

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Describe a time when you were persistent in asking for something. What was the outcome?

## What the Text Says:

How does Jesus describe the friend's response in the parable? Why might this have been shocking to His listeners?

## Understanding:

How does this parable challenge our typical views of prayer?

## Application:

How might understanding God as a loving Father change the way you pray?

What keeps you from being persistent in your own prayer life?

In what areas of your life do you need to practice more "shameless" persistence in prayer?

## Next Steps:

Reflect on your view of God. Do you relate to Him more as a boss or as a Father? How can you grow in your understanding of His fatherly love?

This week, try approaching God in prayer with more boldness and persistence.

## Missional Living:

How might your approach to prayer impact your witness to others?

***Finally, what did this parable leave you to think about?***

NOVEMBER 3, 2024

# PARABLES

## 8: SHAMELESS PRAYER

LUKE 11:5-8

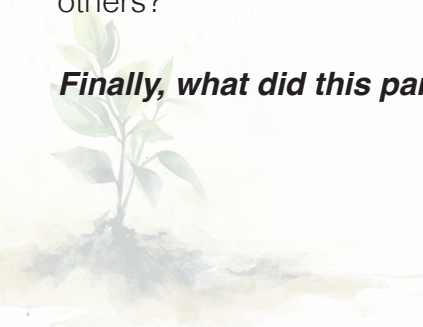
## TODAY'S VERSES:

Luke 11:5-13

Luke 11:1-2

Exodus 33

John 1:12-13



## 8: SHAMELESS PRAYER LUKE 11:5-8

Abraham Heschel wrote, “*The real issue with prayer is how one understands God.*” It’s not about the words, the form, the structure, or the formula; people have a hard time with prayer because we fail to have a proper view of God.

Jesus tells a parable about a person who has an unexpected guest arrive at night. He goes out to ask his friend for bread, but the friend won’t get out of bed to help. The host starts to beat on the friend’s door until he gets up and helps. This is understood as shameless, bold, prayer. Jesus, as most Rabbis do, described this as a positive characteristic.

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### Jesus is NOT comparing God to the neighbor who won’t get out of bed.

In Luke 11:1 the disciples ask Jesus to teach *them* how to pray. Jesus says, “You don’t knock just once, ever.” Jesus was not asked, “How does God *receive* prayers?” Jesus was asked, “How do we *present* our prayers?” How must we go to God with our prayers? Jesus says, “Relentlessly, shamelessly, constantly.” When prayer becomes constant and more natural, it brings us back into connection with our humanity.

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**Shameless prayer is a result of being God’s children.** We pray shamelessly because we are His children, just as kids act when they feel comfortable with their dad. The key is the Christian doctrine of adoption.

- Children pray **aggressively**. None of the things Jesus says make any sense unless you understand that God is your Father.

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There are two different ways of relating to God, which are essentially two different religions: God as boss (saved by my efforts/performance) or God as Father (saved by grace/Christ’s work).

- Children pray **trustingly**. Tim Keller used to say, “*Our father gives you what we would have asked for if you knew everything he knows.*”

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If you watch little children, they instinctively do everything that the Bible describes we should do as God’s children. They bug their parents trustingly, they instinctively expect their parents to take care of them, they expect their parents to love them, and they expect to be accepted. Jesus is reminding us that when we become a Christian, a child of God, those responses can begin to come back again. Prayer doesn’t give us what we want; it is to grow our relationship with God and teach us what we need.

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