



Lord, Teach Us to Pray

Text: Luke 11

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Overview: Luke's account of the life of Jesus includes a remarkable section on the importance, pattern, and expectations of prayer. In response to his disciples' request, Jesus taught believers to approach God lovingly and reverently; to request important things from God while being content; to come clean before God who already knows our hearts; to transform our lives to become more like Christ; and to protect us from the temptations we must face. Jesus then encourages all believers to continue praying even when it seems pointless to do so, and He reminds us that God's goodness is not determined by our expectations being met, but by the fullness of the Spirit for those who ask accordingly.

01. Every believer longs to pray, has an open invitation to pray, and has every reason to pray; therefore we must take time to pray and receive instruction on how to pray.

02. Every church needs to pray, has an open invitation to pray, and has every reason to pray; therefore we must take advantage of opportunities to pray and patiently participate as others pray.

1. Compare Matthew and Luke's versions of the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-5). What similarities do you find? What differences do you find? How do we account for both similarities and differences?

2. Consider the following from Lehman Strauss' *Sense and Nonsense about Prayer*: "Have you ever listened to yourself pray? Did it ever occur to you to think through and analyze your prayers, to examine precisely what you are saying? Do it sometime. Listen carefully the next time you or someone else is asked to pray. Then make notes. You might be convinced that those prayers did not make much of an impression on God." Without becoming too narrow or too judgmental, give this a try.

3. Read Psalm 66:18, Proverbs 28:13, and 1 Peter 3:7. What do these texts suggest about possible hindrances to prayer? Have you ever found yourself avoiding prayer because you are also trying to avoid dealing with ongoing sin and difficult people in your life? What remedy does Scripture provide to enable us to pray in faith again?

4. How might we know the difference between rightly persisting in prayer and stubbornly refusing to accept God's verdict to our request? When is it time to stop asking, seeking, or knocking? What aspects in the Lord's Prayer should lead us to keep asking, keep seeking, and keep knocking regardless of the results?

5. The basic biblical model of prayer is for us to pray to the Father, through the Son, in the power of the Holy Spirit. Why is it appropriate for us to pray primarily to the Father? In what ways does the mediation of the Son make prayer a spiritual reality? How does the Holy Spirit help us to pray? See Ephesians 1:15-23, Hebrews 7:23-8:2, and Romans 8:23-27 for further insight.

For Further Reading: Donald Whitney, *Praying the Bible* (Crossway, 2015)