

Avails Much 5 – Keep Knocking God Answers

Dr. John Carmichael

[Luk 11:5-13 NASB95] 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?"

- "I can't pray for that!" "What if 'no' is God's answer?"
- Jesus illustrates prayer with persistence through the parable of the midnight visitor.
- The lesson: Prayer is not about reluctance on God's part, but persistence and faith on ours.
- God is generous, and His greatest gift is Himself through the Holy Spirit.

What does God want us to know about persistent prayer from this passage?

Here are four powerful truths Jesus taught about persistent prayer.

I. The Call to Bold Persistence in Prayer

- [Luk 11:5-8 NASB95] 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.
 - Unseasonable hour for a non-emergency request concerning decorum.
 - Answered because of persistence not relationship.
 - NET Bible notes: The term ἀναίδεια (anaideia) is hard to translate. It refers to a combination of ideas, a boldness that persists over time, or "audacity," which comes close. It most likely describes the one making the request, since the unit's teaching is an exhortation about persistence in prayer. Some translate the term "shamelessness"
- [Heb 4:16 NASB95] 16 Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.
- Keep knocking. Don't let unanswered prayers silence you. Be bold even when it's "midnight."

II. The Assurance of God's Response

- [Luk 11:9-10 NASB95] 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.
 - The three present imperatives in this verse (Ask...seek...knock) are probably intended to call for a repeated or continual approach before God.

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- b. [Mat 7:7 NASB95] 7 "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.
- c. LITS: To ask is general, but to seek is to search for a particular thing, and to knock is to go where the particular thing will be found.
- d. Pray expecting results. God always hears and always responds.

III. The Father's Goodness in Answering Prayer

- a. [Luk 11:11-12 NASB95] 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?
 - i. The two questions of vv. 11-12 expect the answer, "No father would do this!"
- b. [Jas 1:17 NASB95] 17 Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.
- c. Trust God's character. He will not give you a "snake" when you ask for bread. His answers are always good.

IV. The Greatest Gift: The Holy Spirit

- a. [Luk 11:13 NASB95] 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?"
 - i. LITS: The Spirit guided and empowered Jesus; when the Spirit comes upon his followers, they will be empowered to continue what Jesus began.
 - ii. The Holy Spirit higher than anything you can ask for from an earthly perspective. If God will give the greater; He will certainly give the lesser.
- b. Power when the Spirit comes upon you. [Act 1:8 NASB95] 8 but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."
- c. Seek more than blessings. Seek the Holy Spirit. The Spirit equips us with wisdom, strength, and supernatural empowerment.

- Persistent prayer with faith leads to God's generous and Spirit-filled answer.
- God is not reluctant to bless His people.
- He delights to give us good gifts including the Holy Spirit.
- Keep asking, keep seeking, keep knocking; He will answer.