

Youth Teaching Resources

July 28, 2019



Season After Pentecost (June 16-November 24)

On the Road with Jesus

Luke 10:1-11, 16-20 – “A Mission Trip to Remember”

Luke 10:25-37 – “A Wonder on the Road”

Luke 10:38-42 – “A Better Way to Go”

Luke 11:1-13 – “A Good Way to Pray”

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Find links and videos related to this lesson.

A Good Way to Pray

Luke 11:1-13

YOUTH Teaching Guide

by Jeremy Colliver

This youth teaching outline is designed to support THE BIBLE LESSON by Tony Cartledge, printed in *Baptists Today*. You can subscribe to either the digital or print edition of *Baptists Today* to access the lessons. Please also ensure that each person in your class has a copy of *Baptists Today* so they can prepare before the lesson.

PARENT PREP

With schedules becoming tighter and tighter and less free time, when do you pray? Are you a morning person that gets up early? Are you a night owl who reflects on their day? Do you utter prayers as you are driving down the road? Most importantly, do you pray? Prayer is not magic or formulaic, but to connect you with God. So maybe, instead of thinking about how you pray, think about how you best connect with God, and then do that more.

TEACHING THE LESSON

Fellowship

Begin your session by showing the clip “Bruce Answers Prayers” from *Bruce Almighty*. If you are unable to show the clip, summarize it to the best of your ability, and then facilitate a discussion using questions like the following:

- 1) Why does Bruce seek out a way to organize all the prayers?
- 2) How is Bruce overwhelmed by all the prayers coming in?
- 3) What do you think the ramifications of him answering “yes” to all the prayers will be?
- 4) What does this scene assume the majority of prayers are? Is the assumption wrong?
- 5) What does prayer mean to you?

Information

Transition to the next section of the session by reading Luke 11:1-13. Allow the students to ask any initial questions they have about the text. As you answer their questions, you may want to provide some of the information found in Tony's commentary to answer their questions. When the students have had an opportunity to share their initial thoughts, continue the discussion by facilitating a discussion using questions like the following:

- 1) How does Jesus begin his teaching on prayer?
- 2) How can reciting the "Our Father" or "Lord's Prayer" serve as a teaching tool?
- 3) What are the different aspects of the prayer that Jesus introduces in this passage? How can these different aspects make up your entire prayer life?
- 4) How can Jesus' words about prayer be misconstrued? What are the parameters that he is putting on his own words?
- 5) How does Jesus compare God to a parent?

If your group would like to dig deeper in their discussion, share some of the insights that Tony provides in the "Digging Deeper" portion of his commentary. You may want to use some questions like the following to facilitate your discussion:

- 1) Are there times when we shouldn't pray?
- 2) What does "hallowed be thy name" mean?
- 3) What is the essence of prayer?
- 4) How is "daily bread" different than what we want?
- 5) How do you balance praying for something vs working for something? Are they mutually exclusive?

You may also want your group to discuss "The Hardest Question" if they would like to continue their discussion on this passage. Tony poses the following question to consider as "The Hardest Question": Why is Luke's version of the prayer so different from the one we normally recite?

Transformation

Conclude your session by leading your group through *Lectio Divina*. If you have not led a group through this prayer practice before, familiarize yourself with it before leading the group. After you have lead the group through the prayer practice, take time for your students to share what they heard from God.

Close with a prayer of thanksgiving that God wants to be in communication with each and every one of us.

Digging Deeper

by Tony Cartledge

Digging Deeper is designed to support THE BIBLE LESSON by Tony Cartledge, printed in *Nurturing Faith Journal*. Watch for the “shovel” icon in the THE BIBLE LESSON, and then reference that item in this Digging Deeper resource. You can subscribe to either the digital or print edition of *Nurturing Faith Journal* to access the lessons. Please also ensure that each person in your class has a copy of *Nurturing Faith Journal* so they can prepare before the lesson.

Crossed wires—Many years ago, when I was serving as a church pastor, I once drove an aging church van through the winding mountain roads of southeastern Kentucky, near Williamsburg. The van was loaded with youth returning from a night of teaching mission Vacation Bible School at a small rural Baptist church. It was dark, it was pouring down rain, and I could not get the windshield wipers to work. It was slow going.

When we finally arrived back at the motel and I slowly switched off the ignition, the wipers jumped into action began their merry dance. Worn connections in the ignition switch still made contact in the “accessory” position, but not in the “on” position used for driving. Power was available, but the connection was not there.

It occurred to me that our Christian lives are sometimes ineffective and devoid of power largely because our “prayer wires” are crossed or frayed. We don’t make an effective connection with God, and we don’t experience the power of the Spirit’s presence. Like the disciples, we could profit from asking Jesus, “Teach us to pray.”

For what purpose?—When I played football in high school, the entire team would always gather in a huddle and recite the prayer as the last act before game time. Coming to the end, our husky voices would grow more guttural as we chanted in rapid fashion: “*and lead us not into temptation – but deliver us from evil – for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory – forever and ever – Amen.*”

“Arrrrggghhhh! Let’s go get ’em!”

We can cheapen the prayer Jesus taught in many ways, but he gave it to us for a purpose, for our learning. How can we revitalize this prayer and make it a more meaningful?

We note that Jesus was teaching his followers *how* to pray, not just *what words to pray*. Prayer is not about speaking magic words, but about adopting the proper attitude before God.

Hallowed be thy name—Ritual texts in the Old Testament connected keeping the commandments with honoring or sanctifying God’s name (see, for example, Lev. 11:44 and 22:31-33). When people who live in covenant with God behave badly, they bring dishonor on God’s name. Correspondingly, those who keep the commandments honor God’s name.

As Richard Vinson has written, “In other words, keeping God’s name holy was the result of actually doing God’s commandments. In the context of the prayer, “let your name be made holy” is a prayer for people to do the right thing, and therefore for God to do whatever God can do to make that happen” (*Luke* [Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentaries, 2008], 369).

Digging Deeper *continued*

The essence of prayer—You may be familiar with television or radio evangelists who gained their fame (and made their fortunes) by claiming they could teach people to pray with such faith and power that they could get whatever they wanted from God. Does the prayer Jesus taught support that teaching? What is the best thing for us to ask of God?

Daily bread—If we think about it, the request to “give us each day our daily bread” is a prayer for subsistence rations: just enough food for each day. How does that compare with what we normally think of as requirements for a comfortable life? Does earnestly praying this way mean that we should be praying for *less*?

This is an appropriate place to remember that the prayer is designed as a community prayer, not an individual one. “Give us each day our daily bread,” “Forgive us our sins.” We do not pray for ourselves alone, but for others. If we truly ask God to “give *us* our daily bread,” should we not seek a lifestyle that focuses less on our own excess and more on seeing to it that everyone has daily bread?

Praying – and working—We pray for many things other than bread or physical sustenance. We also pray for things like peace and justice. In doing so, we recognize that we pray as participants in God’s kingdom and as co-workers with God.

That means that as we pray, we also work. We can’t effectively pray for justice unless we are also willing to work for justice. The same people who pray for peace are to be at work as peacemakers. The same people who pray for the hungry to be fed are working to provide food. The same people who pray for the homeless to be sheltered can support shelters and soup kitchens and programs that provide housing for low-income families.

Prayer, then, is not a matter of “give me, give me” but of “make me, make me!” When we say that prayer changes things, sometimes the thing that needs most to be changed is *us*.

Has a time of prayer ever led directly to a change in your life?

The insistent friend—Do you read the comics? I have followed Dagwood and Blondie for at least 50 years. Many things have changed in that time: Blondie is no longer a homemaker alone, but she owns and operates her own catering business. The kids now have computers and cell phones. Some things, however, do not change. Dagwood still eats like a starving horse and sleeps half the time, but remains as thin as a rail. Dagwood’s hair still looks like a chicken trying to fly. Dagwood’s boss won’t give him a raise, and next door neighbor Herb continues to borrow Dagwood’s tools with some frequency, but never returns them.

Do you have neighbors who brashly borrow from you, even at inconvenient times? Jesus apparently knew people like that, and one of them became the subject of his parable about prayer, the story of the insistent friend.

The Hardest Question

by Tony Cartledge

The Hardest Question is designed to support THE BIBLE LESSON by Tony Cartledge, printed in *Nurturing Faith Journal*. You can subscribe to either the digital or print edition of *Nurturing Faith Journal* to access the lessons. Please also ensure that each person in your class has a copy of *Nurturing Faith Journal* so they can prepare before the lesson.

Why is Luke's version of the prayer so different from the one we normally recite?

Few of us could recite Luke's version of what we think of as "the Lord's Prayer." There are significant differences, not just the wording but in the location. Matthew puts the prayer in the context of Jesus' "Sermon on the Mount" (Matthew 5-7) as a contrast the hypocrisy of those who offered ostentatious and public prayers. Luke has a shorter but similar "Sermon on the Plain" (Luke 6:17-49), but he does not locate the prayer there. Rather, he puts it in the context of Jesus' final journey to Jerusalem, with greater emphasis on praying with faith, and faithfully.

Here we compare the two:

Matthew 6:9 "Pray then in this way:
Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
10 Your kingdom come.
Your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
11 Give us this day our daily bread.
12 And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
13 And do not bring us to the time of trial,
but rescue us from the evil one.

Luke 11:2 He said to them, "When you pray, say:
Father, hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come.
3 Give us each day our daily bread.
4 And forgive us our sins,
for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us.
And do not bring us to the time of trial."

The Hardest Question *continued*

Both of these are quoted from the NRSV. As a result, even the version from Matthew is unlike what we're accustomed to, as the prayer is commonly quoted from the King James Version. This brings in the issue of text traditions: the KJV is different at several points, most notably with the conclusion "for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever, Amen."

The earliest and most original Greek manuscripts such as Sinaiticus and Vaticanus, from the 4th century; and Codex Bezae, from the 5th century; do not include this verse. It probably originated as a formula to close the prayer in the liturgy of the early church. A scribe who was familiar with the addition apparently added it to the copy he was making at a later point.

Over time, an expanded text containing this, along with other interpolations such as the longer ending of Mark (after Mark 16:8), became popular and were copied more frequently. Thus, we have higher numbers of these manuscripts, many of which belong to what is called the "Western" tradition, but they represent a less original version of the text.

Having more copies of the text containing the additions, and not recognizing the superiority of the rarer but older manuscripts, translators of the King James Version largely followed the Western text. Thus, the KJV includes the long "thine is the kingdom" clause in Matt. 6:13, but newer translations tend to omit it (NRSV and NET), or to include it with a footnote explaining that it's probably a later addition (HCSB, NASB95).

In a similar way, the KJV includes the addition of "which art in heaven" to Luke 11:2 and "but deliver us from evil" at the end of Luke 11:4. These are missing from the earliest manuscripts, and were almost certainly harmonizing additions, added later so Luke's version would be more like the one in Matthew. Modern translations stay closer to what are judged to be the earliest and most reliable manuscripts.

The gospel of Mark, used as a source by both Matthew and Luke, contains a related verse about forgiving and being forgiven, but not the entire prayer. There Jesus instructs the disciples: "Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone; so that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses" (Mark 11:25).