

Proverbs 28:1

1 The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are **bold** as a lion.

God desires for His church to be **BOLD**.

Part one - BOLD Prayer.

Luke 11:1-13

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. 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. 3 Give us day by day our daily bread. 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. 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; 6 For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him? 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. 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. 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. 10 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. 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? 12 Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? 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?

This passage begins with one of the disciples asking Jesus to teach them how to pray. Stop for a moment and think about this request. The disciples had seen Jesus do many miraculous things. They saw Him cast devils out of people. They watched Him heal many that were sick and infirmed. They were there when He multiplied the loaves and fish to feed five thousand people. They saw the dead brought back to life and the water turned to wine and many other great things, but notice that they didn't ask Jesus how to do any of that. They asked Him, "Teach us to pray!"

The disciples realized, through observing Jesus, that prayer is more important and more powerful than the miracles. In fact the miracles always followed after times of prayer. Jesus first miracle didn't take place until after He had been in the wilderness for 40 days praying and fasting. Later, Jesus went up into a mountain with Peter and John to pray. It was then that He was transfigured and Moses and Elijah showed up they had a chat. They all got done on the mountain, and as soon as they came down Jesus cast a demon out of a possessed boy. After a time of prayer, a miracle happened. The

disciples, the ones left at the bottom of the mountain, were all perplexed because they couldn't perform the miracle and when they asked Jesus about it, remember what He said? This kind cometh not but by ... **PRAYER and FASTING**.

The disciples knew that prayer is what led to the miraculous, which is why they asked Him to teach them to pray.

Anybody have a desire to know how to pray better? Here is how Jesus responded to their request:

First, Jesus starts by saying what we now call "The Lord's Prayer."

The Lord's prayer is our pattern for prayer. It teaches us **WHAT** to pray.

1. PRAISE

Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

2. KINGDOM PRAYING

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, in earth, as it is in heaven.

3. PERSONAL NEEDS

Give **US** day by day our daily bread. 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.

4. PRAISE

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

That is **WHAT** we should pray - PRAISE, KINGDOM PRAYING, PERSONAL NEEDS, and more PRAISE.

But then Jesus tells a parable, and the parable doesn't teach us **WHAT** to pray, but rather, **HOW** to pray.

Luke 11:5-8

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;

6 For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him?

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.

Get the picture of what's happening here.

Imagine one of your friends coming to your door late at night and he's hungry and needs a place to stay. You say sure, but when you go to find him food, you find the cupboards empty. So you go to your other friend next door (because it's midnight and the grocery store is closed) and you ask for some food. He doesn't want to help you out, saying that he's tired, and the kids are already in bed, I'm in pajamas, etc. Watch now what verse eight says:

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.

He wasn't willing to get up on the grounds of friendship, but he did get up because of **IMPORTUNITY**.

I would guess that many of you have no idea what that word means.

Jesus uses the word "IMPORTUNITY" here, and it is the only time in the New Testament you see it. It means "shamelessness, insistence, persistence, impudence, and troublesome."

Although the friend wouldn't rouse himself for the sake of friendship, he did do it because of persistence!

The guy knocking at the door wasn't willing to take no for an answer, so he just kept on knocking on the door and asking for the loaves.

Remember, Jesus is teaching about **PRAYER** here. He already taught us **WHAT** to pray in the Lord's prayer, but now He is teaching us **HOW** to pray in this parable. The way we ought to pray is not by asking once and hoping for the best. We shouldn't just knock on God's door once and then assume that's enough to have our need met. We must be persistent in prayer. God doesn't mind if you are a little bit troublesome and insistent when you pray. In fact, God is *asking* us to be that way! Because of "**IMPORTUNITY**" God will provide for the need.

Luke 11:9-10

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.

10 For every one that ask**ETH** receiveth; and he that seek**ETH** findeth; and to him that knock**ETH** it shall be opened.

The suffix “ETH” means a continual action - ask and CONTINUE to ask, etc.

When we come to God in prayer, it is His will that we be persistent in prayer. That’s the kind of prayer He responds to! It is not enough to just ask God once and be done with it. We must be **BOLD** enough to keep on asking, keep on seeking, and keep on knocking!

That’s why Paul said:

1 Thessalonians 5:17

17 Pray without ceasing.

Because of his **IMPORTUNITY** he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.

Some of you may have been praying about the same need for a few weeks, months, or perhaps even years now, and maybe you feel like quitting. There is only one good time to quit praying ... when God steps in and answers the prayer.

We got to stop thinking, “Well I prayed about it once or twice, and *if* it’s God’s Will, He will do it.” That’s crazy! Do you know you can sway the mind of God through persistent prayer?

When God was going to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, the Bible says that Abraham **interceded** for his nephew Lot, and because of it, God spared Lot’s life!

When God wanted to destroy the Israelites while they worshipped the golden calf at the base of Mount Sinai, Moses **interceded** for them and the Bible says that God repented of the evil which He thought to do unto His people.

You can sway and influence the heart and mind of God when you pray! You just have to be persistent!!

I’m reminded of the syrophenician woman in Matthew 15:

Matthew 15:22-28

22 And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.

- She had a need, and she asked Jesus to intervene. Notice Jesus’ response:

23 But **he answered her not a word**. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us.

24 But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

25 Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.

26 But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs.

- Not only did He refuse to grant the request again, but Jesus is pretty near insulting her by calling her a dog.

27 And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.

28 Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

This woman wasn't willing to take no for an answer. She kept on asking Jesus for her miracle, even in the face of an insult, and because of her **BOLDNESS** and her **IMPORTUNITY**, she got her answer!

Remember Cornelius in Acts 10?

Acts 10:1-4

1 There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band,

2 A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and **prayed to God alway**.

3 He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius.

4 And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, **Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God**.

Every prayer you pray never dies. It lives on forever. When you persist in prayer, it's like taking stones or building blocks and putting one on top of another until it's a great memorial before the throne of God.

Because of Cornelius' **IMPORTUNITY** - his persistence in prayer, he and his family had the privilege of being the first Gentiles into an exclusively Jewish church.

We've got to start being **BOLD** enough in prayer to keep on asking even when it seems like nothing is happening!

I am going to end tonight where Jesus ended in Luke 11.

Luke 11:11-13

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?

12 Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?

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?**

The whole reason Jesus wanted His disciples to have importunity was because He knew that in a short while, they would all be praying in an upper room and it would take ten whole days of seeking God before the Holy Ghost would be poured out. Imagine if the 120 would have given up after a few hours or a couple days. The church might not have been born, and we might not even be here tonight!

God will pour out His Spirit, and He will loose the miraculous, but it comes through **IMPORTUNITY!**

This past weekend, God poured out the Holy Ghost on Taylor and David. Both of them had been seeking for some time, but even though it had been a while, neither of them quit asking God for it! And God responded to their **IMPORTUNITY** and filled them.

Whatever your need tonight, whether you need the Holy Ghost, or you have another need, we are going to come in a moment and add a few more stones to our memorial of prayer.

It is not a matter of human persistence over divine reluctance. God isn't reluctant to answer you, but I feel that He uses this as a way to measure your desire. How bad do you want your miracle? How bad do you want to be delivered? How bad do you want your healing? Are you willing to pray without ceasing and be persistent?

It takes **BOLDNESS** to keep on praying when it looks like nothing is happening, but **IMPORTUNITY** is the key to your answer.