

1. Jesus Was a Man of Much Prayer

- a. Prayer permeates Luke's gospel because Jesus, *the Son of God*, lived a life of prayer
 - i. He was praying when the Spirit descended upon him like a dove (3:21)
 - ii. He prayed during his temptation in the wilderness (4:1-15)
 - iii. He withdrew into the wilderness to pray often (5:16)
 - iv. He prayed all night before he selected the 12 (6:12)
 - v. He was praying before he asked Peter who he thought he was (9:18)
 - vi. He was praying, and asked the three to pray with him, on the mountain before the Transfiguration (9:28)
 - vii. He was praying here (11:1), to the point that Luke has to inform us that "he ceased"
- b. What is prayer?
 - i. **Prayer is humbly entreating God for His divine resources to meet His glorious goals**
- c. Jesus teaches us how to pray
 - i. Jesus is so dependent upon the Father, that the disciples ask for some instruction
 - ii. Jesus does give instruction, which shows us that Jesus cares that we know how to pray and that it is God's will that we pray like him
 - iii. There is mature prayer and immature prayer
 1. "how to pray"
 2. Don't be content with immature prayer, but pursue and grow in mature prayer

2. He Teaches Us God-Centered Prayer

- a. Sanctify your name
 - i. The requests begin with the desire for God to honor, or sanctify, His name
 - ii. This is not a statement, but an imploring that God would make His name renown, that he would set His name apart from all others, that he would glorify Himself
 - iii. Thus, Jesus begins prayer with the Father's heart and purposes in mind
- b. Your kingdom come
 - i. Again, that the Father's kingdom would come, bringing authority, restoration, honor to the Father and wholeness to His dominion
 - ii. This God-centered focus of Jesus' instruction on "how" to pray gives us the model for mature prayer: it is God-centered and focused on God receiving the glory that He so rightly deserves
 - iii. This attitude and passion grows only out of seeing His greatness for yourself, of knowing His majesty and grandeur through His Word and the Spirit's application of its truth and veracity to your soul
 1. Seeking Him leads to Seeing Him leads to Esteeming Him
 2. It is apropos that when God revealed His name to Moses, He did not say to tell them, "I am who you need" but rather "I am who I am"
 "Every now and again we must be reminded that the Lord's Prayer begins with 'Our Father' and not 'Our needs.' Prayer involves *access to the presence of God, first and foremost.*" (Greg Harrick)
- c. Give us our bread daily
 - i. Request for provisions for what is needed
 - ii. Food and sustenance are needed, and they come from God, not the grocery store
 - iii. Ultimately, every loaf and every grain is provided for by the Father, who is the giver of all good gifts (James 1:17), who delights to give good gifts to his children who ask for them

- d. Forgive us our sins
 - i. We pray from a place of powerlessness, not only physically but also spiritually
 - ii. There is a propriety in asking God for forgiveness daily, knowing that He freely forgives and has taken care of the details of how He forgives through Jesus Christ's death/resurrection
- e. As we also forgive the ones owing us
 - i. We do not request of God, the Righteous One, something that we are not willing to give to others – if God forgives, as the Holy one, surely we ought as well
 - ii. The appeal is that since the holy perfect eternal God would forgive what we owe Him, we also forgive "all" who are owing us because of sin against us
 - 1. This shows a heart of true repentance, not using God as a tool
- f. Do not bring us into temptation
 - i. A request that the Lord would keep them from the hour of temptation, that their hearts would not fall away
 - ii. see Jesus' command in Luke 22:40,46 that the disciples pray, "so that you not enter into temptation"
 - iii. God may lead us into situations where we are tempted, where we are tested, where we must put our faith into practice against very high cost (Luke 8:13; 12:11 (bring you in before the synagogues...); 22:28-30; Acts 20:19; Rev 3:10; 1 Pet 4:12)

3. He Teaches Us to Pray Desperately

- a. 'persistence' or 'impudence' – "shameless and unconcerned for convention"
 - i. BAGD – "lack of sensitivity to what is proper, carelessness about the good opinion of others"
 - ii. From the word meaning "no modesty"
- b. God wants us to *shamelessly* call out to him in the midnight of our lives, when there is great need and we have no resources left for ourselves or for others.
 - i. Jesus uses the a *progression* of terms "ask, seek, and knock" in this parable
 - 1. Asking is simple vocal request
 - 2. Seeking requires effort, to get up and move and pursue
 - 3. Knocking is desperate asking, having sought out the source of what is needed
- c. This is God-glorifying soul-gratifying prayer, when we are at the end of our rope of giving, and we feel like we cannot do this alone...we need help. We don't have the resources that we need, we're running on empty. God wants us to be desperately unconcerned about convention and to ask for all the divine resources that we need *to see Him hallowed*.
 - i. Prayer is not quaint and tidy, pious or technical. God-honoring prayer is raw, authentic, cries of utter helplessness and shameless pounding on God's door. It is unconcerned about formality and gaining the good opinion of others. It is simply to ask for his help to build His Kingdom, to live His calling, to be His witnesses, to forgive others, to escape temptation, and to see His great renown until He gives you the divine resources to feed the spiritually poor and walk to the front lines again.
 - 1. If you're a little intimidated by praying, know that God cares not for convention and appropriate behavior or formal pious words in prayer. He wants you to SEEK HIM and to ask Him for the divine resources to glorify Him. *Don't worry about how you appear*, knock on the door at midnight!
 - 2. If you've been a believer for a long time, don't be afraid of what people think of you as you seek the Lord. Don't be afraid that you're bothering God by asking for the same things over and over. He wants you to passionately seek Him for the power to live for His glory!!
 - a. Drop your pride and become desperate in your praying
 - b. Stop trying to sound religious by using pious jargon and technical terms

- c. Get to the heart and simply ask, with transparency and no concern for the appearance of formality, for the divine resources that you need to glorify God and reveal the mystery of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Ask such things for others, too.
 - ii. A neighbor gives in to this desperate shameless asking because of the audacity of the asker, but *God is better than our neighbor*
 - 1. In the strange and mysterious ways of God, He gives us the resources we need for He is pleased with our shameless knocking on His door.
 - iii. In these prayers, we do not ask merely for our own welfare (Jam 4:3), but are asking for bread for the hungry travelers whom God has placed in our need. These are prayers for the resources to meet the needs of others with Life.
 - 1. When we recognize that we don't have the spiritual strength to love well, we are to shamelessly and desperately bang on God's door until He fills our vision and our souls with joy.
 - 2. When we feel that we cannot love our enemies, knock on God's door and it will be opened to you!
 - 3. When we feel that we cannot forgive those who have hurt us, seek Him and you will find Him!
 - 4. When we know we need wisdom (Jam 1:5), ask and it will be given to you!
- d. God works in the silent darkness, too.
 - i. Sometimes it seems as if God is not there in the silence of the unanswered prayer.
 - 1. Even when it seems God is silent, that His good gift is long in coming, know that more is happening in your life through desperate prayer than you can even imagine
 - ii. His silence is never a scorpion or a poisonous snake for our ill, but even his silence and slowness is for our life and for our good.
 - 1. Remember that Jesus won His greatest victory in the silence of a tomb, in which God was still working, despite the deep of the momentary darkness.

4. He Teaches Us That We Pray to a Father Who Loves Us and Delights to Give Us Good

- a. Prayer is childlike in its impudence and its dependence.
 - i. Prayer is addressed to the "Father"
 - ii. You do not have to convince God that you somehow unworthy or humble enough
- b. We do not pray insecurely, as if God had to be convinced or annoyed
 - i. The argument that Jesus uses is actually from the lesser to the greater
 - ii. If your neighbor will even get up and give you what you ask for when you persist in desperate prayer, will not YOUR FATHER WHO IS FAR BETTER give you what you need?
- iii. "How much more..." says Jesus
 - 1. God is *much more* inclined to hear and help with good than earthly fathers.
 - 2. Jesus wants us to understand that we are secure in God's love and that we come to a loving Father, thus we do not need to feel scared, precarious, or unsure of His approval or find Him upset with us when we knock
- iv. Desperate prayer grows and is sustained only in the confidence that God is our Father and that His disposition is what Jesus tells us: He is MORE inclined to give us what we need than ANY human benefactor.
 - 1. Prayer is never desperate or sustained when we feel that God is stonewalling us, or angry with us, or even apathetic toward us
 - 2. How shall God prove His love to you, my precious prayer?

- a. He sent His Son, His unique and eternal Beloved Son, that you might know Him and ask Him for what you need
- b. He showed mercy in the Garden, proclaimed hope when Man tried to climb to Heaven in Babel, even throughout the flood He cared for Man and made the promise of peace – every story of God has hope through Jesus Christ that God has graciously pursued His people
- c. The Father who does not give us scorpions or serpents, the poisonous, harmful, or Satanic, but rather who gives us divinely and gloriously good things that we need
 - i. Spiritual bread for spiritual needs, like a child who asks for sustenance and provision, so the Father gives us what sustains, maintains, and nourishes us to life
 - ii. He gives us His own Spirit of holiness

5. He Teaches Us to Pray for **the** Divine Resource: the Holy Spirit (v13)

- a. In all our asking, our preeminent need is for the gift of the Holy Spirit (v13)
- b. Here is the amazing paradox: we who are heirs of and sealed by the Spirit of God must constantly and desperately seek the comfort, instruction, enlightenment, and empowerment of the Spirit of God.
 - i. Andrew Murray: “The Father can bestow no higher or more wonderful gift than this: His own Holy Spirit, the Spirit of sonship. This truth naturally suggests the thought that this first and chief gift of God must be the first and chief object of all prayer. For every need of the spiritual life this is the one thing needful: the Holy Spirit...If we but yield ourselves entirely to the disposal of the Spirit, and let Him have His way with us, He will manifest the life of Christ within us.”
 - ii. Jack Miller: “Without this heavenly anointing, there is only an earthly work. Our words have no power unless the Spirit speaks through us, and they have no effect unless the Spirit applies them to man’s heart.
- c. All of our spiritual growth and our gospel effectiveness is due to the work of the Holy Spirit of God
 - i. Inward Transformation – fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5)
 - ii. Gospel Effectiveness – illumination of the Spirit (2 Cor 3:15-18)
 - iii. The Glory of God - through prayer and the Spirit (Philippians 1:18-20)
- d. Persistent, Desperate, Persevering Prayer is utterly important for us!
 - i. 1 John 5:12
 - 1. If we have Him, we have everything
 - 2. If we do not have Him, we have nothing

Conclusion:

What do you really need? What do you need for joy? For life? For glory? What do you really need to love well, to be patient, to serve with gladness? Do we not need the Spirit of God to fill us, to open our eyes, to encourage and enlighten? Beyond all other things, we need Him! And He has been promised to us as a gift from the Father!

Let us prevail in desperate perseverant prayer, with an ever deepening sense of security in the love of the Father, a renewed resolve to desperation and self-doubt with persistence in faith in the God who rules all and loves you deeply. And let us be particularly desperate and persistent in praying for the outpouring of His Holy Spirit, his great and precious Promise for our heart’s deepest desires, for His power and presence and gifting, rejoicing that our desperate requests are themselves a work of this very Spirit. Your Father is resplendently good, my dear brothers and sisters, and He delights to answer the prayers of His children with the good gift of His own Holy Spirit for your holiness and your joy.