

## **Between Promise and the Cross: Between Asking and Trusting** *Gospel of Luke 11:1–13*

### **Learning to Knock**

There are certain moments in life when everything depends on whether someone answers the door. Maybe you've had a moment like that.

A late-night emergency. A desperate need. A situation where you had nowhere else to go. And you found yourself standing there... knocking...hoping someone would answer.

Jesus gives us an image like that in our passage today.

A man shows up at midnight. He has nothing to offer his guest. So, he goes to a neighbor's house and starts knocking.

It's inconvenient. It's awkward. It's persistent.

And Jesus says—*that's what prayer is like*. But here's the deeper truth:

Prayer is not just about knocking on a door.

It's about **who is on the other side of the door**.

And Jesus wants His disciples—and us—to understand something life-changing:

You are not knocking on a stranger's door. You are coming to a Father.

### **1. The Request That Reveals Everything (v.1)**

“Lord, teach us to pray.”

Of all the things the disciples could have asked...They didn't say:

- Teach us to preach.
- Teach us to perform miracles.
- Teach us to lead crowds.

They said:

**“Teach us to pray.”**

Why?

Because they had watched Jesus. They had seen:

- how often He withdrew to pray
- how deeply He depended on the Father
- how everything in His life flowed out of that relationship

They realized something we often miss:

**Prayer is not an add-on to the Christian life. It is the source of it.**

Let me ask you honestly—how would you describe your prayer life right now? Not how it *should* be. Not how it *used to be*. But right now.

Consistent? Occasional? Mostly silent?

The disciples start in the right place: **“Lord, teach us.”**

## **2. The Prayer That Reorders Our Hearts (vv.2–4)**

Jesus responds with what we often call the Lord’s Prayer.

And notice how it begins:

**“Father...”**

This is shocking. In the ancient world, people did not casually address God this way. But Jesus says: This is who God is to you. Not distant. Not detached. **Father.**

### **The Structure of the Prayer**

Jesus teaches us to pray in a way that reshapes us.

#### **God’s Glory**

“Hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come.”

Before we ask for anything, we remember: God is holy. God is king.

Prayer begins by lifting our eyes off ourselves and placing our attention on the authority and sovereignty of God.

## **Our Dependence**

“Give us each day our daily bread.”

Not weekly bread. Not lifetime guarantees. Daily. Prayer trains us to live with **open hands**.

## **Our Relationships**

“Forgive us... as we forgive.”

You cannot stay bitter and pray honestly for long. Prayer exposes the condition of your heart.

## **Our Spiritual Need**

“Lead us not into temptation.”

We are not as strong as we think. Prayer is admitting: **I need God to guide me.**

Prayer doesn't just change things. **Prayer changes us.** A challenge for you. When something is happening in your life, in your world at home or at school or at work, and you don't like it. You've prayed and asked God to change it, fix it, remove it. Maybe pray more submissively: God, if this your plan for me, change my heart and change my prayers. Too often we put all of the pressure on God to change what we don't like. Well, maybe what needs to change is what and how you petition God.

### **3. The Story That Teaches Persistence (vv.5–8)**

Then Jesus tells a story. A man has a guest arrive unexpectedly. He has nothing to offer.

So, he goes to a neighbor's house—at midnight—and starts knocking. Now imagine this scene. The house is dark. The door is shut. The family is asleep. From inside comes the voice: “Don't bother me!”

But the man keeps knocking. And eventually the door opens.

Now, we have an important clarification to add here.

Jesus is not saying God is like a reluctant neighbor. God is not annoyed by your prayers. God is not trying to avoid you.

### **The Point**

If persistence works with a reluctant neighbor...**how much more with a loving Father?**

If my child comes to me in the middle of the night, I may be tired...

I may be groggy...But I'm not going to ignore them. Why?

Because they're mine. That's Jesus' point.

### **4. The Invitation: Ask, Seek, Knock (vv.9–10)**

Now Jesus makes it explicit: Ask. Seek. Knock.

And in the original language, it means: Keep asking. Keep seeking. Keep knocking. Continue in this practice. Continually, ask, seek, knock. Jesus didn't just teach us about prayer. He invites us to practice it.

In Luke 11 He says: "Ask... Seek... Knock."

I want us to take a quiet moment to do exactly that. I'm going to guide us through three short moments of prayer. You don't need fancy words. Just talk to the Father who hears you.

#### **1. ASK (20–25 seconds)**

First, Jesus says Ask.

Think of something in your life right now where you need God's help. It might be a burden, a decision, a struggle, or a need for strength.

In the quiet of your heart, simply ask the Father for what you need.

#### **2. SEEK (20–25 seconds)**

Then continue gently: Second, Jesus says Seek.

This is not just asking for something — it's seeking God Himself.

Ask the Lord to draw you closer. Ask Him to shape your heart, deepen your faith, and guide your life.

### 3. KNOCK (20–25 seconds)

Third, Jesus says Knock. Maybe there is a door in your life that seems closed — a relationship, a calling, a step of obedience, or a spiritual breakthrough. Bring that before the Lord now and trust Him with it.

Father,

You have heard every prayer spoken in this room and every prayer whispered in silence. Teach us to trust you while we wait, and to believe that the doors you open are always good. In Jesus' name, Amen.

### 5. The Father Who Gives What Is Good (vv.11–13)

Jesus ends with a comparison. Earthly fathers—even imperfect ones—know how to give good gifts. If a child asks for food, you don't give them something harmful. And then Jesus says:

#### **How much more...**

Your heavenly Father is not less generous than you. He is infinitely more good.

#### **The Greatest Gift**

And what does He give? “The Holy Spirit to those who ask.” Not just answers. Not just solutions. **Himself**. He offers himself.

#### **Gospel Presentation**

Here's where everything comes together. Because if we're honest...Many of us struggle to pray like this. Why?

Because deep down we're not sure:

- if God really hears us
- if God really wants us
- if we can really call Him Father

And the Bible says the reason is this: **Sin has separated us from God.**

We are not naturally close to God. We are not naturally children of God.

But here is the good news: Jesus came to change that.

He lived the life we could not live. He died the death we deserved on the cross. He rose again in victory. So that through Him...

we are forgiven - we are restored - we are adopted

And now, through Christ, we can say: **“Father.”**

### **Invitation Moment**

Some of you today don't just need better prayer techniques. You need a relationship with the Father. And that begins by trusting in Jesus Christ.

First, repent – admit your sin, confess your sin, and believe Christ can save you. Then, surrender your life to Christ.

### **Conclusion: The Door You're Knocking On**

Let's return to that image. A man knocking at midnight.

But now Jesus has changed the picture. You're not knocking on a stranger's door. You're not knocking on a reluctant neighbor's door. You are knocking on the door of a Father... who is listening. Who is good. Who is ready to respond.

### **Final Challenge**

So, keep asking. Keep seeking. Keep knocking. Not because you're trying to convince God to care— but because **He already does.**