

January 21, 2018

Praying Through

Luke 11.5-13

We easily pray insincere prayers and, at times unknowingly, attribute insincerity to God. Jesus addresses this in a challenging parable.

We live in a shameless age. Our society celebrates people who flaunt the shame convention of our culture. In Jesus's day shamelessness was a serious sin. In this parable Jesus seems to say God can be shameless.

Verses 5-6:

- You are at home minding your own business. Its late at night and an unexpected guest shows up at your house. The shame conventions of the time honor hospitality.
- Plus, Jesus set the story up so the unexpected visitor clearly has no choice. If you turn him away you are shameless so you turn to your friend.
- The situation is just like prayer. You have an unexpected need and turn to your friend God to help.

Verse 7:

- The friend acts shameless!
- Who is this friend? Three questions for every parable: 1) who is the audience 2) What is the point of the parable? 3) Who is the God or Jesus figure in the parable. The disciples are the audience. The point is how God answers prayer. The God figure is the friend who shamelessly refuses to help!

Verse 8:

- The friend will not help because of anaideia or shamelessness.
- Whose shamelessness is referred to here? There are three characters: the midnight traveler, the one who turns to his covenanted friend and the one who refuses to help. The last one, the God figure, is in danger of shamelessness.
- Jesus is saying God will help to avoid being shameless.

- Let us be shocked just as Jesus' audience was.

Verses 9-10:

- Jesus's point is God is trustworthy and not shameless.
- We are to continue asking, seeking, and knocking or Praying through our life's situations.

Verses 11-13:

- God is trustworthy to meet us in prayer with His Holy Spirit to engage us through a process that leads to answered prayers. The answers are rarely what we expect them to be.

God's goal in answering prayer is to give us what we really need in a way that deepens our relationship with Him and shapes our inner lives.