

CALL – Lord, Teach Us to Pray

Luke 11:1–13

Introduction

Good morning Church! Praise the Lord! It is a joy to worship our Lord together once again. Today we continue our sermon series, CALL – God Hears You. During the past three weeks, God has been teaching us wonderful lessons about prayer. In our first message, we learned from Job that God hears us even in the middle of pain and suffering. No matter how difficult life becomes, we should never stop calling upon the Lord because He is always listening to His children. In our second message, we studied the prayer of Jabez and learned that God delights in blessing those who seek Him with humble hearts and desire to glorify His name. Last Sunday, through the life of Moses, we learned that prayer is not only about ourselves but also about standing in the gap for others. Moses prayed for a sinful nation, and we were challenged to become people who intercede for our families, our church, and our community. Today we come to one of the greatest passages of prayer in the entire Bible. This time, we are not learning from Job, Jabez, or Moses. Today, we are learning directly from Jesus Himself. If there is anyone qualified to teach us how to pray, it is our Lord Jesus Christ. He often withdrew to lonely places to pray. Before choosing the twelve disciples, He prayed all night. Before performing great miracles, He prayed. Before going to the cross, He prayed. Prayer was not simply part of Jesus' ministry; prayer was the heartbeat of His relationship with the Father. As the disciples watched Jesus pray, they noticed something different. They had seen many religious leaders pray, but Jesus prayed with intimacy, confidence, peace, and power. His prayers were not empty words. They came from a close relationship with the Father. One day, after Jesus finished praying, one of His disciples came to Him with a simple request: "Lord, teach us to pray." That request is still important today because every believer needs to learn how to pray. Prayer is one of the greatest privileges God has given us, yet many Christians struggle with it. Sometimes we do not know what to say. Sometimes we become discouraged because our prayers seem unanswered. Sometimes our prayer life becomes dry. The good news is that Jesus is still willing to teach His people how to pray.

I. A Desire to Learn Prayer

Luke 11:1 says, "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.'" Notice that the disciples did not ask Jesus to teach them how to perform miracles. They did not ask Him to teach them how to preach powerful sermons. They did not ask Him to teach them how to heal the sick. Instead, they said, "Lord, teach us to pray." Why did they ask this question? Church, before we can do great things for God, we must first spend time with God. A strong prayer life always comes before a strong ministry.

This request also teaches us something about humility. The disciples admitted they still had much to learn. They had been walking with Jesus, listening to His teaching, and watching His miracles, yet they still said, "Teach us." A growing Christian never stops learning. The moment we think we already know everything about prayer is the moment we stop growing. Every one of us can grow deeper in our prayer life. Even pastors need to pray, "Lord, teach me to pray." Even mature believers should pray, "Lord, teach me to pray." Prayer is not something we master; it is a lifelong journey of knowing God more deeply.

There is another beautiful lesson here. Jesus did not criticize the disciples for asking this question. He did not say, "You should already know this." Instead, He immediately began to teach them. What a wonderful Savior we have! He delights in teaching those who genuinely want to learn. James 4:8 says, "Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you." Whenever we sincerely desire to know God better, He welcomes us into His presence. Church, the first step toward a powerful prayer life is simply having a desire to pray. God is not looking for perfect words. He is looking for hearts that desire Him.

Let me ask you a simple question this morning. When you wake up each day, what is your first desire? Is it your phone? Your work? Your schedule? Or is it to spend time with your Heavenly Father? Our priorities reveal the condition of our hearts. Jesus desired fellowship with the Father before anything else. If the Son of God depended on prayer every day, how much more do we need prayer? Martin Luther once said, "I have so much to do that I shall spend the first three hours in prayer." That sounds very different from our world today. We often say, "I am too busy to pray." But perhaps the truth is that we are too busy not to pray. Prayer is not wasting time; prayer is investing time with the One who controls all things.

Church, today let us make the same request the disciples made nearly two thousand years ago. Before asking God for blessings, before asking Him for answers, before asking Him for miracles, let us first pray, "Lord, teach us to pray." When God teaches us to pray, our families change, our churches change, and our lives change because prayer changes the person who prays before it changes the circumstances around them.

II. A Pattern for Prayer

After the disciples asked Jesus to teach them how to pray, Jesus did not simply tell them to pray more. He gave them a pattern for prayer. This passage is often called The Lord's Prayer, but it is better understood as the Disciples' Prayer, because Jesus was teaching His followers how they should pray. These are not empty words to repeat without thinking. Jesus was giving them a model that would shape their hearts every time they came into God's presence. Prayer is not about saying the right words. Prayer is about having the right relationship with God.

Jesus begins with one beautiful word: "Father." This is one of the greatest blessings we have as believers. Before Jesus came into this world, many people knew God as Creator, Judge, King, and Almighty Lord. Those are all true, but Jesus teaches us that through Him we can also call God our Father. This does not mean we lose our respect for Him. Instead, it means we have a close relationship with Him. A good father loves his children, listens to them, provides for them, corrects them, and protects them. Our Heavenly Father does all these things perfectly. Church, prayer is not speaking to a stranger. Prayer is talking to your loving Heavenly Father. Every time you pray, remember whose presence you are entering. You are speaking to the God who knows you, loves you, and calls you His child.

Jesus continues by saying, "Hallowed be Your name." Before Jesus teaches us to ask for anything, He teaches us to worship. God's name is already holy, but this prayer means, "Lord, may Your name be honored in my life." Church, the first purpose of prayer is not getting what we want. The first purpose of prayer is bringing glory to God. Before asking for blessings, we should first ask, "Lord, may my life honor You today." When our hearts are filled with worship, our prayers begin to change. Instead of focusing only on ourselves, we begin to focus on God's greatness. Psalm 29:2 says, "Ascribe to the Lord the glory due His name." True prayer always begins with worship because worship reminds us who God is and who we are.

Jesus then says, "Your kingdom come." This means we are asking God to accomplish His purposes on earth. It is easy to pray, "Lord, build my plans." Jesus teaches us to pray, "Lord, establish Your kingdom." Every Christian should desire to see more people come to know Christ, more families restored, more churches planted, and more lives transformed by the Gospel. Church, prayer changes our focus from our own kingdom to God's kingdom. Instead of asking, "Lord, what do I want?" we begin asking, "Lord, what do You want?" The greatest prayer is not, "My will be done," but "Your kingdom come."

Jesus continues, "Give us each day our daily bread." Notice that Jesus does not say yearly bread or monthly bread. He says daily bread. Why? Because God wants His children to depend on Him every single day. When Israel was in the wilderness, God gave them

manna every morning. They could not store it for the future because God was teaching them daily dependence. Church, God wants us to trust Him one day at a time. We often worry about tomorrow, next month, or next year, but Jesus reminds us that our Father already knows what we need. Daily bread represents everything necessary for life. It includes food, strength, wisdom, health, work, peace, and every good gift that comes from God. Every breath we take is a gift from Him. Every meal we eat is a gift from Him. James 1:17 reminds us, "Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above." Prayer teaches us to depend upon God instead of depending only upon ourselves.

Jesus then says, "Forgive us our sins, for we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us." Church, Jesus is speaking to believers who already belong to God. This is not about earning salvation. It is about maintaining close fellowship with our Heavenly Father. Sin damages our fellowship with God. Therefore, we should regularly confess our sins before Him. First John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous, so that He will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness." But notice something important. Jesus also connects receiving forgiveness with extending forgiveness. A forgiven heart becomes a forgiving heart. We cannot ask God to forgive us while refusing to forgive others. Forgiveness does not mean pretending the hurt never happened. It means releasing the desire for revenge and trusting God to be the Judge. When we forgive others, we reflect the mercy that God has shown us through Jesus Christ.

Finally, Jesus says, "Lead us not into temptation." God never tempts anyone to sin, but Jesus teaches us to pray for God's protection against temptation and the attacks of the enemy. Every day we face spiritual battles. Satan desires to discourage us, deceive us, and draw us away from God. Jesus teaches us to recognize our weakness and depend upon God's strength. We should never think, "I am strong enough to face temptation alone." Instead, we should humbly pray, "Lord, keep me close to You today. Strengthen me to obey You. Help me to walk in holiness." Prayer prepares us for the battles we cannot yet see.

Church, notice the beautiful order of this prayer. It begins with God's glory, then God's kingdom, then our daily needs, then our forgiveness, and finally our protection. Jesus is teaching us that prayer is not simply bringing a shopping list to God. Prayer is learning to love what God loves and desire what God desires. The more we pray according to this pattern, the more our hearts become like the heart of Christ.

III. A Persistence in Prayer

After teaching the pattern of prayer, Jesus tells a story. He says, "Suppose one of you has a friend, and goes to him at midnight and says to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves.'" In

those days, hospitality was very important. A traveler arrived unexpectedly, and the man had no bread to offer his guest. So even though it was midnight, he went to his friend's house and knocked on the door. The friend inside answered, "Do not bother me; the door has already been shut and my children and I are in bed." From a human perspective, it seemed like the worst possible time to ask for help. Most people would have given up and gone home. But this man refused to leave. He kept knocking because he knew his need was real.

Jesus says the friend finally got up, not because they were close friends, but because of the man's persistence. Church, Jesus is not teaching that God is unwilling to answer our prayers. God is not like the sleepy friend who must be persuaded. God is loving, willing, and compassionate. The point of the story is that if an ordinary human friend eventually responds because of persistence, how much more will our loving Heavenly Father respond to His children? Jesus is encouraging us never to lose heart in prayer.

Then Jesus gives one of the greatest promises in the Bible. "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you." Notice the three words: Ask. Seek. Knock. Each one becomes stronger than the previous one. Asking is bringing our request to God. Seeking means pursuing God with all our hearts. Knocking means refusing to give up until the door opens according to God's perfect will. In the original language, these words carry the idea of continuous action. Jesus is saying, "Keep asking. Keep seeking. Keep knocking." Prayer is not always a one-time conversation. Sometimes God answers immediately. Sometimes He asks us to wait. Sometimes He uses the waiting to strengthen our faith and draw us closer to Him.

Church, many believers stop praying too soon. We pray for a few days, a few weeks, or a few months, and then we become discouraged. But Jesus tells us to continue praying. Think about Hannah. She prayed for years before Samuel was born. Think about Elijah. He prayed seven times before the rain came. Think about the early church. They prayed continually for Peter until God opened the prison doors. God often works while we are waiting. Waiting does not mean God is absent. Waiting often means God is preparing something greater than we can see.

Let me encourage you today. Perhaps you have been praying for your children to return to God. Do not stop praying. Perhaps you have been praying for healing. Do not stop praying. Perhaps you have been praying for your marriage, your ministry, your future, or someone who does not know Christ. Do not stop praying. Keep asking. Keep seeking. Keep knocking. God's delays are never God's denial. He always answers according to His perfect wisdom and His perfect timing.

IV. A Perfect Father Who Gives Good Gifts

Jesus ends this teaching by helping us understand the heart of God. He asks, "Now which one of you fathers will his son ask for a fish, and instead of a fish, he will give him a snake?" Then He continues, "Or if he asks for an egg, his father will not give him a scorpion, will he?" The answer is obvious. Even imperfect earthly fathers want to give good gifts to their children. They protect them. They provide for them. They do not intentionally harm them. Then Jesus says something even more beautiful. "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?"

Those words "How much more" should fill our hearts with confidence. If imperfect fathers know how to love their children, imagine how perfectly our Heavenly Father loves His children. Sometimes we think God is reluctant to answer our prayers. Sometimes we imagine He is distant or unconcerned. Jesus removes those wrong ideas. Our Father delights in giving what is truly good. Sometimes His answer is Yes. Sometimes His answer is No. Sometimes His answer is Wait. But every answer comes from a Father's heart that loves His children completely.

Notice that Jesus ends by mentioning the greatest gift of all—the Holy Spirit. God does not simply give us blessings; He gives us Himself. Through the Holy Spirit, we receive comfort, wisdom, strength, guidance, conviction, peace, and power to live for Christ. The greatest answer to prayer is not always a changed circumstance. Sometimes the greatest answer is God's presence with us in the middle of our circumstances. When the Holy Spirit fills our lives, He helps us pray, strengthens our faith, and reminds us that we are never alone.

Church, what have we learned today? We learned that prayer begins with a desire to know God. We learned that Jesus gave us a pattern for prayer that starts with God's glory before our own needs. We learned that we should never give up praying because our Father hears every sincere prayer. Finally, we learned that our Heavenly Father is perfectly good and always gives what is best for His children.

As we close this message, let us remember the journey God has taken us on through this series. Job taught us that God hears us in our suffering. Jabez taught us to pray with faith and expect God to work. Moses taught us to stand in the gap and pray for others. Today, Jesus has taught us how to pray. Church, prayer is not a duty to be completed; it is a relationship to be enjoyed. Prayer is not our last option when everything else fails; prayer is our first response because we belong to a loving Father. This week, do not simply say prayers. Spend time with your Father. Keep asking. Keep seeking. Keep knocking. He knows your needs, He hears your voice, and He loves you more than you can imagine. May we become a church that prays faithfully, trusts completely, and walks closely with our Heavenly Father every day. Amen.

