

INTRODUCTION:

There was a man in my church that I loved to hear pray. The way that he prayed you could tell that he was somebody who intimately knew our God. They were not just empty words spoken to the air but were words spoken to a God that he loved and talked too often. And his words were filled with scripture and theology. And it didn't sound like he was trying to make his prayers more impressive it just flowed out of him naturally. When I heard him pray I thought I want to learn how to pray like that. And part of me wondered if I knew how to pray at all.

Maybe you have felt something similar to that. You have seen someone pray and thought I wish I knew how to pray like that because so often I feel like I don't even know what I'm doing. We need to learn how to pray. This morning that's part of what we're going to do. And we are going to learn how to pray from the master Himself.

Our passage this morning and Luke chapter 11 Jesus's disciples come to him and ask him Jesus would you teach us how to pray. And Jesus does so.

So this morning I want you to imagine yourself among Jesus disciples. Imagine yourself walking up to Jesus and asking of Jesus would you teach me how to pray. And listen to His words and instructions. Because Jesus is going to teach us three ways that we are to pray.

Point number 1: **Pray biblically (v. 1-4).**

Our prayers must be biblically prayers.
We cannot pray contrary to what the Bible teaches.
We cannot just pray whatever it is that we want to pray.
Our prayers have to line up with Scripture.
Because if they do not then God won't hear them.
And He won't answer them.

They must be prayers that are informed by the Scriptures.
They must be prayers that are breathed by the Scriptures.
They must be prayers that are filled with the Scriptures.

When we want to know what to pray, we should turn to the Bible.
And this is exactly what the disciples do.
They go to the Word in flesh,
And He gives them the words to speak.

Verse 1, **"Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples."**

They want Jesus to teach them how they are to pray.
They specifically want to be taught how John taught his disciples.

It appears that John the Baptist gave his disciples a specific prayer to pray.
A liturgy and pattern of words they could copy.
It is a prayer whose words they would memorize and then repeat them.
They would pray these over and over in their prayer life.

And then Jesus tells them, "don't pray like John's disciples."
"Don't repeat the same words every time. Just pray what is in your heart."
"God hates empty rituals and patterns so pray better words."
Oh wait no He doesn't say that.
It would be what we might expect Him to say.

Typically, we think of prayer only in terms of our hearts.
We think that the important thing is the right attitude and not the words.
In our faith tradition we are more suspicious of liturgical repetitive prayers.
But Jesus and the Scriptures never tells us to be.
But we should be more concerned that our prayers are biblical ones.

It is true that our hearts must be right.
It is true that prayer is not just a matter of repeating certain words.
But that does not mean the words do not matter.
It does not mean we can pray however we want.
Jesus does not say to pray whatever you feel.
Our prayers still need to be biblical.

Verse 2, **"And he said to them, "When you pray, say:"**

He tells them exactly what they are to pray.

He gives them the words they are to use.

And this is important because we need to know the right words.

And we will not find them by searching our hearts.

We find them in the Scriptures.

We find them from Christ's words.

This is why we teach Children how to pray with specific prayers.

We are teaching our 2 and 4 year old how to pray.

I did so by giving them specific biblical words and language to pray.

And we repeat it at every meal.

I pray the same prayer every night.

Because they need to learn the Biblical way to pray first.

It is like training wheels to get the hang of prayer.

But we still need those kind of biblical written prayers when we are older.

I turn to those prayers when I don't know what the pray.

When I am weak and tired.

Or exhausted and can't find the words.

I turn to the Lord's prayer, or I pray the Psalms

Or I turn to the book of common prayer or puritan prayer books.

Because some days I need help.

And those prayers are meant to help us learn to pray biblically.

The specific words do matter.

But it does not mean we must always pray the same words.

I don't want to give the wrong impression.

You probably noticed that Luke's prayer differs slightly from Matthews.

They have the same ideas.

Much of the language and words are even the same.

But they are not exact.

Because it is not about the words matching up exactly with each other.
It is about them matching what the Bible says.
We can't pray the opposite of what God tells us to.
Our prayers need to line up with Christ's.
They don't have to follow the same structure or formula.
But they must follow the same values and principles.
And so we learn to pray by praying Christ's own words.

We will walk through this pray quickly.
Each phrase could be its own sermon, but we won't spend that much time.

"Father, hallowed be your name."

The prayer begins with who we pray to.
We pray to God.
We don't pray to ourselves or to the universe.
We pray to the one true God.
The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
We pray to YWH, the great I AM.
We pray to our heavenly Father.

And He is not distant from us.
We pray to Him as our Father.
We pray to Him as those who have been adopted by Him as His children.

And we pray that His name would be hallowed.
It means that we want God's name honored.
We pray first not for our own good or requests, but for Gods.
We pray that God's name would be treated with respect.

That it would not be taken in vain.
That it would not be treated as a curse, or something that people say
when they are angry.
We pray it would not be used in vain by politicians.
Those who would use God's name to gain power and manipulate us.
We pray it would not be used in vain by preachers.

False prophets and teachers who would claim to speak for God, but lie.

We pray that it would be honored by those who call themselves Christians.
That we would speak your name with reverence.
That we would live worthy of your name.

We pray that people would pray in a way that honors your name.
Our prayers should be honoring to God.
We should pray for God to be glorified.
One way to pray biblically is to pray that God's name would be honored.

"Your kingdom come."

The message of the gospel of Luke is Jesus is the promised King who came to preach and enact His kingdom, which is for all people, through His life, death, resurrection, and ascension.

Jesus came to proclaim and bring the Kingdom of God.

It is His mission.

He wants His disciples to pray that this mission would be successful.

To pray that the kingdom would come to more towns and people.

To pray the kingdom would continue to do its healing and saving work.

We are to pray that God would continue the mission of Jesus.

We pray not just that our church would be successful, but that the kingdom would.

We pray not just for our own lives, but for the kingdom.

We pray that the kingdom of God would come into our lives and communities and every nation on earth.

But we also pray that it would come fully.

The kingdom of God is here now.

But it will not fully manifest itself until Christ returns.

So, we also are to pray for that day. That it would come sooner.

We echo the prayer at the end of Revelation, "Come Jesus come."

We do not pray that it comes on our time.

We do not pray that it comes in the manner we wish.

We pray that it comes.

One way to pray biblically is to pray for God's Kingdom to come.

To pray for it to manifest itself in our world.

"Give us each day our daily bread,"

Another way to pray biblically is got pray for your daily needs.

To pray that God would provide for us every day.

We are to pray that He does this daily, because we need Him every day.

Every day He is the one who provides for us.

To pray for our physical needs.

And to pray for our spiritual needs.

That He would nourish our souls

We must trust and not assume that we can provide for ourselves.

We must pray and ask that God would do so.

It is also good and biblical to pray for other's to receive their daily bread.

We should not just pray for our own, but for theirs.

This prayer for daily bread echoes the Exodus.

Every morning God would provide the wandering Israelites with mana.

It was their daily bread that rained down from heaven.

We too should pray for our daily bread.

And know that our God can and does provide it.

"and forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us."

Another way to pray biblically is to pray for forgiveness.

To confess our sins to God and ask for grace.

And we can ask knowing that He does forgive sinners.

Even the man hanging on the cross next to Jesus.

Because God loves to forgive the sins of sinners.

But we have to pray and ask.

It is hard to find a more biblical prayer than one asking for forgiveness.
Those who are not Christians should pray this prayer.
Pray and ask God to forgive you.
And He will.

The next part might seem strange.
It is important to see that it does not imply that we can be forgiven
because we are so forgiving ourselves.
No, we ask for forgiveness based on the blood of Christ.
We ask for forgiveness based on the death of Jesus in our place.
We ask for forgiveness based on Christ's defeat of sin and death.

And then because we have received that forgiveness, we pass it on.
We are then gracious to those to whom we want our forgiveness.
We forgive those indebted to us as Christ forgave us.
Not because it earns our salvation.
But because we have gained it, we pass it on freely.
We ask for forgiveness because we have already been changed by it.
And those who do not forgive others prove they have not yet been
transformed by God's forgiveness.

"And lead us not into temptation."

Finally we pray that God would save us.
Not just from the power of sin eternally, but here and now.
We pray that He would deliver us from temptations to sin.
That He would deliver us from the temptation to drink.
That He would lead us away from our addictions.
That He would lead us away from pornography and sexual sin.
That He would lead us away from wrath and anger.
That He would lead us from Satan's traps and schemes.
The next time you are tempted to sin, pray.
Pray for God's help and deliverance.
So, we are to pray biblically.

Do so by repeating this prayer.

Pray exactly the words.

Or pray them and expand on them.

But however you pray, you must pray biblically.

Point number 2: Pray Boldly (v. 5-8)

Our prayers also should be bold.

We should be willing to boldly approach the God of the Cosmos with our prayers.

Jesus tells us a story to give an example of what He means.

Verse 5, **“And he said to them, “Which of you who has a friend will go to him at midnight and say to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves, for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him’;”**

Do any of you have friends whose doors you would knock on in the middle of the night to borrow some groceries?

Probably not.

But one thing we need to understand about this request is it's boldness.

This would take some guts.

Most of us might not knock on a neighbor's door even to borrow something small like one egg that you need to finish your recipe for dinner or a can of pasta sauce or a cup of flour.

Most of us might just go without even if we do need it.

Because we recognize that takes some boldness to do that.

It would take another level of boldness to go knock on your neighbor's door in the middle of the night to ask them to borrow something.

And Jesus asks **“which of you?”**

Jesus is asking them which one of them would be so bold to make this kind of request?

The response and the answer is expected to be no.

None of them would be so bold to ask this.

None of them would knock on their neighbor's door to ask for bread.

Verse 7, **"and he will answer from within, 'Do not bother me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed. I cannot get up and give you anything?'"**

The neighbor has pretty good reasons to not go to the door. Even though this is his friend he does not want to get up. And he has some excuses that we would consider reasonable. If someone was banging on your door in the middle of the night we would all be tempted to ignore it.

And his excuses are ready-made.

The door is shut and it's time to go to bed.

And his children are in the room.

Most homes were kind of one room homes where everybody's in the same place.

There's no way for the neighbor to get the door open without waking up everybody in the house including the kids.

Those of you with small children can appreciate the difficulty of trying to get kids to go back to sleep.

We would see all of these as very reasonable excuses.

But look at the next verse.

Verse 8, **"I tell you, though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his impudence he will rise and give him whatever he needs."**

Jesus says that they can expect a response.

That their neighbor will get up and will give them three loaves of bread.

They will not do it because they are friends.

But he will do it because of their and impudence.

Because of their boldness.

We need to recognize not just that this is a bold request.

We need to see that this is a good request.

This is not a minor thing.

To us it seems like an inconvenience.

Someone has come to visit and when I have any food to make them that's unfortunate but we'll figure it out we'll do without or find some other solution.

Well in the ancient near east, hospitality is a huge deal.

It is not just about being kind it is a matter of honor and expectation.

You provide for guests.

You do forget what you might not do for your own family.

So someone who does not provide for their guests would be ashamed.

You would be a huge breach of expectations.

Everyone in town would hear about it and know them as someone who does not show hospitality.

So they're desire is a good one.

And they're only asking for three loaves of bread which is not an incredible amount of food they're not asking for a banquet.

They're asking for enough for their guests because if they gave them some leftover bread that would already be eaten out of it would be shameful.

They're asking their neighbor to help them save face.

So yes it is an audacious and it is a boulder request

but it is not a bad request.

Especially considering they can't just stop by Walmart.

There's no restaurants they can pick up food from there's no Uber Eats or doordash to deliver something.

They don't have it then they need to get it from their neighbors.

To us it seems like asking to borrow some groceries.

For them this is an incredible emergency.

Because of the seriousness of the emergency the neighbor will help even though they might not want to.

They will help even though they are dragging their feet not wanting to get out of bed.

This would be like if someone knocked on your door in the middle of night and said that their wife was pregnant they needed to get to the hospital could you please give him a ride?

Is the kind of emergency that all of us would stop and even if we don't know the person don't care about them have other things we want to do would recognize we've got to respond.

This is why the neighbor responds.

Because the person is so boldest ask and the request is legitimate and a good one they will give whatever he needs.

Because this is a legitimate need and life or death in their culture.

So what is the implication for prayer?

Yes that we are to pray this way.

That we are to pray boldly before God.

That we should not hesitate to knock on His door.

We should not pause before shouting out His name loudly.

Especially when we have needs.

Especially when there are things that are going wrong in our life.

Especially when we are in pain and nobody understands.

When we don't know what to do, or even just when we feel alone

We should not hesitate to boldly pray.

Don't wait for Sunday or mourning. Bang on God's door and pray.

Hebrews 4:16 encourages us to come boldly Before the Throne of Grace.

We should pray boldly.

We should not be afraid to knock on God's door and to bring him our requests.

Because if even annoyed Neighbors will answer your requests,
then how much more will God?

We should pray to Him boldly.

Pray banging on His door in the middle of the night.

Don't hold back.

Don't be afraid that you might not ask the right way in the right time.

Just go and pray boldly to your God.

[transition] If your neighbor who doesn't like you will do so, how much more will God who loves us do?

Point number 3: Pray Expectantly (v. 8-13).

We are to pray expecting that God will hear us.

Expecting that God will answer us.

Even expecting that He will give us what we need.

Verse 9, **"And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened."**

This is partially continuing the metaphor.

Like in the story go and knock on the door.

Seek out the Lord through prayer.

Knock on the door of heaven.

He will not tell you that He is asleep.

He will not yell at you to go away.

He will open the door and give what you ask.

We are to ask expecting an answer.

We are to seek expecting to find God.

We are to knock expecting God to open the door for us.

These verses are meant to be an encouragement in our prayers.

To know that God will answer us.

But this does not mean that God will always answer how we might wish.

It does not mean that as long as we pray biblically, boldly, and expectantly that God says yes.

If you have ever prayed then you know sometimes God says no.

We just spent a few months on Wednesday studying why God says no.

But what we need to understand and remember is in verse 11.
We can pray expectantly not because He will always say yes.
We can pray expectantly because He is a good Father.

Verse 11, **"What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; 12 or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion?"**

Jesus uses the image of a child coming up to their father.

And like most children often do, this child is hungry.

"Dad, I'm hungry can I have a snack?"

"Can I have a fish?"

How would a good father respond?

Now a good father might respond how I do most of the time when my kids say they are hungry.

I say things like "It isn't lunch time."

"I know they are getting snacks, but we don't do snacks."

And of course the classic, "Hi hungry I'm dad."

Those might get eye rolls but those are not evil responses.

What would be an evil response is giving my son a poisonous snake.

Or a dangerous scorpion instead of an egg sandwich.

It is one thing to not give a child what they want.

It is another thing to give them something that would harm them.

No good father would do that.

Almost no parent would behave that way towards their child.

They would not spite them or try to hurt them.

Especially not when they are asking for something they need.

When they ask for food they need to survive.

Verse 13, **"If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"**

The implication is that God might not give us the fishes and the eggs.
He might not answer your prayer in the way that you hope.
He may not say yes.
But He will not make jokes at your expense like I do to my kids.
He will not roll His eyes at you.
He will not ignore you.
He knows how to give you good gifts.
He knows how to give us exactly what we need.

MTR: So we should pray expectantly.
Not expecting that God will say yes.
But expecting that God will respond exactly how He should.
He will respond like a good Father.
A better father than the one we had.
Praying expecting that God will respond to you.
And He will give us exactly what we need.

CONCLUSION:

1. [Summary] Would you imagine yourself again standing there with Jesus. And after he is giving us these instructions on how to pray biblically boldly and expectantly, Jesus says okay now let's practice, repeat after me and pray like this.
2. [Challenge] We are going to close with the Lord's prayer. I'm going to have the words up on the screen because we are going to pray the Lord's Prayer as it is recorded in Luke's gospel. In Luke's version of The Lord's Prayer is different than the one that we typically have memorized. So I'm going to have the words up on the screen so that we can all pray corporately together as a church the way that Jesus has taught us to pray.