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Luke

Chapter 11 - A Polarizing Wish

God's Wish for You

Keep this in Mind (vs. 5-8)

**Luke 11:5-8:** Then He said to them, “Suppose one of you has a friend, and goes to him at midnight and says to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine has come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him’; and from inside he answers and says, ‘Do not bother me; the door has already been shut and my children and I are in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything.’ I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will get up and give him as much as he needs.

Well, I think the King James calls that “importunity”. That means shameless begging. And it's an interesting passage

which makes reference to, almost elevates that kind of behavior, which is kind of a bizarre thing as we think about prayer. Prayer in and of itself is probably one of the easiest things that we could ever do. I mean, to cry for help, how hard is that? You think of the man on the cross next to Christ, "Remember me." There's nothing complicated about any of those prayers. In fact, Jesus, in many respects, makes reference to those that have long drawn up prayers. And He says, "Don't think by your many words that you're going to be heard by Me." And yet, much is said about what prayer is all about. And I appreciate in particular in this passage, the disciples coming to Christ and going, "Okay, You've got to teach us how to pray. John's disciples are being taught by John. You need to teach us how to pray." And in their asking, what they're really saying in simplicity is, "I don't think we know what to ask for." I mean, how do you approach God? What do you talk to Him about? What is it that He wants out of this?

There's a passage in the Book of James, if you turn with me to James 4, It reminds us that oftentimes our attitude,

our heart is not right when we come to God. And I think sometimes we feel very disappointed because I've asked God for something a number of times and He doesn't seem to respond in any way.

James will say this,

(James 4:1) “What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members?”

(James 4:2) You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask.

(James 4:3) You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures.”

The passage is clarifying that oftentimes we don't come to God with a right heart, and we're only wanting things that are bad. Remember, James will say in James 1, “Every good and perfect gift comes from God.” Now, you go and ask Him for a bad gift, He's not going to give it to you, because He only gives good gifts. So, oftentimes our heart

clearly is not right, and this shows within the passage that you don't have because you ask not, and when you do ask, you ask with wrong motives, you ask for things that are consuming.

And you come to 1 John 5, and John will say very clearly, "Look, we have this confidence that we can have anything that we ask for if we ask according to His will." So, it's very important that we understand what it means to pray, to come to God, to ask Him for things.

Isaiah 59:2 writes this,

"But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God,

And your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear."

It's telling us that if we regard iniquity in our heart, if we love other things, that God is not going to hear us. And there are many things that are blocking that relationship.

Isaiah 66:2 reads this way,

“... “But to this one I will look,  
To him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who  
trembles at My word.”””

That is to say that there's a respect and an honor and a reverence for what God says. Sometimes we come to God, and we go, “I don't want to hear what You have to say. I just want to tell You something.” And God goes, “Well, I don't want to hear what you have to say.” So, it's very clear that there needs to be that sense of confession of our heart.

We come to this passage, Jesus gives this almost a parable of sorts within the passage to explain what prayer is all about. And He does it after laying the foundation, those verses 1 through 4 that we talked about last week. Let me just in some way summarize what we spoke of last week as the disciples come to Jesus and they ask Him what to pray. Once again, as He responds to them, I think in some regard, they may be thinking in terms of, “Well, He's going to tell me exactly what to say.” And Christ doesn't come back that way. He comes back and He says, “Pray with this heart and mind.” And so, the passage that we

have and the prayer that Christ gives is really a format of feelings rather than particular words to be recited. In other words, He's not giving them words to mimic back. He's giving them a heart that needs to be in every prayer that we pray, a kind of sentiment.

So, we pick that up in particular, if you look in Luke 11:2, as they ask Him to teach them how to pray.

He says this,

(Luke 11:2) “And He said to them, “When you pray, say: ...””

And if you remember what we talked about last week, the word that He uses is “*legō*,” not “*laleō*”. “*Laleō*” would be focusing on the words that are being said. “*Legō*,” in this particular passage, focuses on the sentiment that's there. In other words, “Have this sentiment; have this desire; have this mindset when you pray, in the sense of these are your longings.”

Now, in the passage, what we're really seeing is God's wish for us. And we were talking about specifically the fact that prayer in and of itself, “*proseuchomai*,” making

reference to a wish, a good wish. So, what prayer means is you're wishing upward to God. It's the breakdown of the word "prayer". And what you're wishing for is that which is good. So, every good and perfect gift comes from God. So, God's saying, "Okay, make your wish." And here the disciples go, "Well, what do we wish for?" And He goes, "My wish for you is that you wish this way." And so, we're actually seeing within the passage God's desire for us when we come before Him, what does He want us to wish for? And if we can just sort of take this in the antithetical way, let's kind of look at what we usually think about when we wish for things. When you consider that oftentimes our inclinations are to emulate or imitate the world, or more specifically, as Ephesians 2 would say, that we were actually falling in line with the god of this world. Think about the fact that a lot of times people's wishes or their desires or the things that they want to emulate are like the world. You turn on the TV, "I want to be like that person." You don't turn on the TV and go, "I want to be like God." Because all the things that are being revealed to you are the things of the world. And so, you go to work, you go to the social environment that you

have, and you begin to wish for the things that are of the world. Well, Scripture says, "Don't love the world. Don't love the things in the world." But oftentimes when we come in our prayers, we go, "Help me be like this." And God goes, "I'm not going to do that." So, He starts off by saying, "When you pray, pray that you want to emulate," or more specifically, He puts it in the possessive, "Pray that God would be your Father and you'd want to emulate or imitate Him." So, the focus is no longer on, "I want to imitate the world." And once again, it's with this sentiment. So, no matter what you're praying, you should be thinking in terms of, "Okay, I want to be like God."

There have been times that, I mean, naturally, we get angry at people and we as Christians call it righteous indignation, and it probably is, in many respects.

Nevertheless, Scripture says the anger of man can't accomplish the righteousness of God. And so, man tries to want to do the right thing and even gets very intense about it. But God goes, "Okay, now you got to let that go. Don't let the sun go down in your anger because if you hold on to it, something bad's going to come out of that."

Because we don't know how to be angry right. Only God can do that. So, we come before God, we get very angry. Well, sometimes in your prayers, if you think about it, and I've oftentimes thought about Jonah; I'm pretty sure Jonah was thinking, "Get them!" We know Habakkuk was. Habakkuk goes, "I can't believe these people are doing all these sins in front of my very eyes. I have to look at these people sinning. God, just get rid of them." And God goes, "Okay." And of course, we know that Habakkuk ultimately goes, "Okay, but remember mercy in Your wrath." So, he realizes that he called out the troops and maybe, he shouldn't have done that. But the point is that we get caught up in our self-righteousness and we begin to feel like they've done something against us and things aren't happening the way that we think they should. Our initial thought should be, "Help me to think like You, God. Help me to imitate You." So, when we say, "Our Father," it's a possessive pronoun. "You're my Father, therefore I want to emulate or imitate You," as we looked at in specific in Matthew 5, in which Jesus says, "Okay, you need to be like your Heavenly Father. He causes the rain to fall on the righteous and the unrighteous. He causes the sun to shine

on the righteous and the unrighteous. Therefore, you're to be perfect like your Heavenly Father is perfect. Don't just be nice to people that are nice to you. Gentiles do that. But you be like your Dad." So, you start off the prayer. See, instead of starting off the prayer, "God, kill them," you go, "Okay, Father, help me to think like You do. You want to save these people." And of course, that was pretty discouraging to Jonah because, I mean, what really upset him was he knew God to be compassionate. "I knew You were going to be nice. I knew You were going to save these people, and that's why I didn't want to talk to You." But that's the mindset that you want to have. So, it really starts with a desire to imitate Him and to be like Him. And it's a view in the sense of not being like common man. In other words, it's a realization that God is not like anything or anyone on the earth. That's why you use the phrase, "Holy is Your name." You can't come before God and go, "I know You're thinking like me." And God goes, "No, I'm not." You know, Isaiah's clear, as high as the heavens are above the earth, God's ways are higher than yours. He doesn't think like you. In the Book of Hosea, God will declare in that particular book, "I'm not a man. I

don't think like you." So, all the way through, we know that's true. That's why you have to come before God and without your preconceived notions about what you think God needs to do. You know how you have those lists? You know, "God save this person. Now, this is how I think You're going to do it." Then we tell God how He's going to do it. And He goes, "I don't think that way. So, we're going to do it a different way." And it usually has to do with you humbling yourself somewhere in that line. But I know He at least does that. But it's man thinking in some way that God is common. See, the opposite of holy is common in Scripture. So, if you regard God like you or like anybody else that you know, you have the wrong picture. You cannot come in prayer thinking that God thinks the same as you do. This is why you want to get in the word of God. Because you want to let the word of God dwell in you richly, so you're thinking like Him rather than thinking like you. So, "Holy is Your name," as He begins to describe. So, He starts off in verse 2, He said, "When you pray, say this with this sentiment: that you want to be like your Dad, you don't think of Him like anybody else, and you

want His standards above everything else. And of course, fundamentally, when we oftentimes come in prayer, we come to God with our set of standards. “Well, we think this ought to happen,” and we begin to think certain judgment calls, “This is what needs to happen,” and God goes, “I don't want your standards. My kingdom come.” And we emphasize the word “*basileia*,” that word “kingdom,” within the text, making reference specifically to not a place, but His standards. “Your standards come; Your will be done,” as Matthew will emphasize within that.

And then He says this in verse 3, “I want You to give me exactly what is necessary,” as Proverbs will say, “to keep me close to You.” And every thought that we have and every prayer that we have, no matter what the request is, we should be thinking, “God, don't give me this if it draws me away from You.” So, the phrase, “Give us each day,” is, “Every single day, we need to have just what You want us to have that will keep us close to You.” As Proverbs so aptly puts it, “Don't give me too much that I'm going to be proud and arrogant and think I don't need You, and don't

give me too little, in which it draws me away in that respect.” And so, the fundamental principle is, “I just want what You want that would keep me close to You.” We have to think that way every time we pray, no matter what the prayer is, no matter who you're praying for.

And then, of course, obviously,

(Luke 11:4) “And forgive us our sins...”

“Help me not to be oppressive and vindictive. Help me to forgive, as You've forgiven me. Help me to think that way.” I mean, how many of our prayers are vindictive?

You see that with the psalmist in particular, especially, strangely enough, at the end of Psalm 139. At the end of Psalm 139, he's going, “I hate these people. I hate these people. I hate these people.” He uses the word “hate” consistently. Now, if you remember at the beginning of Psalm 139, “Oh Lord, You know me, all my thoughts, I was woven in my mother's womb. Boy, I'm so wonderfully made.” And then he goes, “And I hate these people that are sinners.” And then he ends the text with, “But You have to search me and try me and see if there be any hurtful way in me.” And that's how he ends the text. Well,

what he's saying in the passage is, "You know me better than anybody else, and You know whether or not my anger is righteous indignation, or I'm just angry, and how destructive my anger can be." So, we ultimately come to the point of saying, "Help me to think like You think," and that is, "How can we forgive?" Not in terms of, "How can we vindicate," or "how can we get back, or get even?" And so, it's a different mindset within the passage.

Ultimately, as you come to the end,

“... And lead us not into temptation.”.

Of course, once again, our desires are often that we pursue and acquire anything and everything that we desire. We come in prayer, and we go, "Boy, I really want that." And how does the prayer end? "Don't let me have anything that will lead me away from You." It's fundamentally, "Don't lead me into temptation away from God." And so, this is the stage in which prayer is given and the mindset in which we come before the Lord. He's revealing that.

Then He gives this interesting parable that we're going to look at in the passage. And it seems kind of bizarre. And

we're going to see other Scriptures that are sort of parallel to this that see this kind of repeated. And that is this shameless persistence to get something. And Jesus seems to be applauding it, which is almost bizarre in and of itself. I've oftentimes thought, you know, especially when you go to Matthew 6, and He goes, "Look, I know what you need before you ask." So, what do you ask Him for this stuff for? So, there's so many things that we come before God, "Oh, I need..." and He goes, "I clothe the birds, I take care of the flowers in the fields. What do you think? I'm not going to take care of you? Aren't you worth more than a bird?" I'm thankful for that. But it just reveals the fact that, why are you asking? And once again, He talks about the terms of many words or the repetition. You know, "I've got to keep repeating it. If I repeat it..." He says, "I'm not going to hear it because you repeat it." So, we know it has to do with heart, and yet here's persistence that seems to be rewarded. And this is what seems bizarre within the passage.

So, we pick up, if you read with me, in Luke 11:5,

"Then He said to them..."

Which is tagging on to their cry, “Teach us to pray.”

So, He tags on this particular passage,

“Then He said to them, “Suppose one of you has a friend, and goes to him at midnight and says to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves;

(Luke 11:6) for a friend of mine has come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him’;

(Luke 11:7) and from inside he answers and says, ‘Do not bother me; the door has already been shut and my children and I are in bed...”

That's kind of a cultural thing, but actually, oftentimes, they would have just one room in the house, which kind of conveys that maybe this was a poor house. They have one room in the house, and they all slept in one area. So, in order for the dad to get up, he's going to wake the kids. You know, the one thing that you don't want to do as a young father, wake the kids. You don't want to do that.

“... my children and I are in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything.’

(Luke 11:8) “I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence...”

(King James) “Importunity,” the shameless behavior in which he consistently continues to beg and ask,

“... he will get up and give him as much as he needs.”

Now, that's strange, isn't it? Isn't that a strange passage? I get a kick out of these passages. So, what is He doing? That's the question you have to ask yourself. Why is He throwing that in? I mean, I can understand, you know, “Pray like this, ‘Father, hallowed be Thy name.’” I get all that. But why give this parable that almost seems like you're rewarding somebody that's bothersome in the middle of the night? Clearly, throughout Scripture, God's going to give you examples of the way that the world asks for things and does things. And then, of course, He'll give the comparison and the contrast of how God responds. Within the contrast, it's to be noted that God is not bothered by you. However, He's bringing a greater point out of this.

So, the question is, "Okay, what is the point?" Well, at first, what you have to see is that in order for this person to get the bread that he wants, at the time that he wants it, he's going to have to overcome some pretty huge obstacles. Let's just kind of look at what the obstacles are. One obstacle factor that he has to overcome is time. It's at midnight. So, that's a really bad time to ask people. In the middle of the night, maybe this is going to make it a lot harder. So, he's got to overcome the sense of time; he's got to overcome the perhaps sense of, he has a friend that has come to visit him, and this guy he's asking is his friend, but his friend that he's asking doesn't know the friend that he's asking for. So, now you have the mix of unfamiliarity. He's got to overcome that this guy that he's asking doesn't know this guy. He doesn't know this guy from Adam. He might know you, but why does he want to do this guy a favor? Simply because you asked him to? I don't know. I want to think through that one. And then in the passage, he's got to actually overcome the obstacle of inconvenience, "The door's shut, not happening. We already closed, locked everything up. Everything is put away. You want me to get all this stuff

out again?" So, you have the inconvenience, you have a disruption of the fact that it's going to be disruptive to get out of the bed. The kids are going to be disrupted within the passage and it's going to be difficult. It's something that you have to do. I mean, I have a hard time just finding a glass of water at night. You know, you wake up in the middle of the night, "I'm thirsty," and you're going, "I hope I don't fall down the stairs or something," you know? So, think about the difficulty in the middle of the night. And it just takes a little while for your faculties to kick in. No? Okay. So, there's a difficulty. And then on top of that, he now is irritated. How do we know that? "Don't bother me." So, this guy has to overcome all those things. Now, I know the thought is, "I know how you overcome it, our friendship." So you call out, "Hey, we're friends, we're buddies." "Oh, don't pull that one on me. I'm going to bed." The passage says, even though he's a friend, he's not going to do it for friendship. And he's not going to do it because he's altruistic or benevolent or compassionate or merciful. He's not going to do it for any of those reasons, according to the passage. The only reason that will get that guy up to bring bread is persistence. That's it.

That's the whole text. The only thing that gets this guy to go do something is persistence.

Jesus will say something similar if you look with me in Luke 18.

It says in verse 1,

(Luke 18:1) “Now He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart,

(Luke 18:2) saying, “In a certain city there was a judge who did not fear God and did not respect man.

(Luke 18:3) There was a widow in that city, and she kept coming to him, saying, ‘Give me legal protection from my opponent.’

(Luke 18:4) For a while he was unwilling; but afterward he said to himself, ‘Even though I do not fear God nor respect man,

(Luke 18:5) yet because this widow bothers me, I will give her legal protection, otherwise by continually coming she will wear me out.’”

(Luke 18:6) And the Lord said, “Hear what the unrighteous judge said;

(Luke 18:7) now, will not God bring about justice for His elect who cry to Him day and night, and will He delay long over them?

(Luke 18:8) I tell you that He will bring about justice for them quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?""

Oh, there's a clue there within the passage. And the clue is that this must have something to do with faith. So, as we go through, we're going to see that continual persistence.

You think about in Mark 7, there's an interesting example, if you remember, of the Syrophenician woman that comes to Jesus, and she has a daughter that's demon-possessed, and she comes begging Jesus. He goes, "Look, I came to the Jews," and she goes, "Yeah, but even dogs receive the crumbs from the table." And He goes, "Because you said that, I'm going to heal your daughter." Now, you have to say, "Oh, that's pretty demeaning," and that's the point. The point is that Syrophenician people were very proud and very arrogant. One of the reasons why in that particular region you have Tyre and Sidon,

and it's always perceived as a place of great arrogance and pride, it even is the picture of Satan himself within that particular city. So, here you have a people that are very arrogant, you have a people that are very proud, and what has to happen in order for her to come before God and request something? She has to realize that she can't demand something. She has to realize that she's a beggar coming to Him. Unless you humble yourself, you can't see the kingdom of God. Unless you realize that you come with nothing really to offer, you know, you can't come demanding from God. You have to come with a humble spirit. And so, all these pictures are going to give this interesting picture. I think of Acts, I think it's Acts 16, where you have the young girl, and she's demon-possessed; she begins yelling at Paul. And it says that Paul heals her because he's annoyed with her, you know? And you realize, "Wow, persistent pays off." Yeah, Scripture wants you to know persistent pays off, but it wants you to know why persistent pays off. So, in this passage, let me see if I can define to you why persistent pays off. I'm going to kind of give you a few things that this particular passage is making reference to.

First of all, Jesus is wanting you to know, when you come to Him, you have to come with a sense of weakness. Now, the reason I say that is, within the passage, the way that it's described here is, He says, if you look in verse 6, (Luke 11:6) “For a friend of mine has come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him’.”

In order for you to come to God, there has to be a sense of, “I have nothing. That's why I'm coming to You. There's no merit on my own.” He's not asking him in the sense of, “This will be a great benefit to you.” “I have nothing.” Now, he does say, “Maybe I can pay you back,” but at this juncture, he's admitting that he has nothing. And fundamentally, what the passage is saying is that you have to come that way before God.

The second thing that the passage is making reference to is the fact that when you come before God, you have to be cleansed of your selfish motives. Now, this is very interesting. If you just take a look at the passage. Why is the guy asking for the bread? It's not for himself. It's for his friend. In fact, everything about this particular scenario is making this guy humble himself to the point of

looking bad as a beggar. But it's not for him. That's a very interesting point within the passage. So, Christ is kind of giving this picture of not only a person that comes with great need, but a person that has actually discarded his selfish desires. If you think about so many of our prayers, so many of our prayers are basically fundamentally, "Me first," and "It's all about us." And maybe, if we have time, maybe we'll throw in a concern for somebody else. But what makes this prayer intense is that he's not asking for himself. He's asking for his friend. Let me just say this, that kind of sheds all the superficial things, you know? When I was growing up, that song they used to sing on the radio, "Oh Lord, won't You buy me Mercedes-Benz? My friends all have Porsche's; I must make amends. I work all of my life, with no help for my friends, oh Lord, won't You buy me a Mercedes-Benz?" So, what it does is it takes you away from all that superficial stuff. I mean, if you're going to go to the degree of begging, you better have a good reason to beg. It can't be superficial. It can't be really about yourself. And so, he really sheds himself. Think about in John 4, when Jesus is talking with the woman at the well. Remember the disciples coming up to

Him, and they go, "You do know it's time to eat?" He goes, "I've got food you don't know about. I'm talking to this woman." And so, He forgoes anything for Himself so that she might have living water at that particular stage. You have this sense of selflessness going on. But even more than this, within the passage, this sense of persistence is really that which... And I know at first, I remember thinking to myself, "I don't know if I agree with that, but the more I think about it, the more I realize that this whole idea of having to persist, of not getting what you want right away..."

Let's just kind of work through this scenario. Let's say that the guy yells out, "I need 3 loaves," and he goes, "No problem," throws out 3 loaves. End of story. What are we missing? What we're missing is intensity. And to me, what's wonderful about the passage is God is actually fostering, cultivating intensity in our lives. You come before God, and you go, "You know, I really need this." He goes, "Really?" "No, I didn't guess so." Or you might ask Him for something, and you go, "I really, really want this." He goes, "How bad?"

If you've ever read Proverbs 2, the emphasis is that He'll give you wisdom, but you have to seek for it like you would silver or gold. You have to long for it more than anything else, then He'll give you the wisdom. The question is, how bad do you want it? And what the time in not receiving it does is it increases intensity.

Scripture talks about in John 2, where Jesus goes in the temple, it says, "Zeal for His Father's house consumed Him." He'll do the turning over of the money changers in that particular setting. So, right at the beginning of His ministry, He does that. And at the end of His ministry, He does that. And it's seen in Matthew. And what He states in Matthew is, "For My Father's house will become a place of prayer." Now, what He's basically saying is, "You should be thinking of other people, not exploiting them." But you see the zeal. So, the question is, why the zeal? And there's been this time in which He's having to put up, and the three years' time, creates a greater zeal. It creates an intensity. It's kind of hard to explain, but God does that. And it literally eradicates... You remember the problem with Laodicea? Lukewarm. So, how many of your

prayers are basically like this, “Hey, it'd be kind of nice if You gave me something”? That's not the kind of prayer God's looking for. Remember, God's answering the request, “Pray like this.” So, what He's wanting is intensity. He's not wanting you to think of yourself. He's not wanting it to be all about you, but He's also wanting you to be very intense about this. How bad do you want this? How important is this to you? He's not going to let up. It's so important to this guy, which is bizarre when you think about it, that he would jeopardize his friendship with this guy that he's trying to get the bread from. It's in the middle of the night. He's disrupting everybody. And on top of that, he's risking looking totally foolish in front of everybody. Have you ever prayed in such a way that you felt so constrained that in front of everybody else, it's going to look so foolish? I'm not talking about getting on a soapbox and praying. I'm talking about them seeing the desire of your heart in which you just are talking to God, and you're going, “I've got to talk to You now.” Jesus says, “You've got to come in that spirit, with that kind of intensity before Me.”

But last but not least, and really this is what to me the whole text is about. This is a test of your veracity, or the veracity of your faith. Do you actually believe God is the only One you can turn to? This guy was convinced that his friend was the only person he could turn to. Because quite frankly, if he wasn't the only person he could turn to, he would have gone to somebody else's house. I mean, why sit there and embarrass yourself? Why keep on trying to convince this guy? Why wear him out, wear you out, by trying to get him to do something? There's only one reason why. He was convinced this is the only guy that can do something. And Jesus is saying, "If you don't come to Me in prayer believing that I'm the only One that can do it, don't bother coming to me. You must ask in faith with believing. The one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. Don't expect that you receive anything from the Lord, being a double-minded man with duplicitous thoughts, unstable in all your ways. Do you really believe Me? Then don't stop asking. Do you believe I'm the only One?" The whole process of you being persistent creates that. I found this true in my own prayers, at first, oftentimes I'll come to

the Lord sometimes a little bit cavalier, sometimes without any real sense of intensity, and sometimes really without any real belief. I might pray with Him and then I'll go off to the side and I'll go, "Now, let me see if I can work this out to help God out a little bit." And so, you have your little corner in which you're trying to make bread. But the fact of the matter is, you can't come to God that way. This is an interesting picture in the passage of really demonstrating a selflessness and a shamelessness in your asking. And God says, "You have to come that way."

If in fact you don't come that way, and here again, fundamentally this text is saying, "You need to keep this in mind when you come to Me. You need to actually believe I'm the only One that can do something. And if you don't, don't bother. Don't bother." I mean, we say that God is great. We say that He's good. We say that "You're not like the world." We say that "We only want You to supply all of our needs according to Your riches and glory." We act confident in our faith. We use the right words. But in prayer, I think oftentimes we give up too easily, and it just reveals that we didn't actually believe.

God's not impressed by your many words, and He's not asking you to repeat things. He is asking for sincerity. He is asking for genuineness, and He is asking for intensity when you pray, and a faith that believes that He can do it. Remember the example that we gave you of the widow. When Christ comes, will He find faith on the earth? It's about faith. And faith doesn't give up because faith knows that God's the only source. And I'm not going to stop talking to Him about it. I'm not going to stop.

### **Closing Prayer:**

Father, we come before You today, and we believe that You're the only source of our salvation. There is no other. We do not go to other sources. We don't trust in man. We don't trust in the things of man. We don't trust in our own reasoning, our own ability to make things happen. We come to You with the simplicity of, "I don't have anything to offer You, but I come to You." And You say, if we'll come to You in that way, believing with great intensity

and zeal in our hearts, that You are beyond a shadow of a doubt the only One that we can turn to, You'll hear us.

Your head's bowed and your eyes closed. Perhaps we haven't been praying right. Perhaps our thoughts haven't been right. Perhaps we've tried to come in and tried to convince God that He needs to be doing certain things or perhaps even thinking our way, but no, holy is His name. He's not like you. And you need to remember this every time you come before Him. And you need to remember that this is about having His way in everything that is done, because if it's not, then it's not going to be good. It's not going to be beneficial. It won't help people. It won't be ultimately curing in the eternal state.

We want Your will to be done, Your kingdom to come. And Father, help us never to think in terms of ourselves or just getting forgiveness for ourselves, but in a desire to see the world saved, to see others saved, to see others forgiven, and experiencing Your love. Lord, don't allow anything to come into our lives that would draw us away from You. And if causing us to come before You with the same thing over and over again is what's going to increase

my intensity and desire and my trust for You, then Lord,  
hold it back.