

How to pray?
Text: Luke 11:1-4

INTRODUCTION:

- A. I would like for the boys and girls 10 years old and young to come forward and help be introduce my sermon today.
- B. What is this I hold in my hand? Cell Phone. What do you do with this? Who do you call? Where can you use it? You know that just as you can use a cell phone to call anyone, anywhere, at any time. We have a neat thing called prayer that we can use to call upon God. Anytime of day, anywhere we can call and talk to God. When do you pray to God? Can you do me a favor pray to God this week?
- C. Do we know how to pray as we should? Prayer is a spiritual discipline. It can be strenuous and frustrating, mentally and physically demanding. I think the disciples may have been struggling with how to prayer. They didn't ask Jesus how to preach or teach, but they recognized how they needed help with prayer.
- D. Notice what Luke 11:1-4 states:

Body

- I. We should pray with an attitude of deep respect for God. Lk. 11:2
 - A. A 4-year-old boy named Jonathan was trying to learn the Lord's Prayer. He learned by listening at church each Sunday. On one Sunday as the Bible class saying the Lord's Prayer, he could be heard above all the others, saying, "Our Father who art in Heaven, I know you know my name." [Illustration from Jeff Newton, Lowell, Indiana]
 - 1. Some times it is funny to here young children make simple mistakes like that, yet it is very sad to hear people vainly and rudely dishonor the Lord's name.
 - 2. Our Lord's name is used in vain so often on TV and in our work places that we have grown numb to it, it doesn't even bother us.
 - 3. For example the next time you watch TV count how many times the Lord's name is used in vain?
 - B. When we pray, it is to honor God and bring togetherness with God. He wants us to know Him and respect Him. As we grow in prayer we discover that prayer is more than simply asking God for things, a selfish means to an end. Prayer is not an attempt to force the hand of God, but an act of submission to Him, with the understanding that God's answers are wiser than our prayers. Prayer is to impress us with God more than it is to impress God with us or our needs. If we never gain anything from prayer but the opportunity to commune with God, that should be sufficient for us.
 - 1. Jesus teaches that we honor and respect God as Father. By saying Father we understand that He is Jehovah, Creator, Almighty, and Ruler. Yet he is approachable. V. 2
 - 2. We see the next phrase goes with God as Father, by hallowing his name, again we are respecting God, setting it apart, treating it as Holy. V. 2

3. We see we are to also honor the Lord by honoring his Kingdom. The work of the church goes hand and hand with respecting the Lord. How can we not honor God and expect him to bless his Kingdom through us? V. 2

- a. Acts 9:1-4 Saul's persecution of the church hurt Christ.
- b. How we honor God goes hand and hand with how we treat the church!

C. Some people do not like the Lord's Prayer as a model for their prayer because: I cannot say "our" if I'm living only for myself.
 I cannot say "Father" if I don't try to act like His child.
 I cannot say "Who art in Heaven" if I am laying up no treasure there.
 I cannot say "hallowed be Thy Name" if I am not striving for holiness.
 I cannot say "Thy Kingdom come" if I'm not doing my part to hasten that day.
 I cannot say "Thy will be done" if I am disobedient to His word.
 I cannot say "in earth as it is in Heaven" if I'm unwilling to serve Him here and now.
 I cannot say "give us this day our daily bread" if I'm not relying on Him to provide.
 I cannot say "forgive us our debts" if I harbor a grudge against someone.
 I cannot say "lead us not into temptation" if I deliberately place myself in its path.
 I cannot say "deliver us from evil" if I haven't put on the whole armor of God.
 I cannot say "Thine is the Kingdom" if I am not loyal to the King as His faithful subject.
 I cannot attribute to Him "the power" if I fear what people may do.
 I cannot ascribe to Him "the glory" if I am seeking honor only for myself.
 I cannot say "forever" if my life is bounded completely by the things of time (John MacArthur)

- a. So how do we apply this to our lives? Use God's name with all respect and honor; do not use it thoughtlessly, or in vain. Reserve to invoke His name only in prayer, song, in teaching, and in worship.
- b. Honor God by the work you do in His Kingdom now and when it is revealed in eternity.

II. We should pray with attitude that God will meet our needs Lk. 11:3.

- A. When we understand who God is and what He has done for us we will begin everything we do with prayer.
 1. Jesus in Lk. 11:3 is teaching that the most basic need of life comes from God, and we must not even take our food for granted.
 2. A man, who was raised on a farm, was reflecting on his past and said, "Everyday our family would pray and thank God for our food. They fully relied on the Lord to

provide the rains and the increase in their crops.” But as I have grown older, less and less people grew their own food and more and more people get their food from the store. In turn I have notice that people don’t seem to pray much for their food and never realize how God is blessing them.”

3. Even though we may have jobs or income, grocery stores, or even parents which provide us with food, as Christians and our children we need to realize that every good thing comes from God and we are to ask him for it and thank Him for the blessings he gives.
4. For we would not have all the wonderful things we have if it was not for God. Mat. 7:11
5. We must realize that God is preparing the rains, soil, winds, sunlight, the seed, and all the elements need for food now even before we speak so when we ask we will have a meal!

B. Notice in Philippians 4:6 Paul’s language in regard to prayer is deliberately all-inclusive; there are no restrictions on applying it.

1. Just not praying for our food, but praying before meals, pray before we start our day, pray at night, pray during the day.
2. When we understand who God is we will give him all our requests. Again Philippians says “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God” (Phil. 4:6).
 - i. Nothing is too big or too small for God to handle. When we are in need of something, we should not hesitate to ask God for it.
 - ii. Should we bother God with the same request over and over?
 - iii. There is a difference between vain repetition (empty phrases ESV) Mat 6:7 and persistence in prayer. The parable of the persistent widow (Lk. 18:1f).
 - a. C. H. Spurgeon once said, "Prayer pulls the rope down below and the great bell rings above in the ears of God. Some scarcely stir the bell, for they pray so casually; others give only an occasional jerk at the rope. But he who communicates with heaven is the man who grasps the rope boldly and pulls continuously with all his might."
 - b. Some things may not happen if it is not prayed for or asked of God.
 - 1) Eph. 6:18-20.
 - 2) Col. 4:2-4.
 - 3) Even though Paul has been preaching for years he still needs the prayers of other Christians for clarity of the Gospel.

III. We should pray with the consideration of other. Lk. 11:4

- A. When Edward Everett Hale was chaplain of the U.S. Senate, someone asked him, "Do you pray for the senators, Dr. Hale?" He replied, "No, I look at the senators and pray for the country."
1. Our government, leaders, and the people in our country as well as the people sitting beside us makes aware that every day we need God's help in dealing with people.
 2. 1 Tim. 2:1-2, "I exhort therefore, first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings, be made for all men; for kings and all that are in high place; that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and gravity."
- B. Sometimes we may wonder how to pray for other when we have never met them.
1. Paul may have never met all men, kings, or those in high places but he reminds us to faithfully pray for them.
 2. In fact the greatest weapon we have to make a difference in our community, state, country, and world is prayer. If we will only use it.
- C. We can also understand that there are some basic needs all humans have that we can pray for:
1. Salvation Rom. 10:1 Paul's prayer was for the Jews to come to salvation. This can be our prayer as well, pray that other will here the gospel.
 2. We can request that wars stop, Psa 46:9, "He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; he breaks the bow and shatters the spear; he burns the chariots with fire." This also part of the idea found in 1 Tim. 2:2.
 3. Eph. 6:18 reminds us to be, "praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints." Here are some things that we can pray for all the saints:
 - a. Pray that the Lord of the harvest sends congregations laborers. Lk. 10:2
 - b. Pray for congregations to have godly elders Act 14:23
 - c. Pray for congregations with thanksgiving, be glad for them. Phil. 1:3-4
 - d. Pray for congregations so God may supply what is lacking in their faith. 1 Th. 3:10
 - e. Pray for congregations to spread the gospel. Col. 4:3.
 - f. Pray for congregations to be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding. Col . 1:9
 - g. Pray for congregations who need restoration. 2 Co. 13:9
 - h. Pray for them to act honorably in all things. Heb 13:18

Finally

- A. How should we pray? According to Lk. 11:1-4:
- a. We should pray with an attitude of deep respect for God.
 - b. We should pray with attitude that God will meet our needs.
 - c. We should pray with the consideration of other.
- B. The Bible goes on to say that when we know how to pray we should, "pray

without ceasing...” (1 Thes. 5:17), reminding us that prayer is a duty that is never finished. We “ought always to pray and not to faint” (Lk. 18:1). David prayed evening, morning, and noon (Psa. 55:17); Daniel opened his window, kneeled “...three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God...” (Dan. 6:10). Jesus prayed all night (Lk. 6:12). If these great men needed this much prayer, we do, too.

- C. James states in Jam 5:17-18, “Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. Then he prayed again, and heaven gave rain, and the earth bore its fruit.”
- D. Oswald Chambers, “Every time we pray, our horizon is altered, our attitude to things is altered, not sometimes but every time, and the amazing thing is that we don't pray more.”
- E. I hope this lesson will help you to better pray and to encourage you to pray often. Tonight if you are old side of Christ then we invite you to come in by obeying the Gospel of Jesus Christ, come now as we stand and sing.

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