

“THE PARABLE OF THE THREE FRIENDS”

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INTRO: In Luke 11:58, Jesus told a parable that involved three friends. Besides dying for someone (John 15:13), praying for another person is one of the most unselfish acts possible! How much do you pray for others? How much have others prayed for you? Where would you be without the prayers of others?

THE CONTEXT (Luke 11:1-2).

1. Effective prayer can be taught and learned!
 - A. Jesus is willing to teach us to pray if we ask and listen.
2. **“When you pray, say: ...”** (Luke 11:2)
 - A. Praying is saying [words] not just thinking [words].
 - B. Stretch yourself and do more of your praying by saying.
3. Jesus went on to give us what has been called, “The Lord’s Prayer” which we can use as an effective pattern for prayer.
4. In The Lord’s Prayer there’s no **“I”** or **“me,”** only **“our” “us”** and **“Your”!**
5. Jesus then tells a story involving three friends (Lk. 11:5-6).
 - A. A person has a friend on a journey who shows up unexpectedly a little before midnight.
 - B. He goes to a nearby neighbor friend and asks to borrow some food be able to feed your guest.
 - C. At first the neighbor refuses, but ends up giving the food when he sees the man’s persistence.

SIX PERSEVERING PRAYER PRINCIPLES (Luke 11:5-6):

1. FRIENDS WITH NEEDS WE CAN’T PERSONALLY MEET SHOW UP AT UNEXPECTED INCONVENIENT TIMES.
 - A. Are you willing to be inconvenienced by the needs of others?
2. REALIZE YOU HAVE A FRIEND WHO HAS ALL THE RESOURCES ANYONE WILL EVER NEED!
 - A. I’m talking about God (Ja. 2:23; Gen. 15:6; Jn. 15:15)!
3. WILL YOU GO TO GOD ON BEHALF OF YOUR “FRIEND’S” NEED?
 - A. Expect God to come through for your friend (Luke 11:9-10; Heb. 11:6; 4:16).
4. WHEN YOU GO TO GOD ON BEHALF OF OTHERS, EXPECT OPPOSITION AND DELAY.
 - A. The opposition of the flesh (Mark 14:38; Gal. 5:17).
 - B. The opposition of spiritual forces (Eph. 6:12, 16, 18).
 - C. The delay to build more perseverance (James 1:3).
5. GOD GENERALLY ANSWERS PRAYER ON THE BASIS OF FAITHFUL PERSISTENCE, NOT ON THE BASIS OF NEED (Heb. 11:6; Matt. 9:22, 29).
6. SOMETIMES YOU’LL ALSO GET TO ENJOY SOME OF THE BREAD FOR YOURSELF!
 - *Do you think the man asking for the bread from the neighbor ate any of the bread given?*
 - A. Sometimes we’re also in need of what we’re asking God for on behalf of others (Luke 11:3, 9-10).
 - B. When you pray earnestly for others, and for **“our”** and **“us”** then God will give to **you, you** will find, and doors will be doors will be opened to **you!**
 - C. Don’t overlook the joy and privilege of God flowing resources through you to the meet the needs of others!

CONCLUSION: One of the most unselfish things we can do for another person is to pray for them. Will you, like the friend in the parable, go to your friend God, on behalf of your friends in need, with confidence and persistence if needed? Remember, don’t expect this to be convenient!