

Prayer: Problems & Possibilities

Luke 18:1-8 & 11:5-8

INTRODUCTION: “*So many things to pray about...*”

- I. MANY PEOPLE HAVE PROBLEMS WITH PRAYER
 - A. Don't get to it
 - B. Frustrated by “unanswered prayer”
 - C. Wonder if it makes any difference
 - D. Jesus addresses our prayer issues by means of two humorous parables (Luke 11 & 18)

- II. PRAYER PARABLE # 1: *The Friend At Midnight* (Luke 11: 5-8)
 - A. Picture the typical Palestinian home...
 - B. What a midnight disturbance!
 - C. Jesus asks: “*Well, what would you have done?*”
 - D. Jesus draws us into a comparison with our Heavenly Father...

- III. PRAYER PARABLE # 2: *The Dignified Judge & the Pesky Widow* (Luke 18:1-8)
 - A. This woman would not give up!
 - B. The judge had reason to be scared of her
 - C. Jesus asks: “*Well, what would you have done?*”
 - D. Again He draws us into a comparison with our Heavenly Father

- IV. JESUS ADDRESSES BIG QUESTIONS ABOUT PRAYER
 - A. We often find it hard to pray because we picture God as a reluctant neighbor or unjust judge
 - B. But the good news is that God reaches out to us in Jesus Christ
 - C. We mistakenly think our prayers are not answered
 - D. But in these parables Jesus tell us our prayers are answered in God's time & either with - **yes**, **no**, or **not yet** (2 Cor. 12; Rom. 5:1-5)
 - E. We are mistaken if we reason that since God already knows what we need, there's no need to pray
 - F. But in these parables Jesus tells us that God wants to give us more than an “answer”... He wants to give us Himself (1 Cor. 2:2; Exodus 32)
 - G. God **delights** in giving us the gift of Himself (Gen. 3:9; Lk. 15:20; Lk. 19: 5)
 - H. And, besides all this, God the Holy Spirit & God the Son pray for us! (Rom. 8:26 & 34)

CONCLUSION: *Enough talk about prayer, let's pray!*