

Small Group Materials

Luke 11:1-28

Learning Objectives

- Understand that Jesus' model is more about motives than mechanics.
- Have a renewed belief in the certainty of answered prayer.
- Take steps to reorient our desires around God.

Steps to Prepare (For Leaders)

- Pray
- Read cross references for a better understanding
- Be prepared to navigate comments or questions about earthly fathers/perceived unanswered prayer

Questions for Discussion



Share about a time when you asked a friend or family member for a favor and how they responded.

Possible Answers: Asking for rides to the airport, asking for help moving, asking for a babysitter, etc.

Friends and family were happy to help, went above and beyond, etc.

Leader's Note: In this first section, we will examine how Jesus teaches us how to pray and point out a few significant ideas from this small prayer.

Read Out Loud: Luke 11:1-4 (NIV)

¹ One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples."

² He said to them, "When you pray, say:

"Father,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come.

³ Give us each day our daily bread.

⁴ Forgive us our sins,
for we also forgive everyone who sins against us.
And lead us not into temptation."



In your own words, what things are asked for in the Lord's prayer?

Possible Answers: God's glory, our daily needs to be met, forgiveness and the ability to forgive others the way we have been forgiven.

? What is the significance of Jesus starting His prayer by addressing God as "Father"?

Possible Answer: Up to this point, people addressed God by His covenant name, Yahweh. Jesus here makes this relationship very personal by calling the Creator of the Universe Father.

? Why would Jesus choose to start His prayer with "hallowed be your name"?

Possible Answers: Jesus is most concerned with God's glory. He sees the rest of the prayer as an extension of asking for God's glory. Our prayers should also see God's glory as their primary concern.

Read Out Loud: Luke 11:5-13 (NIV)

⁵ Then Jesus said to them, "Suppose you have a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; ⁶ a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have no food to offer him.' ⁷ And suppose the one inside answers, 'Don't bother me. The door is already locked, and my children and I are in bed. I can't get up and give you anything.' ⁸ I tell you, even though he will not get up and give you the bread because of friendship, yet because of your shameless audacity he will surely get up and give you as much as you need.

⁹ "So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. ¹⁰ For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

¹¹ "Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? ¹² Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? ¹³ If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

Read Out Loud: In this passage, Luke compares asking a friend or family member to fill a need that you have to asking God to fill a similar need.

? What are some similarities and differences between the stories of asking a friend to fill a need, asking a father to fill a need, and what Luke says happens when you ask God?

Norval Geldenhuys said in his commentary on Luke, "The single word 'Father' in Luke represents Aramaic *Abba*, the word which Jesus used Himself and which from His example passed into the vocabulary of the early church. The Jews in addressing God used the slightly formal *Abi* ("my Father") or *Abinu* ("our Father"), but Jesus used the ordinary intimate form which children used (and in Hebrew-speaking families still use) in addressing their father, *Abba*."

Possible Answers: The friend refuses at first and responds because of your shameless audacity. A Father responds favorably. God responds even more favorably. He responds immediately. He gives the Holy Spirit.

? What is your attitude toward asking your friends and family for something you need or for help?

What is your attitude toward asking God for those things?

Possible Answers: I feel comfortable asking friends and family. I forget to ask God. I don't feel comfortable asking God for help.

? What prevents us from bringing our requests or concerns before God?

Possible Answers: I don't think God cares enough. I want an audible or tangible response and when I don't get one, I give up. I just don't think to bring my requests to Him.

Read Out Loud: Psalm 37:4-6 (NIV)

⁴ Take delight in the Lord,
and he will give you the desires of your heart.

⁵ Commit your way to the Lord;
trust in him and he will do this:

⁶ He will make your righteous reward shine like the dawn,
your vindication like the noonday sun.

? What commands are given in this passage?

Possible Answers: Take delight in the Lord, commit your way to the Lord, trust in Him.

? How does God respond to those commands?

Possible Answer: God gives us the desires of our heart, provides righteous rewards and vindication.

? Generally speaking, what tends to be your motivation for praying?

Possible Answers: Motivations could be good, bad, or often they are mixed. Good motivations could include praising God, praying for God's will, etc. Oftentimes, these good motivations are mixed with sinful motives like self-centeredness. Ex. I want God to give me a spouse because marriage is a picture of God and the church AND because I'm lonely and am looking for something other than God to fulfill my needs.

? How does this passage inform the way we think about prayer and God's answer to our prayers?

Possible Answer: It reminds us that our desires and our prayers should be in line with God's way/will and reassures us that God does answer prayer.

For Discussion and Accountability

? In what areas of life do you need to bring your desires in line with God's desires for you? How could this affect your prayer life?

For Additional Reading

Luke 14-28 (NIV)

¹⁴ Jesus was driving out a demon that was mute. When the demon left, the man who had been mute spoke, and the crowd was amazed. ¹⁵ But some of them said, "By Beelzebul, the prince of demons, he is driving out demons." ¹⁶ Others tested him by asking for a sign from heaven.

¹⁷ Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them: "Any kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and a house divided against itself will fall. ¹⁸ If Satan is divided against himself, how can his kingdom stand? I say this because you claim that I drive out demons by Beelzebul. ¹⁹ Now if I drive out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your followers drive them out? So then, they will be your judges. ²⁰ But if I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

²¹ "When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are safe. ²² But when someone stronger attacks and overpowers him, he takes away the armor in which the man trusted and divides up his plunder.

²³ "Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.

²⁴ "When an impure spirit comes out of a person, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. Then it says, 'I will return to the house I left.' ²⁵ When it arrives, it finds the house swept clean and put in order. ²⁶ Then it goes and takes seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that person is worse than the first."

²⁷ As Jesus was saying these things, a woman in the crowd called out, "Blessed is the mother who gave you birth and nursed you."

²⁸ He replied, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it."