

Vertical Church Series, Part 5
“Pray with Persistence” Luke 11:5-13

Luke 11:1 **Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place,**

Now once again we see that Jesus had certain places that He went to pray!

A) Private place, private time – was important to Him.

B) Disciples said: **Teach us to pray** – we spent the first two weeks of this series considering the model of prayer – guide – framework – Matthew 6

C) **This is two yrs later** – gives them the model again in v. 2-4

We noted that the Basic outline of the model is this

- 1) Affirm your relationship - You start with Father – intimacy –
- 2) Declare His greatness – Hallowed .. You are great!
- 3) Surrender your will “Your kingdom is more important than my kingdom – Your deal is greater than my deal.”
- 4) Declare your dependency - I am dependent upon You for provision, for forgiveness, and leading

B) That is the model – Jesus essentially gives the model – but He doesn’t stop there. So glad He didn’t **From there Jesus launches into a discussion on the thing that probably upsets us the most about prayer.**

A) What do you do when it seems like God doesn’t respond to your prayer?

Bb) What do you do when it seems like there is no answer. –

1) Sometimes we pray and it seems like God just doesn’t hear us – no answer. – CEILING

B) Ever been there? – Not just me!

C) Listen **What you do in that moment will ultimately decide the outcome of your life in that situation.**

1) Will you take matters into your own hands? Or will you wait on the perfect timing of God?

See, God always answers prayer – Yes / NO / or wait.

A) When does God say YES ? He always answers yes – when we are praying according to Scripture!

B) Paul’s prayer for the church of Ephesus! 1:16-20

- He prays that they would **grow in their knowledge** of who Jesus is.
- He prays better **understanding of our Hope**
- He prays .. better **understanding of our power** {Brought Christ from the dead}

- Better **understanding of Christ's glory**

C) You pray that for yourself – God is going to answer that – Pray that for our church - -

1) Might not happen over night – but that prayer is inspired.

Pray help me *Grow in Love* – we know that is a part of God's will

A) Pray *for boldness* to share your faith – He will answer that – Gave His spirit to make us bold.

B) **Wisdom**: James 1:5 Ask – He gives freely – meaning – no strings attached.

C) He always answers prayers yes that are according to His will. -

When does God say no?

A) Could be that He has a different plan – we don't see the big picture.

B) Other times – wrong motives - James 4:3

3 When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures. NIV

SELFISH MOTIVES

C) Our heavenly Father never acts as an enabler to aid us in our selfishness or sinful desires.

So God's answer is often YES / sometimes NO – but frequently – His answer is wait. Or Not yet! –

Sometimes comes across as silence.

A) And this is the one that we hate – because – we want an answer NOW!!!

B) Lord I need it NOW!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

C) Here is the question that Jesus answers in our text today:

1) What are we supposed to do when the answer is wait- or seems like there is **NO** answer.

D) Jesus addressed that subject with a parable here in Luke 11

5 And He said to them, "Which of you shall have a friend, and go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves; 6 for a friend of mine has come to me on his journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; 7 and he will answer from within and say, 'Do not trouble me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give to you'? 8 I say to you, though he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will rise and give him as many as he needs.

So you have one friend unexpectedly arrives at midnight – waking up his friend. – Nothing to serve him. –

A) Custom in that culture – You were required – expected – give them a meal.

B) So that friend goes to his neighbor friend and wakes him up – I need your help. – Need some bread.

C) V.7 That friend responds – **Don't bother me – already tucked in.**

Now to fully understand this story – we need to understand middle eastern culture. –

A) The houses they lived in were usually small - only one or two rooms. – The whole family slept together

B) **If it was a Big family** – the men would sleep in one room and the girls would all sleep in another room.

C) Best way to get a picture of what this looked like is to picture in your mind – **TENT CAMPING ?** Ever gone tent camping with your kids?

D) Tent camping with your kids – all in one big tent – tucked in sleeping in a row.

1) What happens When one of your sons says – I have to go to bathroom? Tough – hold it - **Daughter, he might pee on me** - Disrupts everything.

E) So you take care of that all before, **RIGHT?**

Everyone gone to bathroom – brushed teeth – everything you need? - **Ok turning off the light**

A) Camping – no electricity – so you have a lantern – Propane deal

B) That is the picture – except – their lantern was **oil, a wick, a fire – no matches.**

1) So to get up would be a big deal – disrupt the whole family.

C) So that is the picture – the guy who didn't want to get up was not being lazy so much as practical –
1) Don't want to wake up the whole family – go away!

D) But the guy doesn't go away: He keeps knocking - Jesus says v. 8 **I say to you, though he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will rise and give him as many as he needs.**

The NEIGHBOR is persistent and so out of sheer frustration the guy gets up, disrupts the family – opens the door gives his rude friend the bread – and says ok now leave me alone! – That is the picture.

A) Now the **interesting thing about parables** is this – When you are listening to a parable – you are thinking –

B)Someone in this parable is me///– someone in this parable is God!

1) Now in a parable like the prodigal son – that is easy to figure out.

I am like the rebellious son & God is like the gracious father – who forgives and takes his son back. - That is awesome – I get that- easy very clear.

A)Can you imagine the disciples trying to figure this one out.

B) **“This is about prayer** – so we must be the guy knocking on the door at midnight because – we often have unexpected needs that come up.

C)So we are the guy knocking on the door – but that would make God ////

1)THE GRUMPY OLD GUY ON THE INSIDE – SAYING DON’T BOTHER ME!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Surely that is not who God is, right?

A)Jesus told a similar parable another time. Luke 18 – Luke 18 says this about the reason he TOLD this parable.

Luke 18:1

Then Jesus told His disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. NIV

B)So once again the issue is persistence in prayer!

C)**The Parable is about a Judge** – Jesus describes him this way – He didn’t fear God nor did he care about men.

1)He is a mean guy.

D)This Judge is approached by a widow who has a need – she comes to him and he turns her away – but she keeps coming back – she is persistent.

E)Finally the Judge says I am going to help her not because I fear God or care about pp – **but just to get her to leave me ALONE.**

So in these two parables it is easy to figure out who we are! – We are like the widow with the need and the guy knocking at the door.

A)But that would make God seem like – the Judge who doesn’t fear God or care about pp

and the grumpy old guy on the inside of the house – SAYING LEAVE ME ALONE.

B)THE MORAL OF THE STORY SEEMS CLEAR

C)If you need something from God – you just keep banging on the door long enough and he will eventually get up – not because **HE LOVES YOU!**

1)BUT BECAUSE YOU ARE BUGGING HIM TO DEATH!

D) Great lesson today - Ok lets pray!

What is going on here? Jesus is creating a contrast - Jesus is using two extreme pictures to make His point

A) If the judge who doesn't care about pp

Aa) and the grumpy old neighbor who obviously is not stoked with his friend at that moment. –

B) If they get up – if they are moved by persistence.

C) How much more will your heavenly Father – who does care about pp – **Who loves you so much** – who is concerned about every aspect of your life.

1) Who says that He knows the number of hairs on your head.

C) If these guys are moved by persistence – how much more your heavenly Father.

That is abundantly clear here in our text – because Jesus frames this parable in two discussions that emphasize the relationship with God as our Dad

A) He begins the teaching on prayer by saying – Start by remembering – **God is Dad – He is Abba**

B) That is where you start – then notice the application of this parable

Luke 11:9-13

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.

C) Note this when Jesus says ask and seek and knock – the tense is in the present continuous sense.

1) Keep on asking, knocking and seeking

D) That is where we struggle isn't it – God doesn't answer immediately so we say to ourselves – I need to take care of this – I need to deal with this.

E) We think - God is either **uninterested or too busy** – So we take matters into our own hands –

1) DON'T DO THAT !

Jesus says: **Keep on knocking, asking, seeking!**

A) Here is the PROMISE –

10 For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

B) Now here is the contrast **11 If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? 12 Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? 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!"**

C)The ultimate gift is the Holy Spirit!

D)Here is the point – You guys being evil – know how to give good gifts.....

But Your heavenly Father is not evil – Perfect in love and righteousness

A)If you being evil know how to give good gifts – how much more so your **perfect in everyway heavenly Father.** {KEEP ASKINGKNOCKING

B)So here is the question: Why does the Lord have us Wait sometimes?

A)Why does He want us to persist in prayer ? 3 reasons

Bb) **#1 For accuracy** – See He knows what we really need and He knows what we don't need.

1)Sometimes He has us wait – so we can discover that what we thought we needed is not what we really needed at all.

C)Persisting in prayer sometimes brings our real needs to light

Lord give me him/her - He does! – Lord take him/her away!

A)Scariest verses in the Bible – Psalm 106:15 – The people of Israel tested God in the wilderness – complaining – give us meat

B) He answered their request but sent leanness to their souls. Psalm 106:15

1)They found out the hard way that is not what they needed at all!

B) Lord please give me that job – we wait – keep praying –

1)We wait – Keep praying – Lord just give me **A** job

C)Boom –SEE that is where He wanted us to get – Great job

D)Back to Father – greatness – Your kingdom – Your will be done, not mine

1)Surrender my will – I am going to quit dictating to You –what I want and s

We live in the age of impulse buying Americans \$4 billion on impulse purchases every year.–

A)**Get us in trouble** – discover I really didn't need that – now I am stuck with it

Bb)My dad was a genius – Mom wanted something – ok – save

C))Here is what happened – I really didn't want that – **something better comes along**

D)Practice that with our staff – Pray – really need that – Don't want to experiment, God's money or His pp

E)Sometimes discover – really didn't want that that bad – Jason -

Another reason the Lord makes us wait – persist is #2 FOR Dependency

A)We are dependent on him

B)Love it when my kids still need me 3 kids all older

–

1)Aaron married – out of the house

2)Amy just moved out with friends

3)Amanda senior – **very independent**

C)They just don't need me anymore – When they call - Dad help – Son advice –

1)Absolutely –

D)Listen - It is good for me to feel they are dependent on me for something.

1) **Still have a purpose in their lives**

In our relationship with God the opposite is true it is good for us to feel dependent on Him.

A)That is the battle - since the garden – live independently from God – “You will be like God.....”

B)Our struggle comes down to this – If God doesn't answer - **am I going to take matters into my own hands – or will I wait for him to answer ?**

C)Will I cry out to him in desperation!

1) – or I am so independent and self sufficient that I rarely cry out to Him

Promise

Jeremiah 33:1-3

Moreover the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah a second time, while he was still shut up in the court of the prison, {Maybe you feel like you are in a prison of sort – feel trapped} 2 "Thus says the Lord who made it, the Lord who formed it to establish it(the Lord is His name): 3 'Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.'

CALL CRY - DESPERATE

Here is an interesting thought at least to me!

A)There are literally 100's of times in the Bible where God's pp are encouraged to cry out to Him.

B)Or times where it says – And God heard their cry!

C)Cry communicates several things – Desperateness – Cry out when we are desperate – Dad help –

D) Urgency – also Dependency

1)Volume – We don't whisper when we are crying out – **The house is on fire – get out!**

The sheer fact that the Bible mentions calling out – crying out – so often – I think there is something to it!

A) Part of the Jewish culture – but it is not so much a part of ours.

B) Mild mannered – image conscious Americans

B) James 5:16 declares – **the fervent prayers of a righteous man result in much.**

1) Made righteous by Jesus – so what is missing ?
Could it be fervent prayer?

C) Fervent = having or displaying passionate intensity!

D) Isaiah 40:9 says, **“Lift up your voice with strength...”**

I think sometimes the Lord wants to pray with persistence because He wants us to come to that place of realizing – we are dependent on Him.

A) Like Israel marching around Jericho for 7 days – 13 times –

Aa) by the 5th time around I am sure they came to the conclusion – **“without God these walls are not coming down.”**

B) Praying with persistence is like marching around the walls of Jericho – 13 times – **It is meant to**

Accentuate our weakness and to elevate His greatness in our hearts

C) **Accentuate** our need to be dependent upon Him.

D) Sometimes – God will not move until we get there

So for accuracy – Dependency – #3 For Intimacy

A) God is smart and He knows the depravity of my heart –

B) If He gave me what I asked for the first time every time He knows – I would only come to Him when I needed something.

C) Praying with persistence compels us to the true center of prayer, which is not **something**, but **someone**.

C) What He is most interested in for me – is a relationship with Him.

D) Hey Rob I haven't seen u in a while – Keep coming back this is nice

Today we are celebrating communion – 2,000 yrs ago Jesus came – Died – open door – know God

A) Live in **RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM**. – We celebrate that relationship in communion.

B) No longer enemies of God – but His beloved Children through the work of Christ on the Cross.

He is making you wait – because He loves you and is seeking more intimate fellowship with Him.

C) The Cross of Jesus Christ **Magnifies God's desire to answer prayer!**

Romans 8:32 “Since God did not spare even His own Son but gave Him up for us all, won't He also give us everything else?”

Luke 12 Don't worry about provision – needs

Luke 12:31-32

31 But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you.

There it is again – Seek His kingdom – Persistent prayer prepares me for God's answer.

32 "Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

Pray with persistence – Don't resist it

He is making you wait – so you can discover what you really need.

He is making you wait – because you need to be more dependent on Him.

Things coming that will crush you unless you are dependent on Him.