

Series: Parables  
Title: Seek, Ask, Knock  
Text: Luke 11: 5-13  
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The disciples asked the Lord Jesus to teach them to pray. First, the Lord teaches us what to pray. The Lord did not teach us to pray using those exact words. He gave an outline of what we are to pray for. Notice, Christ gives 3 specific needs which only God can give, which we must ask of God:

**1) Luke 11: 3: Give us day by day our daily bread.**

First and foremost, this is Christ our spiritual Bread. Christ said, “Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things (temporal bread) shall be added unto you.” (Mt 6: 33) Christ just told Martha in Luke 10: 42 that “one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.” Once our new man is created by the power of God in the new birth, we need God to renew our inward man day-by-day in the knowledge of Christ the Living Bread. (Col 3: 10; 2 Cor 4: 6) Only God can do this. But we must ask God for this

**2) Luke 11: 4: And forgive us our sins;**

Above all else, sinners need for God to forgive us our sins. By the blood and righteousness of Christ our Propitiation, every believer has been forgiven our sins. But God will have us to ask him continually to forgive us our sins. (1 Jn 1: 8-9; 2: 1-2)

**3) Luke 11: 4: And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.**

We need Christ our Shepherd to lead us because “the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.” (Jer 10: 23) We need God to lead us away from temptation or else we will run headlong into temptation. Only God can deliver us from evil—our flesh. (Ja 1: 13-14)

Then the Savior gives a parable teaching us how we are to approach God for these things: for Christ our daily Bread, for forgiveness of sins by Christ, to be lead and delivered by Christ our Shepherd.

**Divisions and Proposition:** are found in Luke 11: 9: **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.**

**Title:** Seek, Ask and Knock

**I. SEEK, AND YE SHALL FIND—Luke 11: 5: And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight,...**

This man had a need and he had a friend. So he went seeking his friend for help. Do you have a need? Do you have a friend that you can seek at midnight? That is the question here, “**Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight...**”

**Friend of Sinners**

God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ is the friend of needy, importunate, sinners. The Pharisees meant it as evil but what they said is true, Christ is “**a friend of publicans and sinners.**” (Mt 11: 19)

He hates sin; he does not approve of our sin. But all those God elected unto salvation in Christ are sinners and Christ is a friend to true, needy, broken and contrite sinners.

Proverbs 18:24: A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.

That friend is Christ, he has many friends and he shows himself friendly to his friends. Christ said of Lazarus, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth;" (Jn 11: 11) Of Abraham the scripture says, "Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God." (Ja 2: 23)

### **A Friend Who Loves At All Times**

What kind of friend is God our Savior to needy sinners?

#### **Proverbs 17:17: A friend loveth at all times,...**

**Christ is a friend that loveth at all times.** In the parable it was midnight when this man went to his friend. Use a Strong's Concordance and search the word "midnight." Every reference to "midnight" in the Word of God is connected with an event that clearly pictures God's work of redemption and grace to needy sinners in Christ Jesus. It is no accident that our Lord in this parable speaks of a needy man coming to "his friend at midnight" because "midnight" signifies great need and great urgency.

When God reveals to us our true need—for Christ the Bread, for forgiveness of sins by Christ our Propitiation, for leadership and deliverance by Christ our Shepherd--then it is as midnight in our souls. And God our Father and our Savior Jesus Christ is "A friend [that] loveth at all times", especially in the midnight of our souls.

**Application:** So first, the man in this parable knew he had a need, he knew he had a friend, so he sought his friend. Has God given you faith to believe that Christ is a friend to the needy? Scripture says, "without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Heb 11: 6) If you know your need and believe that God is a friend to the needy then our Savior says to us, "seek, and ye shall find."

**II. SECONDLY, "ASK, AND IT SHALL BE GIVEN YOU."**—then the man in the parable asked something of his friend—**Luke 11: 5:...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?**

### **Prayer is Asking God**

Prayer is not demanding, but asking God. God will have us to ask him because in doing so we confess our sin and total inability to God.

This man needed his friend to lend him three loaves. It was because another friend had come to his house and he had nothing to set before him. We need three vital loaves. Our Savior just told us what these three loaves are when he taught us to what to pray.

First loaf is "**Give us this day our daily bread**". When the Holy Spirit gives a sinner ears to hear what the law says then the law is like this friend who came to this man's house—the law is a true friend, a schoolmaster driving us to Christ that we might be justified by faith (Gal 3: 24)—the law demands of us what we do not have to set before it: perfect righteousness from a perfectly holy heart. We must have Christ who is the Righteousness of his people by his fulfilling the law as the Representative of his people, by his

obedience unto the death of the cross. We must have Christ formed in our hearts whereby Christ is our Holiness of Life, the Sanctification, without which no man shall be accepted of God. Yet, we cannot merit Christ, we cannot earn Christ, no more than we can earn righteousness and holiness. All we can do is go to God in the midnight of our souls and ask God for Christ the Living Bread to be our Righteousness and Holiness. In doing so, we confess our sin and total inability to God.

Second loaf is **“Forgive us our sins.”** When the Holy Spirit makes us to know **our sins** then we behold that we have no way of putting away our sins or of meriting forgiveness from God. We must have Christ to put away our sins which is why Christ came and what Christ accomplished on the cross. (Heb 9: 26) We must have **Christ our Propitiation** to God. (1 Jn 2: 1-2) We must have God freely forgive us our sins for the sake of Christ Jesus. All we can do is go to God in the midnight of our souls and ask God to behold Christ our Propitiation—our mercy seat, our Atonement—and forgive us our sins. In doing so, we confess our sins and our total inability to God.

Third loaf is **“Lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.”** When the Holy Spirit comes to us like the friend in the parable and makes us know our flesh profits nothing, then we see we must have God to lead us and deliver us from temptation and evil all our days. All we can do is go to God in the midnight of our souls and ask Christ our Shepherd to lead us and to deliver us. In doing so, we confess our flesh is utterly useless and that we are absolutely dependent upon God.

**Application:** You will never seek God for these three loaves till you know your desperate need. If God in his irresistible grace has brought midnight into your soul, showing you your need of these three loaves, then Christ says, **“Ask, and it shall be given you.”**

But some might object, “But I have asked and God has not given.” So that brings us to the Lord’s third word.

**III. KNOCK, AND IT SHALL BE OPENED UNTO YOU— Get the meaning—knocking signifies broken-hearted, shameful, desperation-importunity.**

#### **Do Not Petition God Based on Friendship**

First, the man petitioned his friend based upon their friendship, Luke 11: 5: **Friend, lend me three loaves;** Christ says in Luke 11: 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.** Christ says in Luke 11: 8: **I say unto you,...he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend.”**

#### **Petition God Based on Importunity**

But again, the man knocked, this time petitioning him based upon his total inability, his great need, which only his friend could supply—Luke 11: 6: **For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him?** Christ says, Luke 11: 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.**

Though God our Savior is a friend to sinners, God will not answer any sinner, if we come to God imagining we are equal, not confessing our total inability to God. This is what God means in James 4, when he gives the reason sinners do not receive, “Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.” (Ja 4: 3)

Many vocally ask God for Christ the Bread with their lips but in their hearts they truly think they are righteous and holy by their own vain works. Ye ask amiss. To consume it upon your lusts: to appear to be trusting Christ when you really trust self.

Many ask for forgiveness of sins in Christ with their lips but in their hearts they truly imagine they do not need forgiveness, they do not need Christ who alone is the Propitiation of mercy for his people.

1 John 1: 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

Many ask with their lips for Christ to lead and deliver but in the heart they rare looking to their own wisdom and strength to do so.

James 1: 5: If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. 6: But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. 7: For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. 8: A double minded man *is* unstable in all his ways. [half Christ, half flesh]

Again, I remind you, Heb 11:6: But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Yet, God shall answer when his child comes importunate—when we come in shameless desperation confessing our sins, our inability, our nothingness—when we come with a broken and contrite heart.

Have you come asking God for Christ the Living Bread **because** you have no obedience of your own and can produce none to set before the law? Have you come asking God to forgive you of your sins for Christ's sake **because** all you are is sin and you deserve no forgiveness except by the blood of Christ? Have you come asking God to lead you and deliver you from evil **because** in your flesh dwells nothing good, because you are totally unable to lead and deliver yourself?

Christ says, Luke 11: 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. 9: 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.**

### **Our Faithful Father Will Give the Spirit to Make us Ask Aright**

Also, Christ speaks a word to us as sons of God as we continue to ask God for these three loaves. He says that God shall give the very good thing we need and not that which shall issue in our death—**Luke 11: 11: If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? 12: Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?**

The bread, fish and egg all signify food for life. What we, as believers, truly want is Christ our Life given us through the Holy Spirit. Yet, we often ask for things we think we need which things which would be as deadly as a stone, a serpent or a scorpion.

But you fathers would not give your sons death, you would give him life. Christ says, Luke 11: **13: If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?**

So though we may ask for deadly things, our faithful Father shall give his Sons the Holy Spirit to teach us what to pray as we ought.

Romans 8: 26: Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

So the Lord shows this shameless desperation in prayer is no longer a prayer for earthly bread: for long life, or riches, or good health; what shall we eat? or what shall we drink? or wherewithal shall we be clothed? It is prayer for Christ our Bread of Life, for forgiveness in Christ our Propitiation and for leadership and deliverance by Christ our Shepherd.

**Application:** Thus our Lord teaches us how every child of God prays as we ought to pray. We cannot even take credit for praying as we ought. It is because God gives us the Holy Spirit who teaches us to pray as we ought.

- God the Holy Spirit gives dead sinners life.
- God the Holy Spirit convinces of sin, righteousness and judgment.
- God the Holy Spirit gives us faith and repentance.
- God the Holy Spirit sprinkles our hearts with the blood of Christ the Lamb.
- God the Holy Spirit puts the garments of salvation upon us.
- God the Holy Spirit speaks peace and pardon to our souls.
- God the Holy Spirit turns us back to Christ when we ask amiss.

And this gift of the Holy Spirit flows to every elect, redeemed sinner from God, freely, not by our merit, but by the merit, power, and efficacy of Christ's atoning blood.

Galatians 3:13: Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree: 14: That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive **the promise of the Spirit through faith.**

So sinner, "**Seek and you shall find.**"—Christ is a friend that sticks closer than a brother, especially in the midnight hour of our souls need for him.

"**Ask and it shall be given you**"—we confess our sins when we ask for these three loaves: Christ our Bread, Christ our Forgiveness, and Christ our Shepherd.

"**Knock and it shall be opened to you**"—God does not open to us based on our friendship, but on our importunity, our shameful desperation and need of him.

Believer, though we as sons may ask amiss, by God giving us the Holy Spirit, rather than the death we ask for, God shall see to it that we ask for the one thing needful as we ought.

Did you see how the man in the parable changed his petition from basing it on friendship to basing it on importunity? Did you see how the son is changed from asking for death to asking for life by the Holy Spirit. Prayer does not change God; God uses prayer to change his child.

**Amen!**