

STUDY NOTES ON THE PARABLE OF THE FRIEND

AT MIDNIGHT: -

NOTE: - The first 13 verses of Luke 11, are dealing with the question of how to pray to God.

- Jesus' disciples asked Him to teach them how to pray.

Luke 11:1: - "And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples."

- Jesus responded to His disciples' question by giving them an example as to how we should pray – the Lord's prayer. This prayer is an example of the type of subjects that we should pray to God about.

Luke 11:2 – 4: - "And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil."

- Jesus then tells His disciples the parable of the friend calling at Midnight asking for food to feed an unexpected visitor. It is an illustration of the persistence we need to have in our prayers to God. The time of Midnight indicates that we can pray to the Lord at any time. The parable gives man's response to persistent prayer. It does NOT represent God's response to our prayers. Jesus gives God's response to our prayer in VS. 9 -13.

Luke 11:5 – 8: - "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; For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him? 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. 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 Bible gives us a few examples of individuals being persistent in their prayers and requests with the Lord.

Abraham was persistent in His entreaties to the Lord for the people of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Genesis 18:23 - 33: - "And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that *are* therein? That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? And the LORD said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes. And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which *am but* dust and ashes: Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt thou destroy all the city for *lack of five*? And he said, If I find there forty and five, I will not destroy *it*. And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And he said, I will not do *it* for forty's sake. And he said *unto him*, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And he said, I will not do *it*, if I find thirty there. And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord: Peradventure there shall be twenty found

there. And he said, I will not destroy *it* for twenty's sake. And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy *it* for ten's sake. And the LORD went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place.”

Jacob was persistent in asking for a blessing from the Angel whom he wrestled with.

Genesis 32:24 - 30: - “And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. And he said unto him, What *is* thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed. And Jacob asked *him*, and said, Tell *me*, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore *is it that* thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.”

The Canaanite mother was persistent in her requesting Jesus to cast out a devil from her daughter.

Matthew 15:21 - 28: - “Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, *thou* son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and cast *it* to dogs. And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great *is* thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.”

- We have some New Testament passages which exhort us to pray persistently and in earnest.

Ephesians 6:18: - “Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.”

Colossians 4:12: - “Epaphras, who is *one* of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.”

1st Thessalonians 5:17: - “Pray without ceasing.”

James 5:16: - “Confess *your* faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”

- Jesus told another parable of a widow who was persistent in asking an unrighteous judge to be avenged of her adversary. He did nothing for a while, but he eventually acted upon her requests to be free from her persistently bothering him to get justice for her.

Luke 18:1 - 5: - “And he spake a parable unto them *to this end*, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.”

- The following verses give God’s response to our persistent prayers. We are to ask, seek and find in making our requests to God. Jesus then uses the illustration of an earthly father giving food to a child who asks them for bread. Then, how much more will our Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him for it.

Luke 11:9 – 13: - “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. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. 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? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? 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?”

- Here are some passages concerning God’s promise of receiving the Holy Spirit.

Ezekiel 11:19: - “And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh.”

Acts 5:29 – 32: - “Then Peter and the *other* apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand *to be* a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things; and *so is* also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.”

Romans 8:4 & 5: - “That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.”

1st Corinthians 12:4 – 11: - “Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another *divers* kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.”

Galatians 5:16 & 25: - “*This* I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. ... If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.”

2nd Thessalonians 2:13: - “But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.”

1st John 3:22 – 24: - “And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.”

- We need faith in God and to have a forgiving attitude to others for God to hear our prayers.

Mark 11:22 - 26: - “And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have

whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive *them*, and ye shall have *them*. And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.”

- We are to pray in the name of Jesus.

John 14:13 & 14: - “And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do *it*.”

John 15:16: - “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.”

John 16:23 & 24: - “And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give *it* you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.”

- We are to pray in accordance with God’s will.

1st John 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: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.”

- The following passages refer to how we are to seek the Lord.

Deuteronomy 4:29: - “But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find *him*, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.”

Psalms 20:1 & 2: - “The LORD hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob defend thee; Send thee help from the sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion.”

Isaiah 55:6 & 7: - “Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.”

Jeremiah 29:11 – 13: - “For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find *me*, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.”

Lamentations 3:25 & 26: - “The LORD *is* good unto them that wait for him, to the soul *that* seeketh him. *It is* good that *a man* should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD.

John 15:7: - “If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.”

- God will not hear the prayers of those who are disobedient to Him within their heart.

Psalms 66:18: - “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear *me*.”

Proverbs 28:9: - “He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer *shall be* abomination.”

- We will not have our prayers answered if we are asking for things to please our carnal lusts.

James 4:1 – 3: - “From whence *come* wars and fightings among you? *come they* not hence, *even* of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume *it* upon your lusts.”

- Here are some general passages in relation to prayer and what God can do for us.

Matthew 6:8: - “Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.”

Romans 8:32: - “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?”

Ephesians 3:20: - “Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.”