

## Prayer is Profitable

Luke 11: 5-10

We have read a comforting and challenging passage of Scripture today. Clearly the focus of these verses is earnest prayer. The previous verses reveal that [Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when He had finished praying, His disciples desired Him to teach them to pray](#). It is here that Jesus offers what is commonly known as the Lord's Prayer. In all reality it might better be described as the Model Prayer. Jesus offered instruction regarding how men ought to pray unto the Father.

After Jesus revealed the way we ought to pray, He provided a wonderful illustration about the need for prayer and the results that it would bring. You would have to agree that prayer is needful in our day. If there has ever been a time that we need prayer, it is today. If there has ever been a generation that needed to intercede with the Lord, it is our generation. Prayer is the most powerful and effective tool we have as Christians, and yet it is used very little. I think most would be ashamed if it were revealed how much they actually pray.

I trust this passage will challenge us to pray as well as encourage us as we discover the possibilities that prayer affords. I want to examine these verses and consider the [elements](#) involved in prayer. As we do, I think you will have to agree that: [Prayer is Profitable](#).

**I. The Necessity of Prayer** (5-6) – [And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; \[6\] For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him?](#)

**A. The Trouble Involved** – We find that a man had a friend show up unexpected, weary from his journey, desiring to be fed. The man had nothing to offer his friend and found himself in a desperate situation.

- In our modern society it is unlikely that we would be troubled by this particular situation, but it does reveal an unchanging truth. Trouble comes in all varieties, but it is not prejudice or picky. Trouble is something we all have, but none of us want. Many times our lives are running smoothly, everything seems to be going fine, and then out of the blue, trouble comes.
- It has been said that we are either in the midst of a storm, just coming out of a storm, or on the verge of being in the storm. Trouble comes with living. [Job 14:1 – Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble.](#) [Job 5:7 – Yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward.](#) Trouble brings us to a place of prayer. Much of what we face is beyond our control and we are helpless in ourselves to do anything about it. In times like these, we need to call upon the Lord in prayer.

**B. The Timing Involved** – Jesus reveals that the friend had shown up in the middle of the night, near midnight. Clearly this could not have been at a more inopportune time. Trouble had come when it was inconvenient.

- That is usually the way our troubles come as well. Trouble does not seek a convenient season or give us any advance warning many times. Often troubles come when we least expect them and many times when we are the least prepared to deal with them.
- It even seems as if trouble often comes in “bunches.” I’m sure that you have faced a difficult season in life and when you thought things couldn’t get any worse, they did! When you felt as if you were facing all you could endure more trouble came.
- Adversity and hardships are facts of life and we must learn to handle them in the best possible way. The only way we can ensure that we deal with our troubles correctly is to seek the Lord’s help and guidance in prayer.

**C. The Tenderness Involved** – The trouble that the man faced was not necessarily his problem. A friend had shown up in need and sought his help. Sure it was an inconvenience. It would have been easier to turn the friend away than to help him in his time of need, but the man felt compassion for the friend and chose to help him, even though it was inconvenient.

- I realize that our lives would be simpler and much easier if we chose not to get involved with issues that didn’t directly involve us. Many of the troubles we face do not directly involve us. From our perspective they may not even be that big of a deal, but we are obligated to bear the burdens of our brothers and sisters in Christ. We need to develop a heart of tenderness and compassion for others. We need to support one another in times of need. We may be in trouble tomorrow and need a friend to lean on.

### **I. The Necessity of Prayer (5-6)**

**II. The Consistency in Prayer (7-8)** – These verses reveal that the man made the choice to get involved. He chose to intercede for his friend. In the man’s response we discover much about the process of prayer and the devotion necessary when we pray. We will find that prayer involves much more than “Now I lay me down to sleep; or God is great; God is good.”

**A. An Initial Rejection (7)** – *And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee.* As the man knocked upon the door of his friend, his initial request was rejected. It was late and the friend had no interest in getting up and helping him at that hour. He knew the man; they were friends, but his initial request was rejected.

- If you have served the Lord for any length of time, you are aware that our requests are not always immediately answered. That isn't to say that God doesn't hear our prayers. It doesn't mean that He does not care about our situation or desire to meet our needs. Sometimes God chooses to refuse our requests. God does hear and answer prayer, but it is not always in the time or manner in which we would like.
- In those situations we must learn to trust God and depend upon Him, but it doesn't mean that we are to give up and cease to pray. A delay doesn't necessarily mean a denial.

**B. A Practical Objection (7)** – *And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee.* The friend was not necessarily being unreasonable. It was the midnight hour. He had already shut the door, turned out the lights, and everyone was already in bed. He would likely have been glad to help at a reasonable hour. The timing proved difficult.

- There is a profound truth that we need to understand in regard to prayer. Everyone may not sense the urgency of our need. Those around us may think that we are expecting too much or even being unreasonable. They might be willing to help bear our burden if it wasn't such a difficult request.
- The world would say to you that there is no use to continue to pray for that loved one after years of unanswered prayers. They would say that there is no need to intercede for one who has been diagnosed with a terminal illness. Forget about that family in need; there has been too much done and said for God to put that home back together. For many these seem like practical objections, but could I remind you that we serve an extraordinary God! We serve One who is not limited by man's doubts and fears. He is well able to meet our needs whatever they may be!

**C. A Continual Supplication (8)** – *I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.* The friend did not get up and help the man simply because they were friends. He would've liked to have rolled over and went back to sleep. It wasn't the friendship that brought results; it was the persistence of the man in need! His **importunity** made the difference. That literally means "*persistent; demanding; relentless.*" The man was determined to provide for his friend. He would stand there all night, continually knocking on the door if that is what it took.

- We need those who will be relentless in their praying. We need those who will commit to persistence in prayer until the Lord answers their request. God honors faithfulness and prayer is no exception.

- We live in an age of instant gratification. We have grown accustomed to immediate results. Sometimes our prayers are answered rather quickly and at other times we must continue to intercede before the Lord. We need to determine to remain committed to prayer, whatever the cause, until the Lord responds to our request!

**D. An Eventual Intervention** (8) – Jesus said that **he will rise and give him as many as he needeth**. The persistence and commitment of the man eventually paid off. The friend rose and gave him all he needed. He didn't supply a portion of his need; he gave him all he needed to provide for the friend. **Jam.5:16b – The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much**. You may feel as if you have prayed and prayed and yet there has been no answer. Now is no time to abandon your prayers. God may be about ready to open the windows of heaven and pour a blessing that will more than meet your need!

**I. The Necessity of Prayer** (5-6)

**II. The Consistency in Prayer** (7-8)

**III. The Urgency of Prayer** (9-10) – **And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. [10] For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened**. Here Jesus speaks of the urgency of our prayers. We are encouraged to **ask, seek, and knock**. Each of these verbs speaks of a continual action, an ongoing process. Notice:

**A. A Prayer of Faith** – **Ask and it shall be given you, for everyone that asketh receiveth**. That is very simple, but also extremely profound. We cannot expect God to answer prayers that are never prayed. We need to learn to ask the Lord for our needs. Simply take it to the Lord in prayer. He desires us to come before Him with our needs in an attitude of faith, believing that He will hear and answer our prayers. **Jam.4:2... ye have not, because ye ask not**. **1 Jn.5:14-15 – And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: [15] And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him**.

**B. A Prayer of Fervency** – **seek and ye shall find; he that seeketh findeth**. This reveals seeking with the purpose of finding. It reveals commitment and a sense of urgency. It presents the idea of seeking diligently for something of great value.

- We know that God has exactly what we need and the ability to provide that for us. We have committed the keeping of our eternal souls to Him, and yet many times we lack confidence in His ability to provide for our everyday needs. We must seek the Lord in prayer as if we sought something of great value, fully expecting to find what we need!

**C. A Prayer of Fulfillment** – knock and it shall be opened unto you; to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Prayer requires practice and passion, but it also requires patience. We must intercede at the door of faith, until it is opened unto us. God will reward the faithful and fervent prayers with fulfillment. His answer may not be what we desired or expected, but it will always be just what we need!

- He may not always answer the first time that we pray. In fact, He may even deny our request, but remember, when God says no, He has a better yes! If we will continue to knock, God will eventually open the door of His abundant grace.

We all have burdens and trials that we must face. Prayer is the most effective and efficient tool that we have. Is there a need in your life today? Have you prayed and prayed and yet there has been no answer? Don't give up, continue to pray; the door of God's abundant grace may be about to open.

If there is a need in your life, why not bring it before the Lord today and allow us to pray with you. Prayer is profitable.