



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

Jesus' Encouragement for Prayer - 2

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In the Gospel According to Luke (AD 60-61), having just taught the disciples the essence of prayer (11:1-4) and the attitude of persistence in prayer, Jesus concluded with giving the promised end of prayer (13). The contrast of characters “you being evil” and a good God is striking. The truth that Jesus is explaining is meant to be outrageously unparalleled. There is no way to even explain the infinite differences between finite and fallible man (even a good one) with an infinite and perfect Heavenly Father.

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; for a friend of mine has come to me on his journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; 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'? 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 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. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. 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? Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? 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!" (Luke 11:5-13, NKJV)

The disciples knew of the Holy Spirit but had not imagined His personal presence in their lives could happen. At first glance we might think that Jesus is kind of narrowing the answer to prayer from “anything” to the Holy Spirit specifically. We could even begin to think that there is a sort of “bait and switch” going on. In Matthew 7:11 Jesus gives similar instruction to the disciples but the Holy Spirit is left out of the conversation as the instruction on persistent prayer closes. So some would think that Jesus is sort of “narrowing” the promised response of persistent to recognize the coming of the Holy Spirit. Not so.

God is so generous that when you ask for the gift, He gives the Giver. When you ask for comfort, He gives the Comforter. When you ask for directions He gives you the Guide. Jesus doesn't say that you had asked for the Holy Spirit specifically, but to the one who has a need and humbly and persistently asks for an answer He gives you the revelation of the Holy Spirit—that's way more than you had asked for! **God plants in you permanently the Source of every one of the good gifts. The generous giving Father takes the answer to your request a step farther.**

These disciples, as Jews, were awaiting the coming/indwelling of the Holy Spirit. He had been promised to them in the O.T. as part of the fulfillment of the arrival of the Messiah. Jesus knows this is in their heart and reveals to them that the Messiah is here, the Father is willing, the Spirit is ready!

We would be helpless, and quite hopeless, if when we had received the good gifts from God, we lacked the wisdom in how to enjoy them! How wise is our God that He fore-knows our short-sightedness and not only answers our prayers but abundantly provides His personal presence to manage our lives in the answered prayer! To the disciples this would have been an extremely radical concept yet in perfect cooperation with their understanding of the ways of God in the O.T. and the expectancy of the long-awaited Messiah.

For Your Consideration:

- How do you manage the blessings of God—with your wisdom or His?
- What type of assurance does God's indwelling presence give to you?
- Do you sometimes find that you want the blessings more than the “Blesser”? Why do we struggle with that?

BIBLE STUDIES

LEGISLATORS: SESSION OR HEARING WEDNESDAYS AT 7:30AM, STATEHOUSE RM. 44

STAFF, LOBBYISTS AND CAPITOL SQUARE COMMUNITY: WEDNESDAYS AT NOON, STATEHOUSE RM.44