

Adventurous Prayer
Session 3
TEACH US TO PRAY

Now it came to pass, as he was praying in a certain place. When he ceased, that one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray”. **Luke 11:1**

Do you have a favorite dish you cook so often that you don’t even have to look anymore? What is it?

In many ways, I take after my father—both in looks and mindset. But I am my mother’s daughter in the kitchen. We are by no means gourmet chefs, but when it come to putting on a good old-fashioned meat and potatoes kind of meal, we’re pros. My mom can put on a meal for twenty0odd peope without blinking an eye and I have the dubious distinction of being called “Queen of Gravy.” But neither of us uses recipes. We’re of the old shool – a little of this and a little of that until it feels just right and then it’s done.

I married into a family of equally good cooks. Wonderful meals, and good home cooking—but recipe-users the whole lot of them. These folks had carefully perfected all their secret recipes (one half cup, plus two teaspoons sugar). They would experiment by making recipes two different ways, or in two different pans, then taste-test them to see which was better. Nothing was left to chance. The eggs *must* be medium—not large. The milk *must* be whole milk and at room temperature. The whipping process *must* go on for twenty-five minutes, not one minute less or the consistency would be off.

With the Lord’s Prayer in **Matthew 6** and **Luke 11**, Jesus gives us a recipe for prayer. Most of us have it memorized. But he didn’t mean for us to stick to the recipe as given every time we pray. Even I use the recipe the first time I make a dish. Then, once I’ve got the gist of it, I just throw it together the next time. Jesus’ prayer is a guideline, a lesson about prayer. But God welcomes our own creative touches when we come to him to share our hearts.

1. How long have you known the Lord’s Prayer? Who taught you?

Thelma Wells: We are admonished to pray without ceasing because prayers assert God’s power in our lives. When we fail to pray, we aren’t cheating God, we’re cheating ourselves.

2. We have God's attention and we are invited to pray. So what do we say to God? The Lord's Prayer is Jesus' example of how we should pray. Did you know he also give us some negative examples of how we should not pray? Look at one in **Luke 18: 11-14**. What is the difference between the prayer of the Pharisee and the prayer of the tax collector?

3. Look up **Matthew 6:7**. What is the other definite *don't* that Jesus shares with his disciples?

4. There are so many things we can pray about, they cannot be numbered. Here are a few of the things the Bible mentions through its pages-the prayers of others often inspire and encourage our own prayer life. Match the text in the first column with the matter of prayer in the second column which is mentioned in its passage.

| | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ___ 1 Samuel 1:27 | a. strength for the work before you |
| ___ 2 Kings 6:17 | b. those in authority over us |
| ___ Ezra 8:21 | c. protection from evil people |
| ___ Nehemiah 6:9 | d. safety in travel |
| ___ Jeremiah 42: 2-3 | e. a chance to see dear friends again |
| ___ Matthew 19:13 | f. direction |
| ___ Romans 1:10 | g. to have a baby |
| ___ Romans 12: 14 | h. blessings for our children |
| ___ 2 Thessalonians 3:2 | i. good health |
| ___ 1 Timothy 2:2 | j. wisdom |
| ___ James 1:5 | k. ability to see things as they are |
| ___ 3 John 1:2 | l. blessings for our persecutors |

5. The scriptures encourage us to pray for one another—for our brothers and sisters in Christ. Paul's heart was especially dedicated to prayer for his fellow Christians. What does he write in **Romans 1:9**

6. On a large scale, we need to be praying for the work of the Lord to continue. What do you suppose is meant by that?

Colossians 4:4 Do you pray for your pastor? What does this passage encourage us to pray on his behalf?

1 Timothy 2:1 Do you pray for those who do not know the Lord? What does this passage urge us to do on their behalf?

Colossians 4:3 Do you pray for missionaries and evangelists? What does this passage ask us to include in our prayers?

7. What does **Philippians 4:6** tell us we should pray about?

8. There are times when we can't quite put our feelings into words. There are times when we feel a prompting to pray, but we do not know what to say. There are times when our burdens and grief are so great, that we cannot even form our thoughts. According to **Romans: 8: 26**, what provision has God made for us in these times?

We have a son who is, apparently, defective. We didn't realize it until he was two, and beginning to talk. You see, he came without a volume control. With this boy, it is either loud, or asleep. Being a little further down the line in the family birth order, he learned very early, he had to speak up to be heard. Since his vocabulary is limited, his main tactic is to repeat a short phrase over and over until he drowns out all other conversations. At this point, he gets what he needs. So whether we're at the table or in the car, he'll begin. "I'm thirsty. I'm thirsty. I'm thirsty." Or, "My blanket. My blanket. My blanket," until someone hands him his favorite blanket. If nothing else, he's persistent. I wonder if this is how we sound to our Heavenly Father when we are in need. "Help me. Help me. Help me."

Jesus could be persistent in His prayer too. **Matthew 26:44** says he brought his needs to his father three times, saying the same things over each time. God

didn't mind that. God answered his son by giving him the peace and strength he needed for the day ahead of him God will answer your calling too.

9. Jesus gave us a parable on prayer in **Luke 11: 5-13**. What quality in prayer gets results?

10. Do you dread asking for patience, because you'd rather avoid situations where your patience will be tested? Do you hold back asking God to show you his will for your life, just in case he might ask you to do something you'd rather not? Now consider the rest of the paragraph Luke 11. Jesus again issues a wide-open invitation. Ask! Seek! Knock! What will be the result of these persistent prayers?

Thelma Wells: Shielding our loved ones from the consequences of their problems often isn't possible. But praying for their ability to handle those problems is appropriate and can benefit them and us. If you're trying to accept responsibility for the problems of others, pray for them and pray with them—without ceasing.

TRINKET TO TREASURE: At the close of each session, a gift will be placed in your hand to serve as a reminder of the things we have learned through scripture and our time together. It will be a small token to keep us from forgetting the faith journey we are traveling.

Closing Prayer: Heavenly Father, you have taught us to pray and we have learned it well. Help us to stretch our creativity and pray other prayers that will include our minister, missionaries, and those who still don't know you. Make us mindful of all that you do for us, and give us confidence to know that the Holy Spirit will guide us in our prayers.