

“Our Father”

Luke 11:1-13(NASB)

11 It happened that while Jesus was praying in a certain place, after He had finished, one of His disciples said to Him, “Lord, teach us to pray just as John also taught his disciples.” ² And He said to them, “When you pray, say:

‘Father, hallowed be Your name.

Your kingdom come.

³ ‘Give us each day our daily bread.

⁴ ‘And forgive us our sins,

For we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us.

And lead us not into temptation.”

⁵ Then He said to them, “Suppose one of you has a friend, and goes to him at midnight and says to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves; ⁶ for a friend of mine has come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him’; ⁷ and from inside he answers and says, ‘Do not bother me; the door has already been shut and my children and I are in bed; I cannot get up and give you *anything*.’ ⁸ I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him *anything* because he is his friend, yet, because of his persistence, he will get up and give him as much as he needs.

⁹ “So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ¹⁰ For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it will be opened.

¹¹ Now suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he? ¹² Or *if* he is asked for an egg, he will not give him a scorpion, will he? ¹³ If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?”

-This is God’s Word

-Thanks Be to God

Lets Pray:

Father We come before you this morning a people who is seeking to know you more and learn under your perfect scriptures so we pray today that you would reveal to us the answer to the disciple's question, how are your followers to pray? Father, we pray that as we read your scriptures, the cobwebs of familiarity with this scripture would be brushed away and that we would be able to see your glory and love anew, and that our hearts would respond in worship to you.

Amen

Good Morning, my name is Andrew, I am the youth minister here at Redeemer. I am so grateful to serve here at Redeemer and even more grateful to be able to serve today in the pulpit. I speak on behalf of guys like myself and Aaron and Jacob who want to thank you, the congregation, for allowing us the honor and the task of preaching the Word a few times a year. It is something that we take very seriously, and I love that we want to be a church that is serious about training up young men to be able to faithfully preach God's Word. So, we thank you.

I also want to thank all of you who came and prayed for my dad and my family. A couple weeks ago my Dad had triple bypass surgery, and it was such a blessing for my family and me that so many people from Redeemer came up to the Hospital to pray with us. His surgery went well, and he is recovering, but my family wants to thank you for your prayers for him and our family.

This week as we continue in our study of Luke we come across a familiar passage.

The Lord's Prayer is maybe one of the most well-known parts of the bible. It is a prayer that many people know by heart, football teams say it before a game, I saw it on a tv show I was watching this week, and while, we know this prayer so well, we know it so little. (Jeremias)

So, this morning rather than focus all our time on the prayer itself, I want to spend our time focusing on one important point in the prayer that will help us understand all of the parables and teachings of Jesus after the prayer. My hope is that by exploring one idea in particular, it will allow us to understand and appreciate the rest of the prayer as a whole and will lead us to pray with greater confidence and dependence. If you are interested in a deeper dive on The Lord's Prayer itself, I encourage you to go to our website and check out the 6-part Lord's Prayer sermon series from a few years back.

(Intro:How are the followers of Jesus to be known?)

Look with me at Luke 11:1

Luke 11:1

11:1 It happened that while Jesus was praying in a certain place, after He had finished, one of His disciples said to Him, “Lord, teach us to pray just as John also taught his disciples.”

-In Jesus day it was common for different teachers to give their followers a special prayer that marked them as a follower of a certain rabbi or teacher. For example, the followers of John the Baptist had their own prayer, the Pharisees had their own prayer. So here the disciples ask Jesus for a prayer that will be a sign and token of his followers. How will the followers of Jesus be known?

(Point 1:God is our Father)

Luke 11:2

² And He said to them, “When you pray, say:

‘Father, hallowed be Your name.

“Father”---The first word of Jesus’ prayer is easily the most shocking part of the Lord’s Prayer. And I think the most important. With this one Word “Father,” Jesus is turning over everything that was ever taught about the nature of God.

A)No one ever prayed like this...especially in Jesus time.

Jewish people in Jesus day never referred to God as their Father. Of all the massive amounts of writing done in Jesus time, no one has ever produced a single instance in Palestinian Judaism where a single person ever addresses God as “Father.”

It was not only unheard of by the Jews in Jesus day, but even in the Old Testament, this is extremely rare. God is only referred to as “Father” 15 times in the Old Testament(typically as the Father of Israel/many people). The thought of God being a personal Father was scandalous.

To the religious leaders of the time, Jesus referring to God as “Father” would be considered highly irreverent and blasphemous.

John 5:18 confirms this:

This was why the Jews were seeking to kill him(Jesus), because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.

So when I say that no one had ever prayed like this, I mean it.

B) But this is always how Jesus prayed. Every time we see Jesus pray in the Bible, he calls God his Father. When he raises Lazarus, his prayers in the Garden of Gethsemane, the High Priestly Prayer, every time Jesus calls upon his Father.

So, To Call God “Father” was new something totally new that started with Jesus. And this trend is even reflected in the scriptures. Remember how God is only referred to as “Father” 15 times in the Old Testament? In the Gospels alone we see God called “Father” over 170 times.

C)And if we look again at Luke 11:2! Not only is Jesus referring to God as Father, he is inviting, and authorizing his followers to do the same!

-When you pray, say: “Our Father.”

J.I. Packer in his book *Knowing God*

“A Christian is one who has God as Father.”

So the Answer to the Disciples question of “How will the Followers of Jesus be known? Is that God is our Father. It is the key distinguishing attribute of the followers of Jesus Christ. We are distinguished from the world around us because we know God as Father.

J.I. Packer continues-

“If you want to judge how well a person understands Christianity, find out how much he makes of the thought of being God’s child, and having God as his Father. If this is not the thought that prompts and controls his worship and prayers and his whole outlook on life, it means that he does not understand Christianity very well at all. For everything that Christ taught, everything that makes the New Testament new, and better than the Old, everything that is distinctively Christian as oppose to

merely Jewish, is summed up in the knowledge of the Fatherhood of God. **Father is the Christian name for God”**

Father is a loaded term for all of us. Because all of us have earthly human Fathers, it is impossible for us not to apply our preconceived notions about our earthly Fathers onto our heavenly Father.

-For some of us, we have wonderful earthly Fathers.

-Maybe the characteristics you associate with your Father are love, kindness, wisdom, sacrificial, comfort, friendship, generosity, patience.

-And while this is hard for us to imagine, the scriptures promise us that our heavenly Father is even better than our earthly Fathers

-For some of us, the topic of Fatherhood is difficult because your earthly Father was either painfully absent from your life, or perhaps he was painfully present in your life.

-Maybe the Characteristics you associate with your Father are anger, severe discipline, harsh demands and expectations, abuse of authority, humiliation, guilt, absence, adultery, abuse.

-And even though the scriptures tell us of a God in heaven who loves you, it is hard for you even to imagine what that looks like.

Thankfully Jesus gives us all a glimpse into his unique relationship with his Father.

If we are to pray as Jesus Prays, we must see God as Jesus sees God.

Often Jesus has a special word that he uses for his Father- “Abba.” We see Jesus use this word regularly and it is a vitally important word. We know it is important because Jesus’ disciples always made special care to preserve the Aramaic word “Abba” among the Greek new testament, precisely because it was such a precious word to the followers of Jesus.

- 1) “Abba” is intimate- “Abba” is the word Jesus used to address his own Father, when we say “Abba, Father” we are speaking Jesus and God’s personal language! That is why the early church preserved this Aramaic word in the Greek text because it is truly how our Lord Jesus spoke to his

Father. But it also shows us the closeness of the relationship between Jesus and his Father that he is inviting us to be a part of.

- 2) “Abba is simple”: Just by hearing this word you can see that “Abba” is a very simple word, so simple that a very small child could say it. And that is kind of the point; this is a babbling sound that even a child can get out. Perhaps this word could be even a child’s first word much like “Dada.” Like “Dada,” for a child who is very limited by nature of being a child, “Dada” becomes a word that means a variety of different things. For a little one who can’t feed himself, “Dada” can mean feed me. For a child who is frustrated “Dada” can mean help. For a child who is hurt “Dada” can mean comfort.

And spiritually, this is the state all of us come before God in. For all of us our first spiritual utterance is “Abba, Father” Jesus understands that we do not have the perfect prayers planned out or that we even will know what to say, but it is comforting to know that he simply asks us to cry out to our “Abba, Father” confident that our Father knows what we need before we even ask.(Matthew 6:8)

- 3) “Abba” shows our dependence: Abba is not only a simple word it is a posture towards God. It is a word that indicates utter reliance and dependence. I am not sure if you are aware of this, but children can’t do anything for themselves(At least mine cant). They are dependent on their mother and father for food, shelter, cleaning...basically everything. By Calling God “Abba,” we are admitting that we don’t have the resources to do life on our own because of our helpless spiritual state. A complete and utter reliance on God for the resources to do life, from our daily bread to forgiveness of sins, to the grace to forgive others we are dependent on God to provide these things for us.

Even when you grew up, you still called your Father “Abba,” you never grow out of your need for your Father and dependence on him!

Our Father is a Good Father

The precious gift of being able to call God “Abba” is something that should fill our hearts with joyous expectation and confidence that **God is our Father** and that **he will care for his children.**

Luke 11:5-8

⁵ Then He said to them, “Suppose one of you has a friend, and goes to him at midnight and says to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves; ⁶ for a friend of mine has come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him’; ⁷ and from inside he answers and says, ‘Do not bother me; the door has already been shut and my children and I are in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything.’ ⁸ I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet, because of his persistence, he will get up and give him as much as he needs.

In any other context, these verses just don't make sense. Is God the grumpy homeowner who just wants to be left alone?

And are we the annoying, irresponsible neighbor?!

No! But If a grumpy homeowner honors his neighbor's persistence, how much more will our good Father listen to his children's persistent prayers?

How much more will our Father in heaven hear the needs of his children, who need him on a daily basis.

So Jesus Encourages us to persist!

Luke 11:9-10

⁹ “So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ¹⁰ For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it will be opened.

Jesus encourages his children to ask, seek and knock. Notice the increasing level of activity.

This is what it means to be persistent. To keep asking, and seeking and knocking (like the persistent neighbor.)

Ask-We realize our lack and ask for help

-Asking is hard sometimes because it requires humility. It requires that we give up our pride and self-dependence and look outside of ourselves for answers and help.

-If we are to pray as Jesus desires, if we are to ask...we must humble ourselves before the Lord

-My First 2 years of teaching I didn't ask for help ever, because I was prideful. I didn't want anyone to know that I didn't know anything, but everyone knew I didn't know anything because I was a first-year teacher. And all my peers who were humble and had mentors help them were growing and becoming better band directors, and I was stagnant.

-Many of us rarely ask God for anything, because we cannot think of anything that we need that we cannot get for ourselves, or buy for ourselves or work towards ourselves or train for ourselves

-If we don't see a need in our lives that we cannot attain or accomplish for ourselves, maybe we don't desire the right things.

-Jesus is asking us trust in the Lord with all of our heart and to lean not on our own understanding (Proverbs 3:5-6)

Seek-Not only experiencing need but getting up and looking for it.

-Seeking implies action.

Knock-Asking-Acting-Persevering. Someone who keeps knocking on a closed door.

Jesus is saying "Keep asking, seeking and knocking" Just like the persistent neighbor!

The first part of each statement is our action- Ask, Seek Knock.

The Response to each of these is God's Work- "It will be given," You shall find," "The Door will be opened."

Those who ask, seek and knock, are those who are persistent and believe that God will answer. And he always answers.

This is how Jesus prayed **Luke 22:14**

And being in agony, he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

Ask, Seek, knock is Jesus calling you to a passionate life of persistent prayer to (reliance on, vulnerability with, intimacy with, humility towards) your Father in heaven.

We knock until our hands are bruised because our bruised hands value what Jesus offers us more than any of the things we could ever gain for ourselves.

G.B Caird reminds us-

“God does not have to be waked or cajoled into giving us what we need...his choicest blessings are reserved for those who will value them and show their appreciation by asking until they receive.”

Luke 11:11-13

¹¹ Now suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he? ¹² Or if he is asked for an egg, he will not give him a scorpion, will he? ¹³ If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?”

My son James, doesn't ask as much as he screams in our face, but he has never missed a meal, we have never not changed his diaper, and by all accounts, I am not a great parent...I have no idea what I am doing. In fact, it is so hard for me to think of a good thing that he could ask for that I wouldn't try my hardest to get for him.

If you then being evil(me) know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him.

Our Father in heaven always gives his children good gifts, in fact, nothing but the best.

What is the best thing that he could give us?

What is the best thing that week could receive from our Father?

-Financial Freedom? A Spouse or relationship? Material possessions?

Galatians 4:4-7

⁴ But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, ⁵ to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. ⁶ And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" ⁷ So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

What is the best thing our Father could possibly give us? Himself!

-While we were slaves to sin, at the right time God sent his only Son into the world to die on a cross so that those who would put their faith in him would become sons and daughters of righteousness.

-And he places into the heart of his children the Holy Spirit, a helper who reveals sin in our lives and illuminates the truth of the scriptures to us and causes us to cry out "Abba, Father!"

-So, Redeemer, if you are a follower, you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son than an heir. And by this, the world will know us, that we know as God "Our Father."

Amen

Prayer ministry-

During this time we have an opportunity to practice what we preach, to come before our Father in prayer as his beloved children.

-Maybe this morning you are a follower of Jesus, but rather than living like a son, you still live like a slave. Rather than seeing God as a good Father who you expect to love, protect, and care for you, you see God as a master who you expect to punish you.

-Maybe your relationship with your Father affects your relationship with your heavenly Father, and you need to approach him with a fellow believer and pray together to your good Father.

-Come before the Lord in prayer.