

Luke 11:5-13 The Gift of the Holy Spirit

**Jesus encourages petitionary prayer by reminding us that God is our Father who supplies His children for their duties with the Holy Spirit.**

**Excursus:** Interpreting parables

**1) God supplies us for our duties when we ask (11:5-10).**

- a) Honor, Shame, and Hospitality
- b) Who is the traveling friend? He is our duty, our responsibility before God.
- c) What are the circumstances of “midnight” and “nothing to set before him”? These circumstances point to our personal insufficiency.
- d) Who is the friend in bed? He is a contrastive character for God.
  - i) His verbal reply would have been unthinkable in that culture. Many would have thought it; few would have expressed it.
  - ii) “His impudence” (ESV) should be “his shamelessness” referring to the friend in bed, not to the friend making the petition. The idea is that his concern for honor outweighs his irritation at being inconvenienced.
  - iii) Verb tenses suggest that he had already risen before he finished his protest. He knew his duty to his honor, his family’s honor, and his village’s honor.
- e) Argument from lesser to greater: If the *reluctant* friend will still do his duty in order to maintain his honor, *how much more* will God honor His name by supplying the needs of His children to perform their duties when they ask?
- f) Ask, seek, knock—together reinforce the call to prayer
- g) Receives, finds, and opened—“promises that our prayers shall not be fruitless” (Calvin)
  - i) Seek/find (Deut. 4:29; Isa. 55:6; 65:1; Jer. 29:12-13; Prov. 8:17) is used in OT for the pursuit of God primarily, and secondarily for help from God, but never for help from God without God Himself as the reward.
  - ii) Sometimes God’s supplies seem far off or locked up. So, Jesus teaches us not to lose heart, but to keep praying, trusting that God hears and will answer graciously.
- h) Caveat: “It is certain, indeed, that often, when believers are asleep, God keeps watch over their salvation, and anticipates their wishes. Nothing could be more miserable for us than that, amidst our great indifference, or—I would rather say—amidst our great stupidity, God were to wait for our prayers, or that, amidst our great thoughtlessness, He were to take no notice of us. Nay more, it is only from Himself that He is induced to bestow upon us faith, which goes before all prayers in order and in time.” (John Calvin, *Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists*, vol. 1, 352)

**2) God’s supplies are conveyed to us by the Holy Spirit (11:11-13).**

- a) The suggestion of a father being so cruel to his child is repulsive.
- b) Argument from lesser to greater: “If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the Father give out of heaven the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!” (11:13).
- c) God determines what is best for us. He does not depend on our wisdom to frame our petitions rightly.
- d) The Holy Spirit is the promise of the Father that clothes us with “power from on high” (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8).
  - i) Application of Salvation (Luke 3:16, baptism of Holy Spirit and fire)
  - ii) Regeneration (John 3:3-8, born of water and the Spirit)
  - iii) Guarantee/Down Payment of Inheritance (Ephesians 1:13-14)
  - iv) Assurance of Adoption (Galatians 4:6; Romans 8:15)

- v) Illumination, Knowledge, Wisdom (John 15:26, Spirit of Truth; inspiration of Apostles; Ephesians 1:17-19; 3:16-19, enlightenment of believers)
  - vi) Enablement/Empowerment for Service (Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11)
  - vii) Love (Galatians 5:22-23)
- e) God's answer to all of our prayers is to give us Himself, nothing less.

**Doxology:** Now to Him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.