
Sermon Notes

June 3, 2018

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

Jesus on Prayer: The Persistent Friend Luke 11:5-10

A Friend in Need

- ❖ Luke records several short parables that Jesus uses to teach His disciples about prayer
 - "A friend in need is a friend indeed" might serve as a good heading for Jesus' parable in Luke 11
 - this parable is preceded by Luke's summary of the Lord's Prayer
- ❖ Jesus tells this parable from the point of view of the person in need (this person is the central figure in the story)
 - caught unprepared with unexpected company and nothing on hand to offer for hospitality
 - embarrassing, but essential????
 - a beeline to the home of a close friend to seek help
- ❖ *Because of his impudence* (v. 8)
 - a person who is brash, bold, has a lot of nerve (gall)
 - a tenacious insistence without regard to time, place or person

Ask... Seek... Knock

- ❖ Jesus wants His followers to learn to pray with the same spirit of brashness and boldness as this man
 - pray persistently, pray boldly, pray repeatedly, pray without giving up
 - if evil, sinful people have it in their hearts to do their best for their children, **HOW MUCH MORE** does God respond to us when we ask Him to provide what we need for life and for godliness?
- ❖ God delights to care for, to nurture, to provide for and to protect His children

"I Don't Want to be a Bother"

- ❖ "I don't want to bother God with..."
 - we appreciate the opportunity to help others, why is it so hard for us to ask help for ourselves?
 - whether it is easy or hard for him to do so, the main character in the parable feels safe, secure and confident enough to ask his friend for help
- ❖ Why does Jesus tell this story?
 - God not only **invites** and **welcomes** us to come to Him with our needs, God **commands** us to do so

- rather than bothering God, you are honoring Him when you come confessing your need for and dependence on Him
- giving to, providing for and protecting His children brings joy to our Father

Prayer and The Sovereignty of God

- ❖ God knows the end from the beginning, and He already knows what He is going to do. So, what is the point/value of praying? (*cf.* Isaiah 46:9-11)
 - why does Jesus teach His disciples to pray and give us this parable, and command us to seek, ask, and knock in a brash, bold, persistent manner?
 - not only does God ordain the beginning, middle, and end of a matter, God also ordains the means to His end
- ❖ In calling and commanding us to pray, God incorporates **us** into His plans
 - God motivates, prompts and shapes us to pray so that our prayers become part of the means through which God accomplishes His sovereign purposes
 - some memorable examples of this from Scripture
 - *In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus* (Luke 2:1)
 - Jesus' death and resurrection (Acts 2:22-24)

- a lesson from the means God uses to bring you to saving faith in Jesus

❖ Is there anything more thrilling than the fact that God chooses to use you and your prayer as the means to His ends?

❖ Keep on asking/seeking/knocking:

- according to God's name, God's kingdom, and God's will
- don't hesitate, don't be embarrassed, **BE BOLD!** (*cf.* Hebrews 4:16)

Personal Application

1. Do you pray persistently, boldly, repeatedly, and without giving up? Why or why not?
2. Is it easy or hard for you to make your needs known to others? Is there any way in which this tendency carries over into your prayer life? After reflecting on Jesus' parable in Luke 11, do you sense God leading you to change in any way with regards to this?
3. God ordains the end of a matter as well as His means to that end. How does knowing that God ordains your prayer as part of His means to His end motivate and stimulate you to pray with greater passion and fervor?
4. After thinking through this parable, what new commitments or resolves will you make regarding your practice of prayer?