1. **Jesus’s School of Prayer – 101**

In Luke 11 the disciples, once again, observe Jesus interacting with His Father. When He was done one of the disciples asked, “Jesus, teach us to do that.”

There was something in Jesus’ communion with the Father that struck the disciples. They wanted in. They wanted what Jesus had.

Prayer was so personal when Jesus prayed. He was speaking with His Abba, His Papa. It wasn’t a ritual to Him. It wasn’t a “work” or a “chore” or a “religious activity.” **Prayer, for Jesus, was relational, and the disciples wanted to know if they could pray like that.**

Jesus answers their request and teaches them to pray.

Today, just like the disciples then, we are asking the Lord to teach us to pray – Lord teach us to pray today.

We are going to discover that **Jesus’ Prayer 101 class is not simply about prayer, it’s about answered prayer.**

Answered prayer must be one of the things that sets us apart from other religions. Why? Because our God is alive, He hears, He cares, and so He answers. Prayer alone does not set us apart – many religions prayer (often with more faithfulness and fervor than we do).

Answered prayer is what sets us apart. **If God never answered prayers we would have the right to call into question the nature of our relationship.**

Relationship is reciprocal; it is a two-way street; it is call and response; it is give and take. If we never heard from or received any answer from God, it would be a one-way relationship – hardly a healthy one.

When it comes to answered prayer, we must understand that the answer is not always “yes.” Sometimes it’s, “no” or even “wait.”

So what do we do – **what do we do when the answer is NO. What do we do when the answer is WAIT. And what do we when the answer is “YES?”**

1. **Class Overview**

Jesus first gives them an overview and example – what we call the Lord’s Prayer.

His first words of the prayer were probably stunning to the young men who were eager to hear Jesus’ teachings on prayer.

**(Luke 11:2)***, So He said to them, “When you pray, say: Our Father…*

Jesus is telling these weak and immature young men that when they pray, they can address God the Father, Creator of Heaven and Earth, the Blessed only Sovereign I AM, as their own Father. **Jesus tells the disciples that they can approach God with the same confidence, boldness, depth, and delight as Jesus Himself.**

1. **How To Pray When the Answer is No**

After giving them a model and example of prayer, Jesus gives the disciples their first Lesson – Prayer 101. This is “roman numeral number one” in Jesus’ teaching notes on prayer.

Interestingly enough, Jesus’ first lesson – His very 1st lesson – on prayer is how to pray when the answer to your prayer appears to be NO.

**(Luke 11:5-8)***, 5 And He said to them, “Which of you shall have a friend, and go to him at midnight and say to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves; 6 for a friend of mine has come to me on his journey, and I have nothing to set before him’; 7 ‘and he will answer from within and say, ‘Do not trouble me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give to you’? 8 “I say to you, though he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will rise and give him as many as he needs.”*

**The Persistence of a Friend**

One of the primary themes in all of Jesus’ teachings on prayer is persistence. In fact it’s one of the very first things Jesus teaches his disciples about prayer when they asked Him to teach them about prayer.

Key words: friendship and persistence.

<tell the story>

**Deep friendship gives us the confidence to pray audacious prayers**. Audacious prayer does not take no for an answer. This can be seen as pushy, presumptuous, or even illegal. And perhaps in some ways it is. But Jesus is saying that this prayer is not only allowed, but encouraged.

The Importance of Friendship

It takes time to build history. It takes time, effort, vulnerability, interaction, shared experiences, and mutual commitment through difficulties to build a friendship. The time to start building friendship with God is not when you suddenly have a need – the time is now.

Having relational equity will give you the confidence to lean into that friendship in times of need, or even when the answer to your prayer appears to be NO.

**When deep friendship has been forged, we can be assured that the relationship can withstand a little pressure.**

Audacious pray-ers refuse to go down without a fight.

**There is a place in prayer where breaking decorum and shedding our polite platitudes is totally “legal.”**

Consider the following “illegal” prayer:

 -the woman with the issue of blood

 -the men who lowered their friend from the roof

 -Mary at the wedding

Jesus invites us to not settle for “no.” If the Father is going to tell you “no,” we are encouraged to prayer in such a way that forces Him to keep telling us “no.” Jesus is saying, push back, don’t settle for “no,” keep at it, stay engaged, be persistent, and don’t lose heart. Stay in God’s face and wrestle, like Jacob. **Persevere in prayer.**

<side note> Audacious prayer do not challenge God’s sovereignty, but rather His sovereign timing. Audacious prayers seek to pull into the “now” that which was meant for another time.

**So when the answer appears to be “NO” we are encourage to keep on praying!**

Which brings us to our next point:

1. **How To Pray When the Answer is WAIT**

Jesus tells us to keep asking, seeking, and knocking. Be persistent. Lean into God for breakthrough.

But what do we do when the answer is delayed? How do we pray when God says WAIT?

 **(John 11:1-15)***, 1 Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany…3 Therefore*

*The sisters sent to Him saying, “Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick.” …6 So when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was…14 Then Jesus said to them plainly, “Lazarus is dead. 15 And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe…*

Jesus delayed. His friend was sick and the sisters asked for healing. Jesus delayed and the friend died. Mary and Martha, the sisters, both had faith that Jesus could have healed their brother.

They both said to him (in verses 21 and 32) “…if You had been here, my brother would not have died.” They believed. They had faith.

The issue for them was not that they didn’t have faith, but rather that they didn’t have answers.

They didn’t understand why He didn’t come sooner.

To get insight into this we should go back to Jesus’ statement in verse 15: “that you may believe.”

The sisters were correct. If Jesus had been there Lazarus would have been healed of sickness. The disciples had already seen Jesus heal sickness. They believed in healing. But now they were about to experience a greater work – the dead coming to life!

**Sometimes when the answer to your prayer is delayed it is simply gaining interest.**

**Delayed answers are often unto greater glory.**

So how might we have encouraged Mary and Martha in their delay? How might Jesus teach us to pray in the midst of delay? Where Luke 11 teaches us to pray when the answer is “NO,” Luke 18 teaches us what to do when the answer is “WAIT.”

Jesus teaches us about this in Luke 18.

**(Luke 18:1-8)***, then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart…7and shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? 8 I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?”*

When God seems to be delaying an answer, the charge to us is to keep crying out day and night. Don’t quit. Don’t stop.

Andrew Murray: *It is…one of the greatest practical difficulties in the exercise of believing prayer. When, after persevering supplication, our prayer remains unanswered, it is often easiest for our slothful flesh, and it has all the appearance of pious submission, to think that we must now cease praying, because God may have His secret reason for withholding His answer to our request.*

Holding on, by faith, to the truth that God is our Father, a good Father, THE Good Father, will enable us to remain in “quiet patience and joyful confidence” in the waiting. The Father’s burning desire is answer, to release justice on our behalf.

This truth, the Good Father’s desire to answer our prayers, fuels persevering prayer. When the answer is taking a while, **persevere in prayer.**

And when He answers, He answers by fire (I Kings 18:24), His justice comes speedily!

1. **How To Pray When the Answer is YES**

So, in prayer, when the answer seems to be NO, Jesus encourages us to persevere, keep praying, and never stop.

Likewise, when the answer seems to be WAIT, Jesus encourages us to persevere, keep praying, and never stop.

What about when the answer is YES?

The simple answer is….you guessed it…..persevere, keep praying, and never stop.

Or as Paul says it:

**(I Thess. 5:16-18)***, 16 Rejoice always, 17 pray without ceasing, 18 in everything give thank; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*

**It is God’s will, God’s desire, that you never stop praying – that your life becomes one of unbroken communion, joy, gratefulness, worship, adoration, and peace.**

Receiving from God that which we asked builds our faith, increases our joy, and promotes more prayer. God answers prayer because when He does He is glorified.

**(John 15:7,8)***, 7 If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. 8 By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit…*

God is glorified by answered prayer. Prayers of gratitude, expressions of praise, joy-testimonies, and confidence to keep coming back to the Lord - these all bring glory to God. Worship, adoration, and continued intercessions are fruits of answered prayer.

Andrew Murray: *The highest conformity to Christ, the most blessed participation in the glory of His heavenly life, is that we take part in His work of intercession: He and we live ever to pray. In the experience of our union with Him, praying without ceasing become a possibility, a reality, the holiest of most blessed part of our holy and blessed fellowship with God. We have our abode within the veil, in the presence of the Father. What the Father says, we do; what the Son says, the Father does.* ***Praying without ceasing is the earthly manifestation of heaven come down to us, the foretaste of the life where they rest not day and night in the song of worship and adoration.***

When God says YES, we keep praying. We rejoice in His goodness, and keep coming to Him.