

“The Problem with Prayer”

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)

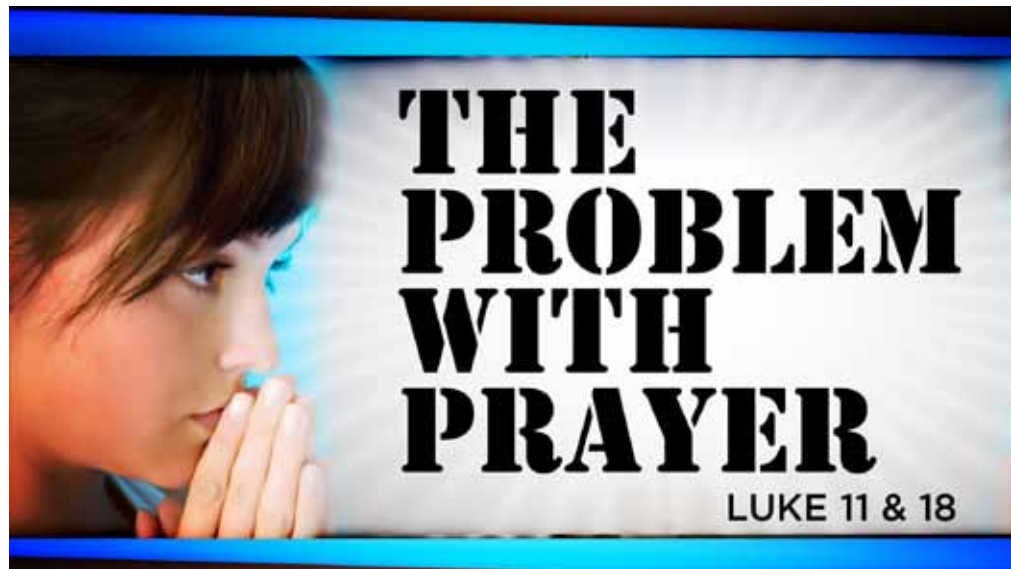
II. PRAYER PARABLE #1: *The Friend at Midnight* (Luke 11:5-8)

- 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 neighbour 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 tells us our prayers are answered in God's time and either with: **yes**, **no**, or **not yet** (2 Corinthians 12; Romans 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 Corinthians 2:2; Exodus 32)
- G. God **delights** in giving us the gift of Himself (Genesis 3:9; Luke 15:20, Luke 19:5)
- H. And, besides all this, God the Holy Spirit & God the Son pray for us! (Romans 8:26 & 34)
- I. **Prayer:** “*Like learning to drive a clutch*”

CONCLUSION:

Enough talk about prayer, let's pray!