



Jesus Teaches on Prayer, His Power, and Hypocrisy Luke 11

Introduction

After a busy day of teaching and an evening spent with devoted friends, Jesus went away to pray. It is through prayer that Jesus communicated with His Father while He was on earth. God has also given us prayer as our means of communicating with Him. Along with this, He has given us His Word. Studying God's Word and going to Him in prayer enable us to sit at the feet of Jesus, as Mary did. We can listen to Him and talk with Him in a meaningful way.

Outline of Luke 11

- I. Teaching the Disciples to Pray - Luke 11:1-13
- II. Teaching About His Power Source- Luke 11:14-26
- III. Teaching About Response to God's Word- Luke 11:27-36
- IV. Teaching About Hypocrisy- Luke 11:37-54

I. Teaching the Disciples to Pray - Luke 11:1-13

- A. The Model Prayer - Luke 11:1-4; Matthew 6:9-13

1. Disciples' desire to pray - 11:1

The disciples were accustomed to hearing Jesus pray. He gave thanks for food, He prayed before ministering, He prayed when the seventy returned with their good report. They knew prayer was a central part of His life. One day as they saw Him praying, they approached Him wanting to be taught how to pray. The best climate for learning is the desire to do something we have seen another do. We are then ready to be taught. Jesus' example led the disciples to say, "*Lord, teach us to pray.*" Perhaps they also have remembered their powerlessness to help the demon-possessed boy was due to lack of prayer (Matthew 17:21).

2. An apostles' prayer - 11:2-4

The prayer Jesus taught is often called The Lord's Prayer, but it is actually the apostles' prayer. The prayer Jesus prays in John 17 just before the cross is the Lord's Prayer. The apostles' prayer is brief, having only six sentences.

- a. "*Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name.*"

The prayer opens with God being addressed and the

holiness of His name recognized. We need to approach Almighty God, Creator of the universe, our Maker and Judge, with due reverence.

- b. "*Your kingdom come.*"

The first petition acknowledges and desires God's righteous kingdom. Its arrival would make all the difference for us. This should be the desire of every heart.

- c. "*Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*"

The subject of the second petition is God's will. In heaven, God's will is done without question, instantly and continually. For that to happen on this earth, which is so full of rebellion, earnest prayer is needed.

- d. "*Give us day by day our daily bread.*"

Luke is more specific than Matthew which says simply, *Give us this day our daily bread.* Luke emphasizes daily dependence upon God for our necessities, never to be taken for granted.

- e. "*And forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us.*"

Luke uses the word "sins" where Matthew uses "debts" Sins are against God. We are only able truly to forgive others as we realize that we are forgiven a much greater debt of sin against the One who loves us most.

- f. "*And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.*"

Luke specifies the one behind evil. God does not tempt anyone (James 1:13). But it is He who can prevent us from being tempted. If we do fall into the grip of the evil one, God can extricate us in answer to prayer. King David prayed to be delivered from his enemies (Psalm 5:8; 7:1).

Luke omits the ending that is found in Matthew but does not appear in the earliest manuscripts, "*For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever, Amen.*"

- B. Parable on Prayer - Luke 11:5-13

Jesus then told a parable to make the point that prayer is answered. This story is about three friends. Friend

A arrives unexpectedly at Friend B's house forcing him to go to Friend C's for bread. Friend C is reluctant at first. However, the urgent begging, or importunity, of Friend B prompts him to meet the need.

1. The application - 11:9-10

Jesus tells us how to apply the teaching to our lives. *"So I say to you, ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened."*

2. The promise explained - 11:11-13

Lest the promise of answered prayer seem too good to be true, Jesus gives a word picture of a father answering a son. No father will mock his child by giving him a stone for bread, a serpent for a fish, or a scorpion for an egg. Even ungodly fathers try to provide for their child's expressed needs.

"How much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him." This last sentence confuses many people who know we do not receive the Holy Spirit by asking for Him, but rather we receive the Holy Spirit when we turn to Jesus as our personal Savior from sin (Romans 8:9,23; 2 Corinthians 5:5; Ephesians 1:13-14). Here, nevertheless, is a gracious promise that can be taken to God for fulfillment as He sees fit, much as you would take a check to the bank to cash.

II. Teaching About His Power Source- Luke 11:14-26

A. Reality of Demon Possession - Luke 11:14

Casting out demons occupied much of Jesus' healing ministry. He cast out seven from Mary Magdalene, a legion from one demoniac, and, on this occasion, one demon causing muteness. "The verb 'to be demonized' occurs, in one form or another, seven times in Matthew, four times in Mark, once in Luke, and once in John" (Unger's Bible Dictionary, Merrill Unger).

Demon possession is to be distinguished from physical and mental illnesses, although the symptoms may be the same. The Bible mentions both demonic and non-demonic illnesses. The paralyzed man in Luke 5:18, the infirm man in John 5 and the blind man in John 9 were not demon possessed. The man in Matthew 8:32; Mark 1:23; and Luke 9:39 were. "The demonized were incapable of separating their own consciousness and ideas from the influence of the demon, their own identity being merged, and to that extent lost, in that of their tormentors" (Life of Jesus, Alfred Edersheim). Jesus treated cases of demon possession as real.

B. Prevalence of Demon Possession

The amount of demon activity in Jesus' time was unusual. "In Acts and the epistles we do not find many references to demon activity. It apparently was a phenomenon especially associated with the earthly ministry of our Lord. It should surely be interpreted as an outburst of demoniacal opposition to the work of Jesus" (New Bible Dictionary, J.D. Douglas, editor). Caution is recommended when associating anything with demonic activity today, although it is still possible. It is dangerous to underestimate the enemy, but it is important not to overestimate him.

C. Attributing Jesus' Power to Satan - Luke 11:15-16

Jesus' critics claimed He cast out demons by Beelzebub, the ruler of demons. Beelzebub, or Beelzebul, means "Lord of the Flies", and is probably derived from Ba'al, the Canaanite/Palestinian god and head of evil spirits. The audience was divided. Some hesitated to credit His power to Satan and asked for a sign from heaven.

D. Jesus' Logical Rebuttal - Luke 11:17-26

Jesus knew the thoughts of those who opposed Him. He gave four arguments in refutation.

1. Illogic of a divided kingdom - 11:17-18

Satan is not so absurd or self-defeating as to cast out the means by which he destroys people. That would be a kingdom divided against itself.

2. Accusation applied to Pharisees' sons - 11:19-20

If Jesus was in league with Satan, so were others who cast out demons, such as the sons, or proteges, of the Pharisees. Since there are only two sources of spiritual power, good and evil, if Jesus used the power of God, then the kingdom of God had come.

3. Illustration of the strong man - 11:21-23

Jesus illustrated the two powers with a story of a strong man and one stronger. Satan is a strong man who guards his goods, i.e. souls, until one stronger comes. The stronger one is Jesus, who strips him of his armor and divides his spoils. Each person belongs in one camp or the other. No one is neutral. *"He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters."* In which camp are you?

4. Warning of the empty house - 11:24-26

Attributing the work of Christ to the power of Satan is

blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, and is associated with the unforgivable sin in Matthew 12:31. The warning of the empty house could refer either to a person or to the nation of Israel cleaning out the evil without putting in the Holy Spirit. Jesus said the empty house would be inhabited by more evil than before. We say, "Nature abhors a vacuum." Are you getting rid of bad habits, making resolutions, turning over a new leaf, but doing it in your human effort without relying on the power of God and filling up the vacuum with Jesus Christ as your Lord? Psychologists find that 90% of dieters put back the weight they lose. Also, the rate of recidivism among parolees is extremely high. Change is not easy. Do you want to change your habits? If so, do it in the power of the Holy Spirit by calling upon God to help you (see Luke 11:13).

III. Teaching About Response to God's Word- Luke 11:27-36

A. The Truly Blessed - Luke 11:27-28

As Jesus was speaking, a woman in the crowd shouted, "*Blessed is the womb that bore You, and the breasts which nursed you!*" Praise for His mother Mary was the woman's way of expressing her admiration of Jesus.

Jesus gave her an answer similar to the one He gave His mother and brothers when they were unable to reach Him because of the crowds (Luke 8:21). "*More than that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it.*" Are you one of the blessed students of God's Word?

B. The Sign - Luke 11:29-36

1. Seeking a sign -11:29

With the crowds still gathered around Him, Jesus turned to address the ones who wanted more evidence, especially a sign (11:16). They seemed less hostile than the others, nevertheless Jesus called them an "*evil generation*". They had evidence enough. All His miracles were signs, His teaching was inspired, and His life exemplary. Still they demanded more. How much evidence is enough for you to be convinced of who Jesus is?

2. Sign of Jonah - 11:30

As the prophet Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites by his appearance after being "resurrected" from the great fish, so the resurrection of Jesus would be the conclusive sign to His generation. What greater sign could there be?

3. Witness of queen of the South - 11:31

The queen of the South (queen of Sheba) was a witness against those Jesus called the evil generation by her journey to hear King Solomon at great expense and inconvenience. Jesus was in their midst and they were not hearing Him as the queen heard Solomon -- eagerly and with awe.

4. One greater than Solomon - 11:32

Jesus declared Himself greater than Solomon and Jonah, two of Israel's most celebrated personages (Matthew 12:41). Solomon had brought Israel to its peak of glory and wealth. Jonah brought Israel's feared enemy, Assyria, to repentance. Jesus claimed more greatness than they. How much more should He be honored than they?

5. In the judgment - 11:32

Everything is not resolved in this life. Jesus was crucified by evil men. The good suffer. The wicked prosper. We do not always see justice triumph nor evil conquered. But a day is coming when everything will be put right. Jesus gave a preview of that day. The queen of Sheba and the people of Nineveh who repented will be witnesses against the unbelieving Israelites of Jesus' time. Who will witness against so-called Christian people for their skepticism disguised as sophistication?

C. Letting Your Light Shine - Luke 11:33-36

"*Take heed that the light which is in you is not darkness.*" Jesus is the "*light of the world*" (John 8:12). His Word is the lamp to our feet and light to our path (Psalm 119:105). He wants to shine forth from our lives as a lamp shines to give light. Is your light shining? If you are living for Christ's glory, your whole being will be affected (full of light). God's Word will teach you how to live each day in your circumstances. Do you deeply desire for others to know that God is sufficient for you? Anything less is pharisaical hypocrisy.

IV. Teaching About Hypocrisy - Luke 11:37-54

"Luke records numerous occasions when Jesus was invited to dinner (Luke 5:29; 7:36; 14:1; 19:5; 12:1,2)" (Wycliffe Bible Commentary, Moody Press).

A. Consistency - Luke 11:37-41

A Pharisee invited Jesus to dinner and was surprised when Jesus challenged tradition by ignoring the customary ritual handwashing. As anticipated, the Pharisee watched Jesus with amazement. Jesus used

the moment to teach about consistency and hypocrisy. "You Pharisees", He said, "*make the outside of the cup and dish clean, but your inward part is full of greed and wickedness.*" The Pharisees kept the ceremonies, which were external, but were greedy and wicked inwardly. God cares about both appearance and substance. Does your inside match your outside? Are you consistently living your faith?

B. Five Woes on Hypocrisy - Luke 11:42-52

1. Woe to Pharisees - 11:43

Jesus strongly warned the Pharisees concerning their love of shallow display, such as having the best seats and being greeted in public. How important are these special treatments to you?

2. Woe to scribes and Pharisees - 11:44

Jesus strongly warned the experts in the law of being like hidden graves which people would avoid if they knew about them.

3. Woe to lawyers - 11:45-46

Jesus strongly warned the lawyers who interpreted the law and who knew they were included in the charge of hypocrisy. By continually adding to the law, they made it hard for sincere people to keep the law. Yet they did nothing to help them.

4. Woe to those who revise history - 11:47-51

Those who built tombs to honor prophets killed by a previous generation claimed that they were more righteous than their ancestors. In truth, the tomb did more to celebrate the foul deed of their ancestors than it did to honor the prophet.

Jesus used Zachariah as an example. He was a good priest who spoke out as a prophet against the corruption

of the people. They murdered him in the courtyard of the temple (2 Chronicles 24:20). Jesus said, "*The blood of all the slain prophets from the foundation of the world may be required of this generation.*" They were about to commit the worst offense of all time by rejecting their Messiah.

5. Woe to teachers - 11:52

The lawyers taught the people how to obey the law, and teachers have a double responsibility: for themselves and for those they teach. As the apostle James wrote, *Let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive the stricter judgment* (James 3:1). Teachers have the duty of not only presenting the truth, but presenting it without bias or hidden agenda. To shade the truth, add to it or subtract from it, is to compromise oneself as a teacher and that is the essence of hypocrisy. Truth is neutral, unbiased. No one needs to fear the truth, least of all believers. Truth will always glorify the One who said, "*I am the way, the truth and the life*" (John 14:6). By perverting the truth for personal advantage, the lawyers were not only missing the kingdom of God but denying entrance to those they taught.

C. Effect on Pharisees - Luke 11:53-54

Instead of heeding Jesus' warnings and agreeing with Him that they were guilty, the scribes, Pharisees, and lawyers turned on Him, *began to assail Him vehemently, and to cross-examine Him on many things.* They lashed out at Him viciously, hurling questions at Him to *catch Him in something He might say, that they might accuse Him.*

Application

Are you in any way a hypocrite? Does the Bible shine a light on anything about your lifestyle, motives, or actions that you need to change? If so, how will you begin to change today?

QUESTIONS

Questions are based on the New King James Version of the Bible.

DAY ONE: Read lesson notes and references.

1. Did Jesus' teaching on prayer help your prayer life? If so, in what way?

2. a. Give one argument Jesus gave for His power being from God and not from Satan,

b. How is "*the strong man*" made to release his possessions?

3. How can you be sure you are not a hypocrite?

DAY TWO: Read Luke 12:1-12.

4. a. What warning did Jesus give His disciples?

b. In Luke 12:1, what does "*leaven*" mean? See Matthew 16:12.

5. What good warning is in Luke 12:2-3?

6. a. Who is not to be feared?

b. Who is to be feared? Why?

c. What two promises can you find in Luke 12:7-8?

DAY THREE: Read Luke 12:13-31.

7. Put Luke 12:15 into your own words.

8. a. What is the point of the parable of the rich man in Luke 12:16-21?

b. What point does Jesus make in Luke 12:22-23?

9. What two natural examples should we "*consider*"? Why?

10. a. What things are we not to worry about? Why?

b. Is this easy for you or not so easy? Explain your answer.

c. What is to be a believer's top priority (12:31)?

d. When this is truly one's top priority what promise is given?

DAY FOUR: Read Luke 12:32-40.

11. a. Compare the person described in 12:31-34 with the rich man in verses 16-20. What are some major differences?

b. Which person would you rather know? Why?

c. Which person do you want to be? Why?

12. a. List the commands given by Jesus to His disciples in 12:35-40.

b. Which of these do you think apply to you as well?

13. In this section, which verse is most important to you? Why?

DAY FIVE: Read Luke 12:41-50.

14. Did Jesus answer Peter's question? Explain your answer.

15. Who will be made rulers in Christ's kingdom?

16. a. How did the servant in 12:45-46 begin to go wrong in his thinking?

b. How did his wrong thinking affect his behavior?

17. a. What are the differences between the two servants in 12:47-48?

b. How does this illustration of the two servants help you to understand the way God will judge people?

DAY SIX: Read Luke 12:51-59.

18. a. Has history proven Jesus correct in saying He came to bring division? Explain your answer.

b. What examples can you give?

c. Have you experienced any division between people because you know Jesus? If so, please describe it.

19. a. What do we all know enough about to influence our behavior?

b. ? (Thought Question) How does that fact make us accountable to God?

c. According to 12:56, what is more important to know?