus taught the disciples was that God is willing to answer. God is not just willing to hear your prayers. God is willing to answer your prayers. Jesus gave the illustration of a father giving gifts to his son. He said, “What father would give his son a snake, when he asked for a fish? What father would give his son a scorpion, when he asked for an egg?” Again, the humor or ridiculousness is intentional. Of course, a father would not do such a thing.

Then, Jesus makes his point: God is willing to answer your requests. Jesus said, “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!” God is far better than any earthly father and he will surely give you good gifts. Some of you are thinking I ask God for good gifts all the time, and he does not give them to me. I asked for a mansion last week and my address still hasn’t changed. This cannot be true. Well, that might be because you are asking for a scorpion, when you think you are asking for an egg. You might be asking for a snake, when you think you are asking for a fish. Look, God isn’t going to give you that snake. Instead, he probably wants to lead you to understand the thing you need to bring the joy that you think the mansion will bring. That joy is found in Him. The psalmist said, “In your presence there is fullness of joy” (Psalm 16:11).

Jesus noted that God will not even hold back from giving you his Holy Spirit. This comment is not to say that the only answer God will give is his Spirit. By contrast, he is saying the best gift he gives is his Holy Spirit, and he will not even hold that back from you. God will even give you himself.

This is the gospel. You deserve nothing. In fact, it’s worse you deserve punishment. Yet, God gives you himself if you would trust him. If you would believe that Jesus lived the life you couldn’t live, died the death you deserved, and raised to defeat sin and the grave, then you could have a relationship with God. Better yet, you can have a relationship with God, where he offers all of himself to you. Jesus said here, God is willing to give you all of himself. Will you ask for him? Will you ask for the only thing in all of existence that really brings satisfaction? Will you ask to know more of God in your prayers?

Conclusion

When Jesus was asked how to pray, he could have said, you should know by now. Instead, he said let me teach you. Jesus desires to meet you right where you are. No matter where you might be in the discipline of prayer, will you learn from Jesus’s teachings this week? Will you allow Jesus to teach you how to pray? Will you emulate his model prayer in your prayers this week?

Will you try to pray the contents that he prayed? You do not have to use his exact words, but I do encourage you to use his order and his requests in your own words and own specifics.

Maybe, you are here today and you realize when you pray to God you are unable to call Him your father. You realize you have never trusted Jesus's work on the cross to pay for your sins as the only way to enter a relationship with God. If that is you, come forward this morning. All you need to say is I want to trust Jesus to be my Savior, and the pastor will talk with you about making that decision.

Remember, prayer, just like running, is something you ought to learn. Talking to God in some sense is intuitive. Conversing with God in some sense should be like conversing with everyone else. However, I know that if we were to have witnessed Jesus praying, we like the disciples would say: "I want to pray like that!" Let's make that our mission this week. Let's ask Jesus as a church family to teach us how to pray.