

## The Parable of the Midnight Visitor

Text : **Luke 11: 1-13**

### INTRODUCTION :

- A. This parable is interpreted in several different ways.**
1. Context must determine how any text is interpreted.
  2. This parable was told to His disciples – **not** unbelievers.
  3. It is a teaching parable.
    - a. Meant to be clearly understood, not to mask His teaching.

**Luke 8: 10-** And He said, “To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is in parables, so that seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.
    - b. It was told in response to a questions, so it’s purpose is clear.
- B. Vs. 1 ... Jesus was often observed praying so they had examples of prayer.**
1. Examples are important, but words are necessary to communicate teaching.
    - a. **Acts 11: 14**
    - b. **James 1: 21**
  2. Words explain the WHY of the actions, of the example.
  3. It is important to live godly lives as an example for others, but words are required to teach people how to be saved.
- C. Those who seek to please God, also seek knowledge of God’s will for them.**
1. **Matt. 5: 6-** Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.
  2. **Eph. 5: 7-** Therefore do not be partakers with them; <sup>8-</sup> you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light <sup>10-</sup> trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.
  3. The disciples were with Jesus night and day, but they still asked for more instruction.

### TRANSITION :

Jesus willingly responded to their request with a demonstration and two examples in the form of parables.

**I. Vs. 1-2 ... Jesus demonstrated the appropriate attitudes for prayer.****A. Jesus did not give this prayer as one to be memorized and recited.**

1. Many call this “The Lord’s Prayer” or “The Our Father.”
  - a. It is memorized by children and repeated on widely varied occasions.
  - b. Some are required to say it as punishment or as penance for transgressions.
2. NO memorized and recited prayer can be appropriate. ( **Read as devotional material** )  
\* **By definition prayer is a dialog between a man’s heart and God’s heart.**

**B. By His prayer, Jesus taught them the attitudes of heart that should be in all prayers.**

1. “**Father**”= Pray is to one with whom there is a personal relationship. ( **parental respect** )
2. “**Hallowed be your name**” = reverent, respectful, humble
3. “**Thy kingdom come**” = submissive to God’s reign
4. “**Give us each day our daily bread**” = dependence, trust, acceptance of God’s will
5. “**Forgive us our sins**” = penitence, humility
6. “**We forgive others**” = love for others, willingness to give what one’s hope to receive
7. “**Lead us not into temptation**” = desire for holiness and commitment to seek it

**C. Each person’s prayer will be different in every circumstance,  
But these principles guide our approach to God.****II. Vs. 5-8 Understanding the circumstances of the parable.****A. It was common for people to travel during the evening hours.**

1. Many in Palestine travel in the evening to avoid the heat of the sun.
2. They did not have cars or motels along the way.
3. Hospitality was one of the highest values of their culture.
  - a. People rejoiced to receive visitors. ( **It was considered a blessing from God.** )
  - b. Extending hospitality was a moral obligation.
  - c. One who did not show proper hospitality was disgraced.
4. Hospitality is also a Christian value.
  - a. It is part of Christian love. ... **Rom. 12: 9-13** cf. -
  - b. Hospitality is enjoined upon all Christians. ... **Heb. 13: 2 , I Pet. 4: 9**
  - c. Church leaders must be hospitable. ... **I Tim. 3:3, Tit. 1: 8 ( Widows I Tim. 5: 10 )**

**B. Eastern houses were not like the Western houses of today.**

1. Average house in Palestine were small.
  - a. Most houses had :
    - 1) One room downstairs with one window.
    - 2) A roof area that could be used as a living area. ( **Approached from outside.** )
    - 3) An attached shed-type roof to cover outside cooking area.
  - b. The floor was just dirt that had been compacted and then covered with reeds.
2. The houses had very little furniture.
  - a. Some had a table, but most did not. ( **That's why lamps were set on a basket.** )
  - b. Only the rich had raised beds.
  - c. Some houses had a slightly raised platform for sleeping. ( **covered about 1/3 of floor** )
  - d. Many had a small charcoal stove for heat.

**C. Sleeping arrangements were also very different.**

1. People did not have individual sleeping rooms or even individual beds.
2. They slept on mats on the floor near the charcoal heat stove.
3. It was cold at night so they all huddled together for heat.
4. The man of the house slept across the door.
5. The house was used as a warehouse for crops and a shed to secure tools.
6. Small farm animals were commonly secured in the house at night. ( **chickens, goats** )

**D. To ask a person to get up and get something after all were bedded down was a much greater hassle for them than it would be for a westerner.**

1. The one arousing his neighbor had also been aroused by the traveler.
2. He knew the inconvenience he was causing his neighbor, but also knew he could get help.

\* **Remember** : **Jesus told this to teach about prayer.**

**III. Vs. 9-10 ... “so I say” ... Jesus applies the parable.****A. Basically Jesus says, “Don’t hesitate to tell God what you need.”**

1. The neighbor was unhappy to be awakened, but he gave his friend what he needed.
2. If a mere man will respond to a need, how much more will God do so ?
3. God never sleeps and He is never disturbed by our requests.

**B. Jesus is not saying we should nag God like a spoiled child.**

1. Jesus does not say that God can or will be worn down by much asking.
2. Man can never prevail or impose his will God.
  - a. To have such an attitude would be wrong in and of itself.
  - b. God is infinite in all His attributes ... in power as well as patience.
3. In three ways Jesus tells His disciples not to hesitate to approach God.

**C. In three ways Jesus tells His disciples ( us ) not to hesitate to approach God.**

1. **Ask** = You will be given.
2. **Seek** = You will find.
3. **Knock** = It will be opened to you.

**D. Jesus welcomes the opportunity to help you.**

1. **I Pet. 5: 6-** Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God,  
that He may exalt you at the proper time,  
**7-** casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.
2. **Heb. 4: 16-** Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace,  
so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

**Compare :** **Eph. 3: 12-** in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him.

**IV. Vs. 11-13 ... The second parable reinforces the first.****A. He addresses it to His disciples who have children. ( Didn't have to be single. )**

1. When your child asks for the things they need to survive, how do you respond.
  - a. Do you refuse to give them what they need ?
  - b. Do you give them something that will hurt them ?
2. He appeals to their logic; Are you better than God? **He takes care of His children.**

**NOTE :**

- a. People should not turn off their head when discussing matters of faith.
- b. Surely we must be a trial to God's patience, e.g., :

**Matt. 17: 16-** "I brought him to Your disciples, and they could not cure him."

**17 -** And Jesus answered and said,

"**You unbelieving and perverted generation, how long shall I be with you?  
How long shall I put up with you? Bring him here to Me."**

**B. When the child of God approaches His Heavenly Father, He will give them what they need.**

1. He knows what we need even before we ask. ( cf. **Matt. 6: 32** )
2. God does not promise to give us everything we want.
  - a. **James 4: 3-** You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures.
  - b. **I John 5: 14-** This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.

**ILL. – Bobby Bear tried to manipulate his father into a motor bike that his father did not want him to have. He didn't get it and lost his bicycle.**

**C. When God grants a request, He doesn't always do it the way we expect.**

**ILL. – For a long time a friend kept praying for an opening to share the gospel with his neighbor. Eventually, he ran over the cat of that neighbor's daughter and the child was devastated. The friend was sure he had no more hope of evangelizing the neighbor. However, while working through the problem, they became friends and a couple years down the road the neighbor became a Christian.**

**CONCLUSION :**

**A. God is a good father.**

1. He takes care of His children.
2. He is always approachable.
3. He knows what they need and will provide for them.

**B. Among the greatest privileges a Christian can boast is unfettered access to the Father.**

1. It is a privilege we should never neglect.

**I Thes. 5: 16- Rejoice always; 17- pray without ceasing; 18 - in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.**
2. We should never allow our prayers to become ritualistic recitations. ( **Heart to heart** )
3. We should confidently approach God :
  - a. As a child approaches his parent.
  - b. With reverence and submissiveness
  - c. With dependence, trust, and acceptance
  - d. Repentant and forgiving
  - e. Seeking holiness and purity

**INVITATION :**

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