



Week 3 - "When You Pray: ASK" - Pastor Holly Bates

Sermon Notes, January 23, 2022

Text: Matthew 6:9-13, Luke 18:1-8, Luke 11:9-13

Introduction

As Jesus disciples spent time with him in the intimate moments between ministry, travel and life in general, they sensed something different about his spiritual life - they recognized he was tapped into something they needed and wanted for themselves. They could sense the presence and power of God and were moved by it. Their hearts were kindled with a yearning for the same intimacy with God that Jesus enjoyed, and so they asked, "*Lord, teach us to pray....*" (Luke 11:1)

P - praise, R - repent. A - ask. Y - yield

We see, in this prayer Jesus taught the disciples to ASK "Give us the food we need"

In Luke 18:1-8, Jesus uses a parable to teach the disciples further about prayer. As we unpack this parable on prayer, it's important to note that this is a parable of contrast, not a parable of comparison. This parable is a clear contrast between the worst of man, and the best of God. If this wicked judge finally did the right thing for the widow who annoyed him, how much more will your Heavenly Father do for you, because He cares for you?

3 Contrasts we see in this parable:

- 1.) The woman was a STRANGER to the judge, we are CHILDREN OF GOD
- 2.) The woman had NO FRIENDS to help her, we have an ADVOCATE in Jesus
- 3.) The woman came to the COURT OF LAW, we come to the THRONE OF GRACE

Prayer isn't about a transaction, it's about a relationship

When you build a *relationship with God*, you begin to *trust the character of God*, you stand on a *firm foundation of WHO God is* and not *WHAT* he does for you.

IF we get this backwards and our prayer is about a transaction and not a relationship, we become:

- demanding
- short sighted
- entitled

Prayer is not an attempt to change God's mind, prayer gets us to the place in our relationship with God where God can trust us with the answer

Conclusion:

Luke 11:9-13

Our "asking" in prayer doesn't always result in a "yes" or a "no," but it always results in a peaceful heart when we seek the Holy Spirit.



Life Group Discussion

Study & Discussion:

1) What resonated with you from the sermon? What challenged or surprised you? What questions do you have?

Read Matthew 6:9-13 & Luke 18:1-8

2) Consider the 3 contrasts that we see in this parable. How to these truths affect how we view God? How does our view of God affect our prayer life?

3) "Prayer isn't about a transaction, it's about a relationship."

What are some practical ways that you keep your prayer focused on your relationship with God, yet continue to believe God to answer your prayer?

"Prayer is not overcoming God's reluctance; it is laying hold of His highest willingness"
(Phillips Brooks)

5.) What are the potential dangers to our faith when we make our prayer life "transactional?"

4) How does understanding the character of God help you navigate through the difficult waters of delayed answers to prayers?

Read Isaiah 55:8,9, Luke 11:9-13, Philippians 4:6, 7

5) Share a time when this was statement was true for you; "Prayer doesn't always result in a "yes" or a "no," but it always results in a peaceful heart."

6) Share a time when God clearly answered your prayer. Take time to celebrate what God has done and continue to trust that He is a Good Father!

Practicing the Way of Jesus:

1) Commit to joining Bethel on our 21 day prayer journey, live on FB & Instagram at noon if you can, and afterwards if you can't.

2) Begin to keep a prayer journal. Write down what you are praying for weekly, and when God answers a prayer OR speaks to you about a situation you are praying about- record it! You will begin a written record of God's unfailing love in your life. You will begin to see his faithful character at work in your situations.

