

Never Give Up

Long Beach Alliance Church • July 27th, 2008 • Pastor Chris Lankford

**IF YOU THEN, BEING EVIL, KNOW
HOW TO GIVE GOOD GIFTS TO
YOUR CHILDREN, HOW MUCH
MORE WILL YOUR HEAVENLY
FATHER GIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT
TO THOSE WHO ASK HIM?
~LUKE 11:13 (NASB)**

1) Teach Us To Pray...

- A) As disciples of Jesus Christ, it was natural for the disciples to observe Jesus engaged in many different "normal life" behaviors. One of those was prayer, which the disciples observed often through the Gospels (Luke 11:1).

- B) In this instance, the disciples plead* with Jesus to teach them how to pray (11:1). Jesus provides the disciples with a liturgical prayer which is very similar to the traditional "Lord's Prayer" (Matthew 6:9-13).

- C) The emphasis of the prayer is not on its memorized form, but on its essential content, which should be reflected "when you pray" (11:2), or "whenever you pray."

* We have here the only request in the Gospels for Jesus to give teaching. Jeremias, 161, suggests that the disciples wanted a prayer that will be characteristic of their position as a community around Jesus, just as other Jewish groups, including the disciples of John the Baptist, had their own distinctive prayers. (*The Gospel of Luke, The New International Greek Testament Commentary Series*, I. Howard Marshall, Pages 456-457).

- D) The prayer honors God's authority (11:2), our dependence (11:3), our need continual forgiveness on the basis of life change (11:4), and an appeal for a pure life (11:4).

2) Be Bold In Your Prayers

- A) In order to further illustrate how we should approach God, Jesus tells a parable about the need to borrow some food from a friend for an unexpected visitor (11:5-8).
- B) In Jewish culture, it was extremely important to provide hospitality to your guests, who often arrived at unexpected times. With no "AM/PM" available, the vivid and humorous situation presented real tension for the listener (11:5-6).
- C) The response of the neighbor is understandable, opening up the house would wake the children and cause too much of a commotion so, no bread for you (11:7).
- D) Jesus however, teaches that it is not because of the relationship (friendship) of neighbors that the request for bread will be fulfilled, but because of "shameless boldness," the willingness to suffer (even) humiliation in asking (11:8).

3) A.S.K. ~ The Three-Fold Reminder To Never Give Up

- A) Jesus explains His parable by telling His disciples they must ask, seek, and knock (A.S.K.) in prayer to God (11:9-11). The point is not three different prayer actions, but an overall attitude of shameless boldness in our everyday prayer lives.
- B) The natural question arises in one's mind (and probably in the disciples minds), "won't that annoy God?" Shouldn't I approach God "only when necessary?"
- C) Rather, Jesus replies that it is the goodness of God and His great desire to love His children, which will provide -- through the Holy Spirit, the needs of those who pray (11:11-13).