

# Ask Your Willing Heavenly Father

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Date: 05 November 2023

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[ 0 : 00 ] Take your Bibles and turn to Luke chapter 11, the Gospel of Luke chapter 11.

After hearing Jesus pray to his heavenly Father, one of his disciples said, Lord, can you teach us to pray? I'll read the first 13 verses.

One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.

He said to them, when you pray, say, Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come.

Give us each day our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us. And lead us not into temptation.

[ 1 : 09 ] Then he said to them, suppose one of you has a friend, and he goes to him at midnight and says, Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, because a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, And I have nothing to set before him.

Then the one inside answers, don't bother me. The door is already locked and my children are with me in bed.

I can't get up and give you anything. I tell you, though he will not get up and give him the bread, because he is his friend, Yet because of the man's persistence, he will get up and give him as much as he needs.

So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you. Seek, and you will find. Knock, and the door will be opened to you.

For everyone who asks, receives. He who seeks, finds. And to him who knocks, the door will be opened. Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will he give him a snake instead?

[ 2 : 32 ] Or if he asks for an egg, will he give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him?

Let's hear from God. Lord, teach us to pray. That's been my request as we've been studying this passage for the last couple months.

And the wonderful thing about God's word, as we've heard in the Sunday school hour recently, is that Jesus Christ continues to speak today in the reading and the preaching of his written word.

Christ in his word really does draw near and has been teaching us just as surely as if we had been there with the disciples that day and had asked our Lord, teach us to pray.

This is the living voice of Christ to us today. His and his sheep hear his voice and they follow him. And few things are more important for us to learn from him than how to pray.

[ 3 : 53 ] Because in teaching us to pray, he's teaching us how to do life with God. How to relate to him, how to communicate with him, what's important to him, what pleases him, what are we to be living for?

His name, his kingdom, his will. What are our greatest needs? Today's food. Forgiveness of sins. Protection from sin and temptation of the evil one.

And so these words of Jesus prayed daily are meant to be a pattern that reform our prayers, getting us on the same page as God is.

But even more so, they're meant to be reforming not only our prayers, but our very lives, our lives as well, bringing them more into line with God's good and perfect will and what matters most to him.

But having told us what to say in our prayers, that is the topics that we are to address with God, our Lord then proceeded in verses 5 to 13 of Luke 11 to move our hearts to pray.

[ 5 : 09 ] Not only what to say when we pray, but to move us, to inspire us, to spur us, to make us want to pray. And he does that by opening up the heart of God towards us and our prayers.

When we pray, what is the heart of God toward us as we come asking in Jesus' name? That's what the Lord Jesus is opening up to his disciples from verses 5 to 13.

And the main point is the Father's willingness, that God is willing to answer our prayers and bless us. So why, we asked last week, why does Jesus spend five times more words on this than he does teaching us what to pray?

Well, because of our lingering doubts about God's goodness and lingering doubts about how delighted he is to answer our prayers.

Because we're so prone to project upon God what we ourselves often feel, our own irksomeness with somebody continually asking us for something.

[ 6 : 20 ] And we can grow weary of it and we can think God must grow weary of me coming and asking, especially when it's the same thing over and over and over again. Those requests that he's teaching us to say in prayer, those are things to pray every day.

Doesn't he get weary and irked with our continual knocking at his door? But no, he's the one telling us to ask, to keep asking, to seek and keep seeking, to knock and to keep knocking.

He's the one commanding me to do so. So intent is he on having me come to him. He's the one promising me, not once or twice, but six times that if I ask, he will give.

He'll open the door and we'll find all that we need from him. Jesus wants us to pray with the absolute certainty of being answered.

Do you? Do I pray like that? He wants us to. And that's what he's teaching us. So we then notice the structure of the passage.

[ 7 : 27 ] It looks like a sandwich and the meat in the middle of the passage is verses nine and ten, where we have three commands to pray, ask, seek and knock and keep doing it. And then we have six promises to answer us if we will, but ask, seek and knock.

And all of it is emphasizing how willing God is to give to us. But in a sandwich, there's not only the meat, there's the two buns.

And we saw that those two buns on either side are two parables. But they have the same point as the meat to stir us to pray by revealing to us the heart of God and his willingness to give.

In the first parable last week, it was the parable of the friend. And we saw that God is a much better friend than any earthly friends we may have, because he never tires of us coming and asking.

He never gets weary of seeing us come and ask. He never gives out of a reluctance. Well, I'm not going to give to you because you're my friend, but I guess I'll give to you just to get you off my back.

- [ 8 : 32 ] He never does that like so-called friends may do. But he rather welcomes us to come at any time and always gives because of his relationship to us, because he is a perfect friend.
- And he counts us as his friends. And he treats us always accordingly. So today we come to the bottom bun, which is a parable not about a friend, but about fathers.
- And it's noteworthy that Jesus' teaching on prayer starts with the Father and now ends with the Father. It all started back in verse 2 when he says, when you pray, say, what?
- Father. Yes, that's where his teaching starts. And now it ends. How much more, verse 13, will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him?
- When we come and pray to God. We're to remember who he is in relation to us. So prayers are not some mechanical formula that we do that somehow earns answers from God.
- [ 9 : 52 ] It's not like the Buddhist prayer wheel where you pin a request to the wheel and then you spin it. And the more rotations you spin that prayer wheel, the more you get from God.
- No, it's not like that at all. Nor is it like the babbling of the pagans who think that they will be heard for their much speaking as if the more words in our prayers, the more answers we get from God.
- No, it's not at all like that. And nor is it like the prayers of the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel who cut themselves as they cried out for Baal to answer them as if the more blood shed, the more Baal will pay attention and give to us.
- No real prayer to the real God is nothing like any of that. It is rather making use of the privileged relationship that we have with God.
- Dear believer, that is the relationship that he has only with those who know him as father. And you do.
- [ 10 : 55 ] Through repentance and faith in his son, Jesus Christ. And it's asking them from the best of friends. It's asking from the best of fathers who gives the best of gifts to us.
- So it's making use of your best friend. You've got a friend in high places. Indeed, in the highest place. The throne that rules the universe. And we're hearing this morning that our prayer here in God is even more intimately joined to us than friendship.
- But that this friend in high places is also our compassionate and perfect father. So, once again, Jesus is pointing us to a human relationship.
- In the first parable, he asked us, which of you has a friend like this? Now he's coming to talk about fathers. But he doesn't say, which of you has a father like this? He rather is speaking directly to the fathers.
- He says, which of you fathers? So sit up, fathers. He's talking to you. Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead?
- [ 12 : 05 ] Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? Kids, you know what a snake is. Maybe you've not known what a scorpion is. But they're huge, hairy spiders with a big tail in the back that sticks up with a sharp point.
- And when that stings you, you know you've been stung. And it's especially dangerous for little children. And the question is, is which of you fathers?
- You got your son coming to him and he's asking you for his daily bread. He's asking you for his daily food. Give me a fish, father. Give me an egg.
- And would you give him a snake or a scorpion instead? Would you give him something harmful rather than what is helpful? Would you give him something bad rather than something good? And you say, no way would I do that.

Fathers do not treat their sons like that. We want our sons to grow and live, don't we? Not to suffer harm and die. So we give them what's good for them.

[ 13 : 06 ] And to the praise of God's common grace, that's a fairly natural tendency within fathers. We want to see them do well. And so just about the time these fathers and maybe ourselves are ready to pat ourselves on the back for how well we treat our sons, Jesus pops our bubble.

And he does it here. If you then, though you are evil, though you are evil, Jesus believed in total depravity.

Jesus believed in original sin. That we come into the world as evil. Not neutral. That we could end up going one way. No, we come in with our backs toward God and our face toward our way.

That's evil. This God feeds me. This God cares for me. And I turn my back on him. If you fathers, though you are evil, you know it was because we were evil that he sent his son to come into the world to die for us.

That he might save us. That he might give an offering that would satisfy the justice of God and would be able to forgive us freely and fully of all our sins.

[ 14 : 23 ] And so, if you then, fathers, are being evil, still know how to give good gifts to your son, how much more will your Father in Heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him?

So, Jesus isn't making us evil fathers to be the pattern that shows us what the Heavenly Father's like. Any more than he was using the friend to show us what the Heavenly Father was like.

We don't have a Heavenly friend like that friend we saw last week. No, he was using that friend as a foil in which to compare the Heavenly Father and to say, look, your Heavenly Father isn't like these friends.

He's so much greater. He's the perfect friend. And that's the way this is operating. He's not saying, oh, you fathers are so wonderful to your children. You're the pattern of the way God treats his children.

Not at all. It's how much more. Because God is not evil. And if you being evil know how to give good gifts, think how much more God without sin, without any blemish, with nothing but pure love and grace and truth, how he is able to give good gifts to his children who ask him.

[ 15 : 46 ] So, once again, the argument is from the lesser to the greater, from the lesser friend to the greater friend, from the lesser father to the greater father in heaven.

So, believer, God is telling you that with God as your father, when you pray, you should never doubt that he will answer your prayer, but will give you what is best for you.

Not what is harmful, but what is helpful. Always. Either giving you what you asked or what you should have asked. That's because he is your loving, willing, perfect father in heaven.

Now, fathers, if we do doubt when we pray to our father in heaven and really wonder whether he's all that concerned about what's best for me, well, we're putting ourselves above God.

we're saying we being evil know how to give good gifts to our children and our children are more certain to get good from us than we are to get good from our heavenly father.

[ 16 : 52 ] That's highly offensive. That's projecting something upon God that he's unworthy of. So, we're not meant to doubt his heart any more than we want our children to doubt the heart of we fathers toward them.

He's the perfect father and far outshines all other fathers as the sun outshines the candle. Fathers, you know your heart and how it's bound up in the hearts of your children.

When you see them hurting, you hurt. When you see them rejoicing, you rejoice. Should we think any less of our heavenly father?

As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him. Psalm 103.13. But his compassion is to a far greater degree than any human father.

And so, believer, your heavenly father does not despise you in your weakness and your need, but he pities you. He pities you perfectly in your weakness and need and has exactly what is best for you.

[ 18 : 15 ] So much more than any pity you have for your children in their sickness and in their weakness. He never says, oh no, it's her again coming. But rather, oh boy, do I have something good for her at this point in need in her life?

That's our heavenly father. Is that how you think of him when you pray for your daily bread? Listening with the tenderest sympathy of a perfect father who gives out of that pity and out of that generosity, whatever is needed for you.

and when you come asking him as we're taught to ask, forgive us our sins. It's the same fatherly heart of love. He never says, not again. Won't he ever learn?

No, but I'm so glad you've come to me for this. I'll gladly wash you whiter than snow. Do you remember how the prodigal son, when he came home to his father to confess his sin, what kind of reception he got?

Oh, but son, think what you did to me. Think how you shamed me in front of all my friends. He didn't hear a thing of it. But his father fell on his neck and kissed him and wept with joy and said, come, let's kill the fatted calf and celebrate.

[ 19 : 34 ] This son of mine was lost and now he's found. He was dead and now he's alive. That's a picture of God the father too and the way he greets you when you come and pray, father, forgive me.

I've sinned against you. And is that your view of him when you come and ask him, Lord, don't lead me into temptation. I'm so weak. But lead me and protect me from the evil one.

Deliver me from the evil one. He doesn't ever say, well, by now you ought to be able to handle this on your own. Get with it.

But rather, I'm so pleased to see you growing in your conviction of just how weak you are, son, and how much you need me. Come on, let me make you strong with my mighty power against temptation.

You see, our continual asking and seeking and knocking is not to twist something out of God's clenched fist. It's to lay hold of his open bounty.

[ 20 : 37 ] He comes to us in the gospel. He comes to us in scripture with his arms loaded with gifts, wanting to give. He's a generous father.

As generous as he is rich and my as he rich, the earth is the Lord's and everything in it. And he is just as generous as he is rich.

He gives grace and glory. No good thing will he withhold from those who walk uprightly. Not one good thing. Psalm 83, 11, or 84, 11.

Well, this is your heavenly father and he's the one who promises to give you the Holy Spirit if you will ask. Now, on an early occasion recorded in Matthew 7, 11, Jesus said, if you being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him?

You give good gifts, he'll give good gifts. But here in Luke 11, 13, is how much more will your father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him?

[ 21 : 46 ] Now, we've already noticed the slight variations between this teaching of the prayer and the Lord's prayer in chapter 11 of Luke and how it flows in Matthew 6.

A fuller case there. There are minor differences, but never contradicting. One is a fuller expression of the prayer than this one that's a little smaller.

So there is that variation, but it's always carrying the same main point. No contradiction. There's no contradiction to say that how much more will he give the Holy Spirit as to say how much more will he give good gifts?

Because the Holy Spirit is a good gift. Indeed, he's the best gift. In fact, he's the gift in which are all the other gifts in living the Christian life.

The Holy Spirit, who is he's a third person of the one eternal God. As much God as the Father and the Son been with them for all eternity making up the one God. He's the on-site agent of the Trinity freely given to his children to live in us and from our hearts here, not from the throne of God in heaven, but from our hearts here he takes up his abode and from that heart we have the very life of God in the soul of man.

[ 23 : 13 ] I wonder if you recognize that as you greeted your brothers and sisters today who you were greeting. You were greeting temples in which the Holy Spirit, the eternal God dwells.

What a privilege to be a part of that family and to greet one another as those in whom God dwells, walking temples of the Lord. This Holy Spirit has come to live in us to mediate the power and the presence of the Father and of the Son who are of the same nature, the same one God as the Holy Spirit who dwells in us.

He brings to us the presence of Christ and of the Father. He brings to us His power and blessing. There is but one divine nature and they share it together.

And He lives in us to carry on all His supernatural ministries to us. Let me just rehearse a few of them. He's in us as the paraclete, the comforter to come alongside us, to comfort us in all of our sorrows, to shed abroad in our hearts God's love, God's love, to make us overflow with hope that will never disappoint us.

Yes, He's there to do that. He's also there to encourage us in all of our weariness, in doing good, in doing our duties, in pressing on the upward way.

[ 24 : 41 ] He's here to revive our drooping spirits, to lift up the arms that hang down. He dwells in us as a teacher, an illuminator, to open our eyes so that when we read this book, we see wonderful things, things that make us say, wow, that's wonderful.

He lives in us to do that, to illuminate and to open our eyes. He reads with us the Holy Scriptures and reveals our risen Lord. Do you see Him there, John?

Have you ever found anything like that in the world? Look at your Savior. He reads the Scriptures with us. He puts the truth then into our inward parts, into our very desires, our minds, our hearts.

He renews our minds. He transforms us into the likeness of Christ. You see, your Heavenly Father gives the Holy Spirit to those who ask. He does all that and more.

He dwells in us as the guide to guide us into all truth, to lead us into paths of righteousness for His name's sake. He dwells in us as the Spirit of adoption to assure us, to make it absolutely certain in our hearts and minds that God is my Father.

[ 25 : 56 ] I am His well-beloved child. What a precious, precious ministry of the Spirit of adoption in our hearts. He helps us in our weakness to pray.

We're studying prayer. We find it hard going sometimes, don't we? And He dwells in us to help us in our weakness. He actually intercedes from within our hearts with groanings that are too deep to express in words.

And the Father understands those groanings. He equips every single one of us with spiritual gifts that we might serve one another in love. and He works in us the willingness to use those spiritual gifts.

For He works in us both to will and to do His good pleasure. He emboldens us to bear witness of Christ and His gospel to others. Are any of you needing any of these things that the Spirit has been sent to do?

Well, for your encouragement, your Heavenly Father gives the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him. He's in us as a sanctifier. He's come here to clean house.

[ 27 : 08 ] He comes to help us to put to death the misdeeds of the body that we might live. Romans 8, 13. He's living inside us to overcome the down drag of sin, of indwelling sin that would sink us into hell if it could.

And He's there to war. The Spirit wars against the flesh. Aren't you glad? He's carrying on the battle within you. We'd be gone sinners. He's the one who moves us, Ezekiel 36, 27.

He moves us to be careful to keep His laws. He doesn't just, here it is, John, go do it. No, He's the one moving us to keep His laws.

He produces in us His Christ-like fruit of the Spirit. Why do we call it the fruit of the Spirit? Think of the tree. What is fruit? It's what's produced by the tree, isn't it?

And so the ninefold fruit of the Spirit, you know them. I know you know the first three. Love, joy, and peace. What is that? If you have any real love in your heart, it is what the Holy Spirit has produced in you.

[ 28 : 26 ] It's the fruit of the Spirit to love. And if you need more love in this world, it's good news that your Heavenly Father gives the Spirit to those who ask.

And He comes and He bears that fruit in your life. His joy, His joy in your sorrow. Have you got any sorrow in your life? Needing some joy on your bad days and your failures?

Do you have that bedrock joy in the Lord? Whatever the dirt is on top of it, there's that joy undergirding you. The joy of the Lord, your strength.

Where does that come? The Spirit of God producing the fruit of the Spirit of joy. Peace. Peace in a troubled world? Peace with all of our problems?

Our anxiety? Yes, that quietness in the heart of the storm. A contest was held for people to paint a picture of peace.

[ 29 : 36 ] And there were lots of entries of a pond and serene and sunsets on it. The winter was a picture of everything but serenity.

There was a storm, a dark sky, lightning striking, rain blowing, and there's this big boulder and tucked into the little cleft in the rock is a little bird hovering in the shelter of the rock.

that's the peace of the Holy Spirit in the midst of the storm of troubles producing something that cannot be explained, the peace that passes all understanding.

Where's that come from? From the Holy Spirit. It's good news that the Father gives the Spirit to those who ask. Patience under provocation, kindness and goodness when it's badness you've received.

faithfulness. Faithfulness. Anybody need faithfulness? Faithfulness to be a godly husband to your wife, to be a godly wife to your husband, to be godly parents to your children, to be a godly child to your parents, to be faithful churchgoers, church members, to be faithful citizens of this country, to be faithful to your neighbor.

[ 30 : 57 ] faithfulness to your promises and you have troubles keeping your promises, maybe your marriage, Bob, faithful to keep your commitments when you gave your word to something.

Anybody need faithfulness for that? To your responsibilities, your duties, gentleness when irritated, self-control over your appetites, your temper, your tongue, all of this is the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

And your Father delights to give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him. The Spirit imparts grace to their hearts and grace that's sufficient in every situation, empowering us to live supernatural lives, to live something above nature.

What's nature? Somebody does evil, I give it back to them. That's natural. He enables us to love our enemies. That's supernatural. And that's why He's in us, working in us to will and do what pleases God.

He's the source of all good, anywhere in the universe and in you, child of God. And He's out to glorify Christ in your life. And so all this good that He does can be wrapped up in this gift of the Holy Spirit.

[ 32 : 10 ] Commentator Geldenhuis summarizes this way, the Holy Spirit is the good gift par excellence. The gift which is indispensable and which brings about all true life and true happiness in the believer and is the source of all good things.

There is so much more to experience of this supernatural ministry of the Holy Spirit in our lives. But don't fail to notice that we must ask for this.

We must pray for this. This manifold ministry of the Holy Spirit in our lives. So ask and you will receive. You see, we're right back to the meat of the sandwich.

We're never away from it. It's ask because He'll give it to you. He's willing. So ask. It's the law of the kingdom of Christ that we have not because we ask not.

So ask. Matthew Henry says the gift of the Holy Spirit is a gift we are, every one of us, concerned earnestly and constantly to pray for. That's why He's teaching us to pray and to ask for the Holy Spirit.

[ 33 : 19 ] In saying that, we're not saying, well, as a Christian we don't have the Spirit. The moment we're born again, we're given the gift of the Spirit. He's our lifelong friend.

But we are to ask for the Spirit. To ask for His greater ministries to us. For the fullness of the Spirit. We're to ask the Father to give Him to us in the fullness of the bounty that He has to bring to us and to produce all of these fruits that He's come to produce.

So, I have to ask you, when's the last time you've asked the Father for the Holy Spirit? Asked Him to come and produce His life, the life of God in your soul.

The Spirit of wisdom and understanding. The Spirit of counsel and of power. The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. It's the same Spirit that was upon Christ.

Ask and you'll receive. And asking implies that we're aware of our need, doesn't it? Who asks for what they don't think they need?

[ 34 : 26 ] No, to ask for the Spirit means that we are aware of our need of the Spirit. If we have no sense, we don't ask.

Zechariah 4.6 says, It's not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord. Now, that verse alone should make us aware of our need.

I don't know what you're up to do today, tomorrow, but you wake up every day and you say, it's not going to be by my might or my power. It's going to have to be by His Spirit. That's an awareness of our need.

Well, then we ask, don't we? Then we stop just saying our prayers and we pray as a desperate man or woman or young person for the help of God the Spirit.

Seeking, knocking, asking on the door of heaven, believing our Heavenly Father gives the Holy Spirit to those who ask and we hang on like Jacob and says, I won't let you go until you bless me.



[ 35 : 30 ] What a double motivation then we have to prayer. We see our need, we see our weakness, and we look up and we see His willingness to give.

And between those two, wow, we should be praying without ceasing just like the Bible tells us. It was a high blessing to have an earthly father whose love for me was unquestioned.

and His joy in giving to me meant I could ask Him for things I wouldn't dare to ask anyone else. And I've told you before of the time we were late for one of the children's swim meets at school and we were hurrying to get out the door but we needed ten bucks for the entry fee and wherever we looked in the house we couldn't come up with ten bucks.

And without hesitating I called my father. He said, Dad, we're on our way to the swim meet right there across from where you live and we don't have any cash in the house so would you have ten bucks to loan us?

Sure. And we were off pulled in the back alley and he's standing there out of the alley with his arm extended and ten dollars in his hand and just rolled the window down and passing by grabbed the money.

[ 36 : 46 ] Thanks, Dad. Off we went. What moved me to feel free to ask my father in a pinch for ten dollars on the spot in a way that I wouldn't have felt free going over and knocking on my neighbor's door perhaps.

Well, it was his relationship to me. It was knowing that he's my loving father. I've had decades of experience of that love.

I've had decades of his willing giving to me as my father and his beloved son. And that moved me to ask him.

I didn't think twice about calling him and asking him. And you know what? I don't think he thought twice about giving to me either. I treated him like a loving father in my asking.

He treated me like or I treated him yes, like a loving father in my asking and he treated me like a loving son in his giving. And his willingness to give made it instinctive for me to ask.

[ 38 : 00 ] Now, is that your view of your father in heaven? Remember, my dad was evil too. He had remaining sin too. And yet, he knew how to give good gifts to his children.

How much more should we think of our father in heaven like that? That as soon as we have a need, where does our mind go? Oh no, this, that.

Or do we look up? Like Billy Bray, that converted Cornish coal miner, used to be an ungodly man, but whenever he met any trouble in his life, oh, I must go and talk to father about this.

Is that how you meet trouble? Or like David, who is often in trouble and he runs to his refuge and strength, that ever-present help in trouble. Help me, Lord. Are we not seeing that in the Psalms?

Or like King Hezekiah, when he receives that threatening letter from the Assyrian king Sennacherib, what does he do? He takes it into the temple and he spreads it out. He says, here, Lord, look what he's saying about you and your people.

[ 39 : 03 ] And that's, that's your father. And you go and you spread the whole mess before him. You pour out your heart to him and you hold back nothing. You tell him all because you have such a father and you know his delight to help you and to give you good gifts and to answer your prayers.

Is that your view of your father in heaven? More willing to give to you than any earthly father. And that's why he packs this passage with three commands to pray and six promises if you will pray that he will answer and two parables, all of that revealing, unveiling the father's heart of willingness to give to you.

Because he knows that once that sinks into the crevices of our heart, we'll come running to the throne of grace, knowing what kind of a father we have there, knowing what he's, that he is going to answer us and that he delights in giving good gifts, even the spirit to those who ask him, his children.

Jesus knows that nothing will move us to pray like being sure of the heavenly father's heart towards us. Now this is Luke chapter 11. The cross is yet for future, isn't it?

You and I are living on the other side of the cross though, aren't we? What would be the ultimate unveiling of the father's heart towards us? Well, you know, it's the middle cross at Golgotha.

[ 40 : 48 ] There the father's heart was laid bare for the whole world to see. God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son. That when we needed a savior, God did not withhold his precious son, the one that had been with him for all eternity.

The joy of his heart who dwelt for all eternity in the father's bosom, face to face, love flowing between them. And when we needed a savior, he did, our father did not withhold him, but gave him up for us all.

Gave him up to what? To the hellish cross of Golgotha where the father laid on him the iniquities of us all and then standing in our place at the place of judgment, God sent hell to the cross and poured out upon him his wrath, his justice that we deserve for eternity.

But he's standing in in our place and that's the unveiling of the father's heart for you, child. So whenever you're tempted to try, it's that picture, it's back to Calvary.

This is, what kind of love is this that the father has lavished upon us? That he didn't spare his son? That he punished him instead of us? That he so loved us that he would pour out his wrath on him?

[ 42 : 21 ] That we might become his children? If we would but repent and turn and receive this Jesus because it's in receiving Christ that his God and Father becomes our God and Father.

And that's the standing demonstration of the father's heart. God demonstrates his love for us in this and that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Ever want to know the father's heart toward you, child of God? Run to Romans 5.8. Run to dozens of passages that reveal wide open the heart of God.

And now he says, come, come and ask, come and see, come and knock because my heart hasn't changed toward you. The book of Hebrews reminds us of this privilege of prayer.

Father, you know it's a blood-bought privilege, right? For us to be able to come to father and to pour out our requests.

[ 43 : 26 ] It's the most expensive gift he's ever given and that you have ever received. The blood-bought privilege of sonship to come at any time into the presence of your father and have confidence, assurance that you're accepted there and love there and his heart is wanting to give to you.

Listen how he puts it in Hebrews 10.19. Therefore, brothers, sisters, since we have confidence to enter the most holy place by the blood of Jesus, why can you go into the holy place to talk to father?

By the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened up through the curtain that is his body and since we have such a great high priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith.

Is that how you pray to your father? Full assurance, you're accepted there, you're loved there and he's got good stuff for you, the best for you. I don't know if you've ever spent a lot of money on a gift and given it to someone who just despised it and set it off to the side and is there anything else?

And you spent big money on that gift. I'm not saying it happened to me but maybe you have but I will tell you that I have done that to this blood-bought privilege of prayer.

[ 45 : 00 ] The father said, this privilege to come to me has been bought at the blood of my son. And I don't know how many days I have just despised it as if it were nothing really big to think about.

I've got other things to do. Why pray? I've got other means to try to figure this out. Why pray? No, may God forgive us.

May he help us to make use of this blood-bought privilege. this series on prayer from Luke 11 has been asking. We've been asking, Lord, teach us to pray.

And he's done that. And he's done it clearly, hasn't he? He said, when you pray, say. So it's been very clear as we heard in Sunday school this morning. He's been teaching us.

The question then is will we learn from him? Will you order your requests according to his word? He's taught us some of the most important things to pray for.

[ 46 : 05 ] His name being exalted, hallowed, held high, his kingdom to come, his will to be done. He's told us to pray for our daily bread and everything necessary for life on the planet.

He's told us to pray for the daily forgiveness of our sins and to be kept from temptation. Are you? Will you?

Let's not omit any of these requests but daily come to our Father and pray them to him. Let's form new habits in prayer. First things first, seeking his name and kingdom and will and then our needs for daily bread and forgiveness and protection from temptation.

Let's pray unselfishly. Give us this day our daily bread. and forgive us our sins and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

Unselfish praying. And as we do, let's remember God's willing heart toward us and our prayers that he's the best of friends, the best of fathers and has the best of gifts for his children.

[ 47 : 19 ] Let's ask big then. Let's ask for the Holy Spirit. Let's plead our relationship to God. Father, we're your friends, remember?

We're your children. Let's plead the many promises we've been given, six of them here. Lord, you said if we asked we would receive. We would receive again what is best for us, not a scorpion instead of an egg, but what is good for us and you know that better than I.

Let's ask with confidence worthy of children of this heavenly king most high. And so in answer to our prayers, may his name be hallowed, his kingdom come and his will be done in our hearts more and more.

If you're lost and still in your sins this morning, the prayer that you need to ask is God be merciful to me, a sinner, and save me because of what Jesus has done. He's my only hope of heaven.

I trust in his blood to cleanse me of my sin. Nothing good in my hands I bring. I'm simply holding up the empty hands of faith and saying have mercy on me and save me.

[ 48 : 32 ] That's the prayer you need to pray. And you want to talk about an expensive gift being despised? God sent his one and only son into the world that whoever, that's you my friend, unbeliever, that's you, young, old, whatever you are, he sent his son into the world that whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Are you still despising that gift? Oh, one day you'll meet the father who sent that gift and you'll have to answer for it.

Seek him today. Trust in him today and begin today the thrilling life of a dearly loved child of the perfect heavenly father.

Amen. Let's pray. Father, how can we thank you enough for the gifts that you have sent?

Gifts unearned. You sent your son even when we weren't asking for him. You sent him when we didn't want him. But then you sent your spirit to our hearts to open our eyes and to show us how much we needed him.

[ 49 : 54 ] Though we might make it through this world without him, we will never stand in the day of judgment and spend eternity in bliss without him.

So thank you and thank you, Lord Jesus, for teaching us how to pray. all our prayers go off the rails. They go into the gutters and we see our continual need to have this realignment of our hearts in prayer and to pray like you taught us to pray and to pray with a heart that understands your heart, heavenly father.

So, do forgive us. Forgive us that we let this privilege bought with the blood of Jesus lie unused and so alert us and awaken us.

Holy Spirit, you've been sent to help us to pray, help us, teach us and draw others to come into this wonderful family of God.

We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.