

# Asking to Give (Luke 11:1-13)

## A Small Group Outline



### 1. Praise *(Purpose: To worship God)*

- What are you thankful for this week? *(let the group's secretary write these down in an A4 hardcover or some notebook)*
- Song Service
  - Sing a few songs of praise to God

### 2. Pray *(Purpose: To carry each others' burdens and to seek the Lord)*

- What challenges did you have this week? *(write these down in an A4 hardcover or some notebook)*
- Go into a season of prayer

### 3. Review *(Purpose: To learn accountability)*

- Tell us how it went with what you promised to do in last week's meeting? *(e.g. Who did you share your faith with this past week? Who did you minister to? How did actioning your I WILL STATEMENT go?)*
- *Where people have failed to fulfil what they said they would, do not be harsh with them but gently encourage them to try again in the coming week. Give them more support by phoning or joining them in the week.*

### 4. Give *(Purpose: To be good stewards of our monies)*

- This is the time to return tithes and offerings. If done electronically, kindly ensure that you get the bank account details of your local church from your treasurer. Don't forget to complete an envelope and to send the breakdown to him/her.

### 5. Discover *(Purpose: To learn to listen to God, and be obedient to His Word)*

- **Notes for the facilitator**
  - Read *Christ's Object Lessons (COL)*, pp. 139-149
  - Christ spent much time in prayer. This was the powerhouse of His ministry: "Not for Himself, but for others, [Christ] lived and thought and prayed. From hours spent with God He came forth morning by morning, to bring the light of heaven to men. Daily He received a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit. **In the early hours of the new day the Lord awakened Him from His slumbers, and His soul and His lips were anointed with grace, that He might impart to others.** His words were given Him fresh from the heavenly courts, words that He might speak in season to the weary and oppressed. [see] Isaiah 50:4" (COL 139).
  - In answer, to the request 'teach us to pray', Christ repeated the Lord's prayer, then in a parable He illustrated the lesson He desired to teach them. (cf. COL 140)
  - "Here **Christ represents the petitioner as asking that he may give again.** He must obtain the bread, else he cannot supply the necessities of a weary, belated wayfarer. In like manner the disciples were to seek blessings from God....They were to give the bread of life to the people.... Often they would be thrown into unexpected positions, and would realize their human insufficiency. Souls that were hungering for the bread of life would come to them, and they would feel themselves to be destitute and helpless. They must receive spiritual food, or they would have nothing to impart. But **they were not to turn one soul away unfed.** Christ directs them to the source of supply. The man whose friend came to him for entertainment, even at the unseasonable hour of midnight, did not turn him away. He had nothing to set before him, but he went to one who had food and pressed his request until the neighbor supplied his need. **And would not God, who had sent His servants to feed the hungry, supply their need for His own work?"** (COL 140).

- **“The selfish neighbor in the parable does not represent the character of God. The lesson is drawn, not by comparison, but by contrast.** A selfish man will grant an urgent request, in order to rid himself of one who disturbs his rest. But God delights to give. He is full of compassion, and He longs to grant the requests of those who come unto Him in faith. He gives to us that we may minister to others and thus become like Himself” (COL 141).
- Significance of calling God our Father
  - It is associated with the closest connections of the human heart
  - It strengthens our confidence in Him
  - It is a sign of our love and trust in God
  - It means we are part of God’s royal family
- This parable teaches the importance of perseverance, and assures us that God is willing to hear and answer our prayers (cf. COL 142)
- **“We are to ask that we may give.** The principle of Christ's life must be the principle of our lives.... **Our mission to the world is not to serve or please ourselves; we are to glorify God by co-operating with Him to save sinners.** We are to ask blessings from God that we may communicate to others. The capacity for receiving is preserved only by imparting. We cannot continue to receive heavenly treasure without communicating to those around us” (COL 142)
- “In the parable the petitioner was again and again repulsed, but he did not relinquish his purpose. So our prayers do not always seem to receive an immediate answer; but Christ teaches that we should not cease to pray. **Prayer is not to work any change in God; it is to bring us into harmony with God.** When we make request of Him, He may see that it is necessary for us to search our hearts and repent of sin. Therefore He takes us through test and trial, He brings us through humiliation, that we may see what hinders the working of His Holy Spirit through us” (COL 143).
- When we come to God in prayer, there are conditions to the granting of our requests:
  - Obeying God (John 14:15, 21)
  - Reconciling differences between each other (1 John 4:20)
  - Not robbing God in tithes and offerings (Mal. 3:7-8)
  - Coming to God in faith, i.e. show a firm, undeviating trust in Him (Heb. 11:6; Mark 11:24). “We shall receive increased blessings because we have increased faith” (COL 146).
  - Persistence in prayer: “Persistent asking brings the petitioner into a more earnest attitude, and gives him an increased desire to receive the things for which he asks” (COL 145)
  - Asking according to God’s will (1 John 5:14-15)
- As we seek ‘bread’ for others, let’s keep the following in mind: “You need not go to the ends of the earth for wisdom, for God is near. **It is not the capabilities you now possess or ever will have that will give you success. It is that which the Lord can do for you.** We need to have far less confidence in what man can do and far more confidence in what God can do for every believing soul. He longs to have you reach after Him by faith. **He longs to have you expect great things from Him.** He longs to give you understanding in temporal as well as in spiritual matters. He can sharpen the intellect. He can give tact and skill. Put your talents into the work, ask God for wisdom, and it will be given you” (COL 146)
- “Take the word of Christ as your assurance. Has He not invited you to come unto Him? Never allow yourself to talk in a hopeless, discouraged way. If you do you will lose much. By looking at appearances and complaining when difficulties and pressure come, you give evidence of a sickly, enfeebled faith. **Talk and act as if your faith was invincible. The Lord is rich in resources; He owns the world. Look heavenward in faith.** Look to Him who has light and power and efficiency” (COL 146)

- “There are many who long to help others, but they feel that they have no spiritual strength or light to impart. Let them present their petitions at the throne of grace. Plead for the Holy Spirit. **God stands back of [i.e. stands behind] every promise He has made.** With your Bible in your hands say, I have done as Thou hast said. I present Thy promise, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.... **The honor of His throne is staked for the fulfillment of His word unto us”** (COL 147-148)
- “All who seek of Him shall find. **All who knock will have the door opened to them.** The excuse will not be made, Trouble Me not; the door is closed; I do not wish to open it. Never will one be told, I cannot help you. **Those who beg at midnight for loaves to feed the hungry souls will be successful”** (COL 148)
- “**Personal effort for others should be preceded by much secret prayer; for it requires great wisdom to understand the science of saving souls.** Before communicating with men, commune with Christ. At the throne of heavenly grace obtain a preparation for ministering to the people” (COL 149).
- “**All that Christ received from God we too may have.** Then ask and receive. With the persevering faith of Jacob, with the unyielding persistence of Elijah, claim for yourself all that God has promised” (COL 149).
- What the Holy Spirit brings (*Morris Venden, Your Friend the Holy Spirit*)
  - **Conviction** (i.e. convicting the world of sin) – John 16:8
  - **Conversion** (leading sinners to Christ) – John 3:3-8. He does this by guiding the sinner into truth (John 16:13)
  - **Cleansing** – 1 John 1:9 (Christ does this work of cleansing through the Holy Spirit who was sent after Christ’s ascension – John 16:7). This cleansing work produces the fruits of the Spirit in our lives (Gal. 5:22-24)
    - ⇒ “Sin could be resisted and overcome only through the mighty agency of the Third Person of the Godhead.... It is by the Spirit that the heart is made pure. Through the Spirit the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ has given His Spirit as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress His own character upon His church” (DA 671)
  - **Commissioning** for service – Acts 1:8. This the Holy Spirit does through equipping the saints with spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12:4-11)
  - “This promised blessing [of the Spirit], claimed by faith, **brings all other blessings in its train.** It is given according to the riches of the grace of Christ, and He is ready to supply every soul according to the capacity to receive” (GW 285)
- How to receive the Holy Spirit:
  - Repent and be baptised (Acts 2:37-38)
    - ⇒ “It was by the confession and forsaking of sin, by earnest prayer and consecration of themselves to God, that the early disciples prepared for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. The same work, only in greater degree, must be done now” (5T 507)
  - Obey all of God’s teachings (Acts 5:32)
  - Ask for it (Luke 11:13)
  - Believe that you have received Him (Mark 11:24)
- *Read Luke 11:1-13. Preferably let one person read it. Let everyone then put down their Bibles and get the group to reconstruct the passage in their own words. This teaches the group to be careful in quotation Scripture correctly and to use it as the basis of their discussions.*

- **Discussion Questions** (*use only a few*). *The notes in italics after some of the questions below are for the facilitator, and not to be read out to the group.*
  - Why do you think the disciples, who had prayed all their lives, asked God to teach them to pray?
  - What is the significance of calling God our heavenly **Father**?
  - How do most parents respond to their children's requests?
  - How is God the Father like, and unlike human fathers?
  - What are things that could possibly hinder the granting of our requests by God?
  - Why do you think we have to persevere in prayer? Does God delight in getting us to ask for things over and over before He grants it? (*ask one question at a time*)
  - What is the importance of ask to give, versus asking to receive?
  - Why is God so keen to give us the Holy Spirit? What does the Holy Spirit bring when He comes into our lives or our churches? (*ask one question at a time*)
  - Generally speaking, why don't we seem to sense our need of the Holy Spirit, even though God is so eager to give His Spirit to us?
  - How do people receive the Holy Spirit in their lives?
- **Application Questions** (*select a few depending on your time. One has to be the I WILL STATEMENT*)
  - Share a time when someone pestered or harassed you for something? What were your feelings and thoughts at the time?
  - Share an experience where you earnestly sought God to impart spiritual blessing, wisdom or salvation to someone else?
  - What stood out for you in this lesson that you'd like to apply in your own life?
  - I WILL STATEMENT: Formulate an I will statement in response to what you have discovered in the Word. Let the group's secretary also record these in an A4 notebook. Ensure that everyone gets a chance to give their I WILL STATEMENT. You have to be specific. E.g. "From this week I will pray for the salvation of my 2 closest friends and not stop seeking the Lord until they come to conversion."

**6. Share** (*Purpose: To be witnesses of our faith*)

- Do you have anyone you could share today's lesson with this week? *Be specific.*

**7. Closing prayer**

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