

COMMANDS OF CHRIST

5. Pray



Another command given by Jesus is found in Luke 11:9, and it tells us to ask, seek and knock. This is speaking about prayer. The disciples had been watching Jesus praying and they wanted Him to teach them how to pray. His answer is in three sections. The first is what we call 'the Lord's prayer'.

Scripture Reading: Luke 11:1-13

A. The Lord's Prayer Luke 11:1-4

This is a beautiful prayer but Jesus did not give it just for us to repeat over and over without meaning. Jesus is giving us an example of how to pray. So what does this prayer teach us?

a.) Who do we talk to in prayer?

Prayer is not just empty words, but talking with someone who loves us very much. We can talk about the things that are on our hearts. Jesus told us to pray to our Heavenly Father. v2

b.) What do we talk to our Father about?

In v2 it says, "May your name be honoured". When we come to our Father we need to begin by praising Him. Although we may have a problem, God is always worthy of our praise, so begin with praising Him for the good things He has done in your own words. Now look at v3. We are to pray for our daily needs. Each day talk to God about your needs for He is your Father and cares about you. Then in v4 it says, "Forgive us our sins, for we forgive everyone who does us wrong." If we have done things that are wrong we need to confess our sin and receive forgiveness. We are also to forgive others if they have hurt us or spoken unkindly to us. Unless we forgive others God cannot forgive us. Finally at the end of v4 it says, "And do not bring us into hard testing." We need to pray before problems arise, so that God will give us strength to over-come difficulties and temptations.

B. Story of the friend at midnight Luke 11:5-8

Suggestion: Read the story and then act it out. One person could be the man who asks for bread, another the man who was in bed, and others the family members.

Why did Jesus tell this story? He is wanting to teach us some truths about prayer. Then He goes on in the next section to tell us what these truths are.

C. Meaning of the story Luke 11:9-13

The first thing Jesus is teaching us is to keep asking day by day for the things we need. In the story, the man did not want to get out of bed and give bread to his friend. Finally he got up and gave the man three loaves of bread. Why did he get up? Look at v8. It tells us he got up because the man was not ashamed to keep on asking. This is what Jesus wants us to learn. We are not to be ashamed to keep on asking. He tells us to ask, seek and knock and we will receive. Read v9-10 again.

The second thing Jesus is teaching us is that God is good and loves to meet our needs when we ask Him. Sometimes our friends are reluctant to help us just like the friend in the story, and yet finally he got up and gave the man what he wanted, simply because he kept asking. Jesus is saying that if a friend would do that, our Father in heaven will certainly give us everything we ask for.

Jesus goes on to speak about what a father is like. Read v11-13 again. If your son asked for a fish, would you give him a snake? No, of course not! You love your son and want to give him good things. Jesus is saying that if our human father is like that, even though he is not perfect, how much more will our Father in Heaven. God is good and will always meet our needs when we ask Him. And He wants us to ask for our day to day needs.

Conclusion

What have you learnt from these verses? God wants us to come to Him every day. When we begin to pray we need to confess our sin and begin to praise Him for all the good things He has done. He wants us to pray for our daily needs and for strength to face temptations and difficulties. We can keep on asking for the things we need as we do not need to be ashamed, even when the needs are small, because God is our Father and loves to answer our prayer.