

God First: Building a Prayer-Centered Relationship with God – Week Five

Sometimes God Makes You Wait

The importance of perseverance in prayer – Luke 11:5-13; Luke 18:1-8

Introduction: Most of us know patience is a virtue, but today, options for instant gratification abound, and we want what we want now. This poses a huge problem for prayer, because sometimes God makes us wait. His intent is not to be mean, but because of the character he hopes to produce. In the waiting God develops our character, and we learn great things about his character. We begin with a central principle then three parables.

1. THE PRINCIPLE – Sometimes we need to persevere in prayer. Luke 11:9-10

- A. Context – Jesus got “caught” praying, and his disciples ask for teaching on prayer.
- B. First observation – Each of the terms in vss. 9-10 are in the imperfect tense.
- C. Second observation – Each of these terms represents different kinds of prayers.
- D. Third observation – All great men and women of God were required to persevere in prayer.

2. 1ST ENCOURAGEMENT AS YOU WAIT – See God as a faithful friend. Lk. 11:5-8

- A. Jesus teaches a good lesson from a bad example. *Imagine...*
 - 1. Your best friend arrives unannounced after a long journey; he’s exhausted and hungry.
 - 2. You feel compelled to practice ancient laws of hospitality, but you have no bread.
 - 3. You go to your friend’s house, but he says, “I can’t do it; door’s locked! We’re in bed.”
 - 4. You shamelessly persist, and he gives you the bread (but probably with a snarly attitude).
- B. The contrast with God: God is not a begrudging friend. He’s a generous friend.
 - 1. We can be “shamelessly” persistent, *in faith* that God wants to provide.
 - 2. When you ask, he will give, “as much as you need.” But he is the definer of our need.
- C. The application: Keep a list of things you desperately want that would take a miracle to get.

3. 2ND ENCOURAGEMENT AS YOU WAIT – See God as a generous father. Luke 11:9-13

- A. The story of the bad dad. *Imagine...*
 - 1. A father and son are working together, and the son becomes hungry.
 - 2. The son asks his dad for something simple to eat: a piece of fish or maybe an egg.
 - 3. The father, with malice of intent, gives his son a snake and a scorpion.
- B. The contrast with God: Notice the “if/then” lesson by Jesus.
 - 1. If we sinful parents give good gifts to our kids, how much more will God?
 - 2. Specifically, God gives the Holy Spirit to those who ask him.
- C. The application: Sensing the comforting presence of a *Father* empowers perseverance.