

# THE VALUE AND POWER OF PRAYER

**BIBLE TEXT** : Luke 11:1-13; Matthew 6:9-13

LESSON 133 Junior Course

**MEMORY VERSE: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation" (Matthew 26:41).**

## **BIBLE TEXT in King James Version**

### **Luke 11:1-13**

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> Give us day by day our daily bread.

<sup>4</sup> 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.

<sup>5</sup> 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;

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

<sup>7</sup> 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.

<sup>8</sup> 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.

<sup>9</sup> 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.

<sup>10</sup> For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

## **BIBLE REFERENCES:**

### **NOTES:**

#### **The Disciples' Desire**

Jesus' disciples had left all to follow Him, and had gone about the countryside for some time, working miracles in His name. They rejoiced in the great work that they were accomplishing through their ministry. And even then one day one of the disciples said to Jesus, "Lord, teach us to pray."

That is a prayer we all should pray. Perhaps we have served God for many years, and have often seen Him send wonderful answers to our prayers. That does not mean that we have learned all that God wants us to know. The more we see answers to prayer, the more we learn of the power in prayer, the more we feel like bowing low before Jesus and crying out: "Dear Lord, teach us to pray!"

Jesus was the Son of God, and He told the disciples, "I and my Father are one" (John 10:30). Yet Jesus felt His need of prayer, and often prayed all night. If He needed to pray, how much more should we!

#### **Our Father**

Jesus told His disciples to address God as "Our Father." When we receive forgiveness from God we are born into His family. "I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (II Corinthians 6:17, 18).

What compassion a true father has upon his child! He is very happy when a son is born into his home, and he will make many sacrifices to give that child every advantage in life. Of course, the little one will have to be punished for doing wrong, but the father does it in order to make him a son who will get along with other people and be a help in the world.

God loves His children even more than our earthly fathers love us. Are we not happy that He wants us for His children, and even lets us call Him Father when we pray?

When we pray we are talking with God. He wants us to tell Him all our joys and sorrows. When something very wonderful happens to a child, he will excitedly tell his parents about it. Do you tell Jesus, too? Do you thank Him for the blessings that come to you? He wants to hear you pray — not only when you are begging Him to give you something, but when there is nothing but praises in your heart. Jesus is saying, "Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely" (Song of Solomon 2:14).

#### **Friends**

Perhaps when a child grows a little older he feels a certain reserve toward his parents and would rather confide in his best friend. Jesus wants that place, too. "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (John 15:14). Do you treat Jesus as a friend? Do you enjoy talking with Jesus as much as visiting with your school friends?

When you awaken in the morning, do you remember that Jesus is your best Friend; and do you have communion with Him

<sup>11</sup> 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?

<sup>12</sup> Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?

<sup>13</sup> 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?

### **Matthew 6:9-13**

<sup>9</sup> After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

<sup>10</sup> Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as *it is* in heaven.

<sup>11</sup> Give us this day our daily bread.

<sup>12</sup> And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

<sup>13</sup> And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

first, before you get your mind cluttered with earthly cares?

### **Elder Brother**

At another time Jesus called Himself our Brother (**Matthew 12:50** <sup>50</sup> For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother). If we do not pray to Him it is the same as though we were not speaking with our brother. Is it not unpleasant to have someone in the home who will not speak? Jesus is always near and hears and sees what we do; and think how He must feel when we neglect to speak with Him in prayer!

Sometimes people do not want to bother the Lord with "little things." Jesus does not consider it a bother. He notices the little things and is interested. We do not pay much attention to the little birds, but Jesus does. Not one falls to the ground without His notice.

### **Without Ceasing**

Jesus wants us to pray without ceasing. That does not mean that we shall have to be on our knees all the time, but that we must consider Jesus in everything we do. We have had our morning devotions before leaving home, and as we go out we breathe a prayer that God will protect us through the day, so we may safely cross the street, and no accident will happen to us in other ways. If trials come to us we tell Jesus, "You know more about this than I do, Lord. Won't You help?" He does, if He knows we are trying to please Him.

There are many things around us for which we should thank Him. Perhaps we see some billowy clouds, or a gorgeous sunset, or rolling hills of green, or the brilliance of the sunshine on a snowcapped mountain. We are thrilled with the beauty of nature and we thank God for making the world so beautiful for us to live in. But we may see, too, someone suffering illness, or a child hurt at play, or someone who does not have a good home to live in. We feel bad, and our hearts just pray to God to help them.

### **Secret Prayer**

In order to be instant in prayer, to know that Jesus is near to hear our whispered prayer at any time, we must do much praying on our knees, too. Jesus wants us to take time to be holy, pray in secret by our bedside, or in the church, at the altar. If we pray hard then, and consecrate our hearts and lives to Him, we shall feel He is very near to us all the time. But if we become careless and neglectful, and just pray a few minutes now and then, we shall forget the Lord when we go about our work or play. He will not seem like our dear Friend and Brother, whom we may talk with at any time.

When we are enjoying that close fellowship with Jesus, the temptations to do wrong that come to us will not be hard to resist. But if we forget Jesus for a while, we may be tempted to sin before we hardly realize it. Prayer is our shield against sin. Even when hard trials come, we can just pray to Jesus to cover us afresh with His Blood, and He will give us power to resist all evil.

### **In the Garden**

A little while before Jesus was crucified, He went into the Garden of Gethsemane to pray. He took Peter, James, and John with Him, and hoped they would help Him pray. Instead, they went to sleep. Jesus sounded disappointed when He said, "Could ye not watch with me one hour?" He warned them that they should watch and pray lest they enter into temptation. If they

could not pray for Him, they should at least have prayed for themselves. But they went to sleep again; and when the soldiers and Christ's betrayers came, the disciples did not have strength to stand up for Jesus, and they turned and ran away.

### **Prayers with Tears**

Jesus said He would hear the prayers that come from a broken and contrite heart. Jesus sees our tears when we pray, and takes note of them. Israel once had a king named Hezekiah who became very ill. The prophet Isaiah was sent to tell him to settle his business affairs and prepare to die. Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and wept and prayed that he might get well again. God sent Isaiah again to Hezekiah, and said, "I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will add unto thy days fifteen years" (Isaiah 38:5). God had noticed the tears. When we pray in humility, and consecrate our hearts to the Lord, our tears will flow with our prayers.

Hezekiah's tears were not of sorrow that he was a sinner, in trouble. He reminded God that he had walked before the Lord with a perfect heart, and had done that which was right in His sight. No tears will help us win our request from the Lord if we try to cover up sin.

### **Prayers for the Lost**

God wants us to pray for the lost ones, so they will be saved and escape punishment. He wants us to cry and pray. "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" (Psalm 126:6). When we pray earnestly for the lost, and yearn for their souls to be saved, Jesus will answer our prayers and we shall be happy to bring precious "sheaves" before the Lord. The Spirit of God will help us to pray when we do not know what to say. "We know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Romans 8:26).

When we ourselves are saved, sanctified, and baptized with the Holy Ghost, and are living close to the Lord, we want to see Him come back to set up His reign upon earth for a thousand years of peace. When God's Kingdom is set up in this world, then His will shall be done. In the meantime, the Christian who has the Kingdom in his heart prays: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." However, that prayer will not do us any good if we insist on having our own way.

### **Daily Bread**

Jesus taught His disciples to pray: "Give us this day our daily bread." Jesus said our Father in Heaven knows we have need of these things and will provide, but He still wants His children to ask. When we ask, and He gives it to us, our faith increases. The more faith we have that He will answer our prayer, the more we will pray.

### **Prevailing Prayer**

What if our prayers are not answered right away? Should that weaken our faith? Jesus gave an illustration to show us what to do if our first prayer was not answered. He told of a man whose company arrived unexpectedly in the night, and there was no bread in his house to give him to eat. He asked to borrow bread of his neighbor, but was refused because the neighbor was already in bed. But when the man kept on asking, the neighbor finally gave it to him so he would go home and be quiet.

That neighbor was cross, and did not want to be disturbed, but he answered the request of the man who wanted bread. Jesus is not cross, and He wants to give good gifts to His children. Would He not be more willing to answer than was the neighbor, even though He might make us wait a little while? "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Luke 18:1).

### **Power Through Prayer**

Power to serve God, as He wants us to, comes through prayer. The work we do for the Lord will not bear fruit unless we pray earnestly for the Spirit of God to bless it for His glory. Jesus said: "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (John 6:63). And He told His disciples that after He went away He would send the Comforter and they would receive power after the Holy Ghost had come upon them, "and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

It is the Spirit of God that convicts men and women of sin; and God's plan is for His children to have that Spirit in them to' such an extent that the sinner will feel it and be turned from his wicked ways to Christ.

Many sinners are constantly going into eternity without God. Are we doing our part to help them? Do we have the Spirit of God in our hearts so that they feel conviction in our presence? Are the words we speak sent by the Spirit into the heart of the unbeliever? Do you see why we must cry, "Dear Lord, teach us to pray"?

### **QUESTIONS**

- 1 What did the disciples ask of Jesus in this lesson?
- 2 What relationship do we have with the Lord?
- 3 For what should we pray?
- 4 How much should we pray?
- 5 What should we do if we receive no answer the first time we pray?
- 6 What power does Jesus give us through prayer?
- 7 Memorize the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13).