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Luke 11:1-2a

One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.” He said to them, “when you pray, say...

Matthew 6:9b – 13

“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, **your will be done** on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Opening statement:

We often hear about prayer requests being answered and testimonies given. Church marquee reading “God answers knee mail.”

We don’t, however, hear about those times when we Pray our guts out and things actually get worse.

Prayer is one of the most beautiful/frustrating and perplexing things imaginable.

We pray for these things and then nothing happens.

We have probably all struggled with our prayer life in one way or another.

The disciples are obviously struggling with their prayer life because they ask Jesus to teach them how to pray.

Jesus drops a big, mature, pinnacle, and varsity level prayer and then says pray like that.

Recap:

Hallowed by your name – your name is great, let your name, your renown, your reputation be seen and magnified and loved and wondered about.

Your Kingdom come – lives be changed by the power of God. We worship you instead of worry, we bow down to you and your kingdom, not our problems.

Your Will be done – This is a scary prayer to pray and one that doesn’t happen too often anymore.

When we pray “your will be done” What are we praying for?

This has to do with our priorities and to who or what we are placing our trust in to provide our needs.

Activity:

Ask people what their priorities are? List them on a white board or large piece of paper for everyone to see.

When we view our lives as a list of priorities, our life becomes a giant check off list. Praying “God’s will be done.”

What are we praying?

When we pray, “God’s will be done.” We’re saying 2 things here.

1. God is the center of who we are.

The cry of our heart is not for a certain thing, but in that certain thing, God be magnified, His will be done.

Example – show on white board or piece of paper
God is the center of relationships, family, finances, job, my life and whole existence.

This is a beautiful prayer and completely God-centered.

Examples –

Jesus in the garden in Matthew 26 – Your will be done

Paul in Acts 20:22 – I’m going to Jerusalem and there are warnings of suffering and imprisonment. I don’t want to do it, but it’s the Lord’s will.

This is not a prayer for a hedge of protection, or a million dollars, but one that requires complete trust and surrender in God.

2. Letting go of our idolatry.

You know when we pray for this thing and it becomes our ultimate goal, and we plead with Jesus for him to accomplish this thing. “I want this, I deserve this, and here’s how it should play out.”

Personal Example – When have you asked for something that you wanted instead of what God wanted?

In the end, we want what we want and not God’s will. We use Jesus as a means to get what we want.

Our view is often...

I did this, I didn’t do this, God you owe me.

It’s as if we use Jesus as a means to get what we want.

The gospel is not if we love Jesus, then we get everything we want. The gospel is if we have Jesus, He’s enough no matter what.

So, we're praying for God to be the center and for God to have His way in our lives despite how uncomfortable that may be.

How do we pray for that?

You have to see this passage from just one point of view, or it gets really goofy.

Luke 11:5-8

The he said them, "Suppose one of you has a friend, and he goes to him at midnight and says, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, because a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have nothing to set before him.' Then the one inside answers, 'Don't bother me. The door is already locked, and my children are with me in bed. I can't get up and give you anything.' I tell you, though he will not get up and give him the bread because he is his friend, yet because of the man's boldness he will get up and give him as much as he needs.

Summarize the story

Bill shows up at midnight knocking at your door

Big time guests have showed at Bill's house and he has nothing to feed them.

Finally, because you keep asking, keep seeking, keep knocking, eventually he will open the door and give you what you need.

If you read this story from the guy who's in bed, it does not make God out to be very gracious. He's telling the story not from the point of view of the man in bed, but the man asking, seeking, and knocking.

If you see it this way, then everything lines up.

Luke 11:9-10

So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

So, How do we pray for God's will?

Persistently ask, seek, and knock for it to happen.

We ask for God's will to be done in our marriage, relationships, job, life, education, family, etc.

Surely God it's not your will for my child to be sick, or my marriage to fall apart. I ask that your will be done. We ask over and over and over again.

We Seek

Asking is sometimes the easy part.

We may say, “I hate this about me, take this away from me Lord.” But then we do nothing about it.

We persistently ask, but we don’t do anything about it. Seek out advice, counseling, responsibility.

We knock (wait patiently)

Example - Abraham and Sarah
Waited 25 years for God’s will to be done.

When we knock we are in essence waiting for a response, waiting for some sort of answer.

So we persistently ask, seek, and knock.

Why do we pray for God’s will?

Luke 11:11-13

Which of you fathers, if your son asks for fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!

A loving father would never give to his son or daughter something that would harm them or pervert them.

We have hope by coming to Him like a child and because we know that He can.

Example – Children don’t understand why they don’t always receive what they want because their parent’s ways are higher than theirs and thoughts are higher than their thoughts.

Only the wicked father gives in to every request.

I don’t expect her to understand why the answer is sometimes no, but I admire her persistence because she trusts that I can.

God doesn’t expect children to understand why the answer is sometimes no, but we pray for His will because we trust that His will is better than ours.

We have to trust that if a loving earthly father would never do anything to harm their children, than an infinite, loving Heavenly Father would never do anything to hurt His children.

We pray, because we know that He can

Why is the answer sometimes no?

Not because he's mad at you, or because of that thing you did in college, or because you didn't read your Bible enough.

Because God has something better for you.

Question: When have you asked for something, but didn't get it because someone had something better for you?

When we don't always get what we ask, I simply suggest because there's something bigger going on in the situation than we can ever comprehend.

Because His ways are higher and His thoughts are higher and we just have to trust that He loves us and that He can see what we don't see.

An indicator of a true disciple of Christ is one marked by complete trust and faith in God no matter what is going on down here. It's really a peace that surpasses all understanding.

Discussion Questions...

Are we praying for God to be the center of our lives?

What is the motive of our prayers? To get what we want, or to see God glorified?

Are we persistently asking, seeking, and knocking?

Do we really trust and believe that He is good, that He's our loving father?