

Luke 11:1 ¶ And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.

As this chapter opens, we find Jesus once again in prayer and His disciples close by. When He had finished praying, one of the disciples asks Him to teach them how they should pray. I think the context indicates that this question was prompted by a difference they heard in the prayers of Jesus as compared to the manner in which John the Baptist had instructed his disciples to pray. My guess is that they wondered at the familiarity with which He talked to His Father in heaven.

Luke 11:2 And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.

Luke 11:3 Give us day by day our daily bread.

Luke 11:4 And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

This model prayer is basically the same as recorded by Matthew except he adds another closing line: *“For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.”*

I don't think Jesus meant for His disciples to repeat this prayer by rote; He meant it to be an example.

- Our prayers should acknowledge God as our Father in Heaven, One who is beyond our full understanding and worthy of our worship. This address also affirms a loving relationship with Him as His children, as joint-heirs with Jesus. It also presupposes recognition of His loving authority and His wisdom as He responds to our prayers. Often that means His answer is “no” or “wait.” He know the resulting impact on our life for good or bad.”
- Our prayers should reflect a yearning for the coming of His Kingdom.
- Our hearts should reflect a desire to see God's will done on earth just as surely and readily as it is done in heaven; in other words, a desire for the time when we will live in His presence on the new earth—a time when sin is no more.
- We should ask Him to provide our physical needs for each day (with the expectation that He will I think is implied).
- We should acknowledge our sins and seek His forgiveness. We should also reflect a heart that is willing to forgive others who are under obligation to us in any way with the same heart that we are asking God to forgive us. Matthew's record is very explicit in declaring that our forgiveness is directly connected to our willingness to forgive.

Matthew 6:14–15 “For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

- The context of the last request connects it with deliverance, so I believe He is saying that we should seek God's protection from falling victim to the enticement to sin.
- Matthew encourages us to close on the high note of recognition of the power and authority of God who is able to do far beyond our expectations.

**Luke 11:5 And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves;
Luke 11:6 For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him?
Luke 11:7 And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee.
Luke 11:8 I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.**

Jesus follows up the model prayer with a word picture to encourage us to be diligent with our prayers. The scenario: Suppose you have a friend that shows up on your doorstep in the middle of the night and you have nothing to offer him to eat, so you go next door to your friend and ask to borrow some bread. Your "Friend" basically tells you to go away and stop bothering him; the door is closed, the kids are asleep and it would be too much trouble to get up. In spite of what he says, if you continue pleading with a sense of urgency, he will eventually get up and give you what you asked for just to get you to go away—not necessarily with the heart of a friend.

**Luke 11:9 And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.
Luke 11:10 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.**

Jesus now makes application from the story He just told.

Kenneth Wuest's expanded translation puts it like this: *"Keep on asking for something to be given, and it shall be given you. Keep on seeking and you shall find. Keep on reverently knocking and it shall be opened to you. For everyone who keeps on asking for something to be given, keeps on receiving, and he that keeps on seeking, keeps on finding, and to the one who keeps on reverently knocking, it shall be opened."*

In other words, sincere persistence is one of the keys to getting prayers answered.

**Luke 11:11 If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?
Luke 11:12 Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?
Luke 11:13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?**

Jesus next poses another scenario through a series of rhetorical questions to instruct our expectations regarding God's answer.

My paraphrase: If your son asks you for some bread, would you give him a rock? If he asks for some fish, would you give him a snake? If he asks for an egg, would you give him a scorpion?

The obvious answer to each question is "no." Jesus then explains that if we, sinful human beings, understand the need to provide good things to our children, should we not understand that God the Father will provide for us through the ministry of the Holy Spirit when we sincerely seek Him. Matthew uses the words "good things" rather than "the Holy Spirit." I think this is just a technicality since the Holy Spirit is the means by which the Father comforts us, teaches us, gifts us and supplies our every need.

I think it is important to note that God will respond to us as a loving parent—according to what He knows is "good" for us.

Luke 11:14 ¶ And he was casting out a devil, and it was dumb. And it came to pass, when the devil was gone out, the dumb spake; and the people wondered.

Luke 11:15 But some of them said, He casteth out devils through Beelzebub the chief of the devils.

Luke 11:16 And others, tempting *him*, sought of him a sign from heaven.

Luke 11:17 But he, knowing their thoughts, said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house *divided* against a house falleth.

Luke 11:18 If Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? because ye say that I cast out devils through Beelzebub.

Luke 11:19 And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast *them* out? therefore shall they be your judges.

Luke 11:20 But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.

Sometimes when I am reading through the gospels, I am curious as to the formatting of the original record; I can't help but wonder at the order of things. The connecting thought here seems to be the discernment of good and evil.

At this point Luke chooses to relate an incident when Jesus cast a devil from a person who could not speak with the result that the person began to talk. The people who witnessed this miracle were, of course, amazed. David Guzik provided some further insight regarding their reaction: "The Jews in Jesus' day had their own exorcists, who sought to cast demons out of people. But they believed that they had to have the demon reveal his name, or they could not cast the demon out....According to the Jewish thinking of that day, the demon was impossible to cast out because he made the man unable to speak, and unable to reveal the name of the demon."

Considering that type of thinking, some of those who witnessed the miracle concluded that Jesus' power over the devils came from Beelzebub, the chief of devils, another name for Satan. Others sought to test Him by asking for a sign from heaven that would prove His authority to be from God.

Jesus was aware of the differing opinions. He answered these thoughts with an argument of logic. A kingdom or house divided against itself is doomed to destruction. My paraphrase: How can Satan's kingdom prosper if he doesn't allow his demons to work their evil? So, why would he empower me to disrupt that activity? If you have determined that I can only cast out demons by the power of Satan, then you must deduce that to be true for all others who cast out demons. If, however, I am casting out demons by the power of God who has all power and authority, then you must admit that the kingdom of God is among you and my message is true.

Luke 11:21 When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace:

Luke 11:22 But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.

Jesus goes on to explain that it takes someone stronger than a well-armed man to be able to succeed in taking away his weapons and take what he wants away from him.

The implication—I am stronger than Satan to be able to gain the victory over him or any in his kingdom.

Luke 11:23 He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth.

Again, my paraphrase—Considering what I [Jesus] have just said, you are either on my side or you are on the side of my enemy [Satan]. You are either working with me or you are working against me. There is no middle ground.

Luke 11:24 When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out.

Luke 11:25 And when he cometh, he findeth *it* swept and garnished.

Luke 11:26 Then goeth he, and taketh *to him* seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first.

Jesus goes on to explain that though the unclean spirit has been cast out, there is no guarantee that it won't try to come back and take up residence again. If he can't find another satisfactory host, he may decide to come back and check out his former host. If he just finds it swept clean and put in order and decorated (from the Greek), he may decide to bring a few friends to live with him with the end result being that the person is worse off than he was before.

Not said, but definitely implied is the need to replace the unclean spirit with a clean spirit—the Holy Spirit. This would make it impossible for the unclean spirit to ever again “demonize” that person.

Again, David Guzik makes a statement that I like: “The heart of man has a vacuum-like nature to it. It has to be filled. If we ‘empty’ our heart with evil, without filling it with Jesus and His good, evil will rush in again to fill it.”

Luke 11:27 ¶ And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked.

Luke 11:28 But he said, Yea rather, blessed *are* they that hear the word of God, and keep it.

“rather” = yea doubtless; Webster = preferably

This seems to be a clear example of someone who is given a word of prophecy through the Spirit. After hearing Jesus’ teaching, this woman apparently “got it.” She pronounces a blessing on the woman chosen to be the mother of Jesus. Jesus recognizes the blessing as appropriate, but points out that the better blessing is for those who hear the word of God and obey it.

Note: Even Mary was saved by faith; she willingly accepted God’s will for her life even though His message spoke of what seemed to her to be impossible.

Luke 11:29 ¶ And when the people were gathered thick together, he began to say, This is an evil generation: they seek a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet.

Luke 11:30 For as Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation.

Jesus now addresses those who continually ask Him for more signs to verify the signs He is already giving them. I think He is basically recognizing that they will never be satisfied.

At this point He declares that they will get a “super sign.” This sign was prefigured by Jonah’s experience that led him to prophesy in Nineveh. Jonah was swallowed by a great fish, and for three days and three nights he remained in the belly of the fish before the Lord commanded the fish to spit him back out on the land.

The “super sign” – Jesus would experience death on the cross and spend three days and three nights in the belly of the earth before God the Father resurrects Him from the grave to affirm the message He had declared.

Isn’t it interesting that Jonah’s experience resulted in a great response of faith by the people of Nineveh—a Gentile city. So, too, would the death and resurrection

of Jesus result in a great response of faith throughout the world—especially among the Gentile nations.

Luke 11:31 The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.

Luke 11:32 The men of Nineve shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.

Jesus now makes reference to another Gentile—the queen of the south, identified in scripture as the Queen of Sheba (1Kings 10). She traveled a great distance to hear the wisdom of Solomon in person (which implies that His reputation as a wise man was well known throughout the ancient world). Jesus declares that this Gentile queen will speak out against the men of this generation in condemnation for rejecting Jesus and His message—One who is infinitely greater than Solomon.

I can't help but wonder if she is rising up in judgment "with" these men or "against" these men as part of the multitude of faith. The Old Testament record indicates that she recognized the LORD as the God of Solomon and One who loved Israel "for ever," but that she also placed faith in His God can only be speculation.

1 Kings 10:9 "Blessed be the LORD thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel: because the LORD loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and justice."

The fact that she is mentioned in connection with the people of Nineveh, who did respond in faith and repentance, gives one cause for hope on her behalf. Jesus declares that the people of Nineveh who received the witness of Jonah would join the queen in testifying against those to whom Jesus was ministering. These Gentiles responded in faith and obedience to the testimony of God through a mere man. Jesus was the Son of God in flesh, yet His own people wanted more from Him than the people of Nineveh required of Jonah.

Luke 11:33 No man, when he hath lighted a candle, putteth it in a secret place, neither under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light.

Luke 11:34 The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when *thine eye* is evil, thy body also is full of darkness.

Luke 11:35 Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness.

Luke 11:36 If thy whole body therefore *be* full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light.

I think the connection this time involves understanding your spiritual condition. Jesus explains that men use the light of a candle to facilitate vision. The eye is the organ that allows man to utilize light. When the eye is clear and healthy, its function benefits the whole body. When the eye is unclear and unhealthy, it cannot benefit the body.

Jesus then makes an interesting statement; He warns His listeners to consider whether or not the light “in” you is real. I think He is referring to the light of understanding, the ability to recognize wisdom as referenced in the preceding verses. We know that this type of understanding is given to those willing to hear and receive the truth of God’s Word as declared through Jesus, His only begotten Son. Spiritual understanding, true wisdom, is beneficial to the whole body.

The light of the Holy Spirit within one is a guarantee that the demonic forces of darkness will have no power over you.

Luke 11:37 ¶ And as he spake, a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him: and he went in, and sat down to meat.

Luke 11:38 And when the Pharisee saw *it*, he marvelled that he had not first washed before dinner.

Luke 11:39 And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness.

Luke 11:40 Ye fools, did not he that made that which is without make that which is within also?

Luke 11:41 But rather give alms of such things as ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you.

At this point “a certain Pharisee” asked Jesus to have dinner with him. Jesus did so, but did not choose to clean His hands according to the established tradition. The Lord explains to the Pharisee that though they take great care to maintain outward cleanliness, they do nothing to ensure a clean spirit. He boldly declares that on the inside they are greedy predators and full of immorality and sin. They foolishly assume that God is only aware of their actions, not their thoughts and motives. Jesus reminds him that the same God that created the body also created the spirit. What he needs to do is to treat others with compassion and share what he has. That would give testimony to cleanliness before God.

Luke 11:42 But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

It would seem that there were other Pharisees present at the meal. Jesus now pronounces sorrow and grief for these so-called spiritual leaders of the people in the form of woes. In the first He addresses how they take such care to tithe even the condiments and herbs used to prepare their foods, but they neglect to show justice or to act toward others with the love of God. He makes a point of saying that tithing is the right thing to do, but not at the expense or in lieu of being just

and compassionate. In other words, not doing what is right is sin just as surely as doing what is wrong.

Luke 11:43 Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets.

This second woe addresses their pride. They were known for loving to take the best seats in the synagogues and basking in self-importance as they responded to the respect shown them by the people who greeted them in public.

Luke 11:44 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over *them* are not aware of *them*.

The third woe addresses the hypocrisy of the Pharisees. Though they are really like the walking dead, they have no clue of the true state of their spirituality. They are like unmarked graves that make others unclean who are connected to them. The people look to them for spiritual leadership, yet do not understand that they are teaching and exemplifying a corrupted understanding of God's word.

Luke 11:45 Then answered one of the lawyers, and said unto him, Master, thus saying thou reproachest us also.

Luke 11:46 And he said, Woe unto you also, *ye* lawyers! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers.

Luke 11:47 Woe unto you! for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them.

Luke 11:48 Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers: for they indeed killed them, and ye build their sepulchres.

At this point a man identified as a "lawyer" speaks up; these lawyers were otherwise known as scribes and they were the recognized experts at interpreting the Torah, the law of Moses. This lawyer recognized that what Jesus was saying also cast reproach on him and his fellow lawyers.

Jesus boldly affirms the truth of the lawyer's observation by also pronouncing a woe directed specifically to the lawyers. He declares that their "laws" placed a heavy burden on the people, a burden that they didn't mind inflicting but certainly never even tried to alleviate.

Their hypocrisy was evidenced as they sought to build tombs in honor of the prophets that their own forefathers had killed. It's like they were trying to atone for the wrong done the prophets by their forefathers, yet their actions toward Jesus mirrored those of those same forefathers toward God's prophets of old.

Luke 11:49 Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and *some* of them they shall slay and persecute:

Luke 11:50 That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation;

Luke 11:51 From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation.

I think Jesus is identifying Himself as “the wisdom of God.” John records other times in which He identifies Himself in some way that represents who He Is as God’s messenger or representative—as the Door, as the Good Shepherd, as the Bread of Life, etc. I think He uses this title in declaring Himself to embody true spiritual wisdom in context. Speaking for God He declares that He will continue to send prophets and apostles to declare His truth, many of which will be killed and/or persecuted. He then makes a clear declaration that “this generation” to whom He is speaking will be held accountable for the blood of all God’s martyrs from Abel to Zacharias. The corresponding passage in Matthew identifies Zecharias as the son of Barachias, who was one of the last Old Testament prophets—presumably the last one to be martyred at the hands of God’s people.

Zechariah 1:1 “In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius, came the word of the LORD unto Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet, saying....”

I am reminded that God’s judgment is often forestalled until sin is determined to reach its fullness for a particular group or nation. God waited until the sin of man had reached saturation before sending the flood. The people of Israel weren’t allowed to possess Canaan until the sin of the Amorites was full, and God determined that the time for judgment had come. Those privileged to experience the ministry of Jesus would represent the fullness of the nation’s rejection of God and be judged accordingly when the legions of Rome conquered the nation of Israel and dispersed its people throughout the world. The fullness of the sin of the Gentile nations that reject the gift of salvation offered by God through the sacrifice of His son will result in judgment upon the nations during the time of God’s wrath that will be poured out on that final generation before Jesus returns to establish His kingdom.

Though it may seem to be “not fair” in human reasoning, it is really an act of God’s grace and longsuffering to allow people as long as possible to turn to Him in repentance and obedience. Peter expresses this very truth.

*1 Peter 3:18–20 “For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; Which sometime were disobedient, **when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.**”*

*2 Peter 3:3–4 & 9 “Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.... The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; **but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.**”*

Every one who rejects God and is accountable for God's judgment will be judged; there is no escape.

Luke 11:52 Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.

The last woe He pronounces against the scribes is an indictment against them regarding their lack of understanding of the message of the kingdom that Jesus was declaring and the fact that they were proving to be a hindrance to the understanding of the people as well. What was the message of the Kingdom? The fact that God was going to provide salvation for His people in the person of Jesus, the Messiah.

The prophets had declared the coming of the Messiah. Daniel had specifically prophesied the timeframe in which He would come. The so-called experts in the law should certainly have understood the message of the prophets.

Luke 11:53 And as he said these things unto them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to urge *him* vehemently, and to provoke him to speak of many things:

Luke 11:54 Laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him.

The scribes and Pharisees never gave up; their hearts were hard. I don't think they felt one pang of guilt or even once considered that what Jesus said was true. Instead, they continued to attack Jesus with hostile questions hoping to trip Him up and cause Him to say something that they could use against Him.