

The Book Of Luke: Lesson 7

Jesus, the Holy Spirit, & Prayer

Memory Text: “So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.” (Luke 11:9, 10)

Setting The Stage: Sometime back the Associated Press carried this dispatch: “Glasgow, Ky.--Leslie Puckett, after struggling to start his car, lifted the hood and discovered that someone had stolen the motor.” How unfortunate! Can’t go very far in your car without a motor, and you can’t expect to live an animated, joyful, courageous, Christ reflecting life without the Holy Spirit and prayer.

Out of gospels according to Matthew, Mark, and Luke, Luke spends more time talking about the connection between the ministry of Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Matthew refers to the Holy Spirit 12 times, Mark refers to the Holy Spirit 6 times, while Luke mentions the Holy Spirit 17 times. He also mentions the Holy Spirit 57 times in the book of Acts.

As the author of the lesson notes, “Luke sees an operational link between Jesus and the Holy Spirit.” He also sees the importance of prayer in Jesus life and ministry, highlighting the need for us to lead a life of dedicated prayer. If Jesus, spotless the Son of God, saw the need to pray, how much more fallen humanity?

Sunday – Jesus & the Holy Spirit

Luke 1:35, 41; 2:25-32; 3:16, 21, 22; 4:1, 14, 18; 11:13; 12:10

It’s without a doubt that Luke viewed the emergence of Christianity – from the conception of Jesus to His ascension to the rise of the church – as a marvel initiated and steered by the third Person of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit.

What was the role of the Holy Spirit in Christ’s coming as man? (see Luke 1:35, 41; 2:25-32) 1) Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit. 2) The Holy Spirit confirmed Mary’s divine pregnancy through Elizabeth. 3) The Holy Spirit connected the baby Jesus to the church through an elderly priest named Simeon.

How else was the Holy Spirit tied into Jesus ministry? **Luke 3:16** – John the Baptist predicted Jesus would come and baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire. **Luke 3:21, 22** – The Holy Spirit affirmed the Messiah-ship of Jesus at His baptism. **Luke 4:1** – Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness. Closeness of the Spirit teaches two important lessons: 1. The Godhead is connected by an eternal tie as it relates to the defeat of Satan and the plan of salvation; 2. We can only be victorious if we know, obey, and practice the Word of God inspired by the Spirit, whether we

are hungry and poor, surrounded by the allurements of the world, or testing the veracity of God's promises.

Luke 4:14 – Jesus was filled with the Spirit as He began His ministry. **Luke 4:18** – Jesus applied the words of Isa. 61:1-3 to Himself declaring that His work would be anointed and empowered by the Holy Spirit. **Luke 11:13** – Jesus promised the Holy Spirit to those who would ask for Him. **Luke 12:10** – Jesus warned us not to blaspheme the Holy Spirit. **John 16:5-7** – Jesus abiding presence would be with His followers through the Holy Spirit. Here Jesus speaks of the Holy Spirit, not as a force or power, but as One with God.

Q. What practical ways can we open ourselves up to the leading and infilling of the Holy Spirit in our lives? Are there things we can do that can harden us to His voice? Study the Word; be careful to follow and obey it; remove hindrances or obstacles in our lives (attitude, pride, people, lifestyle, etc.).

Monday – The Prayer Life of Jesus

Luke 3:21; 6:12, 13; 9:18, 28-36; 22:39-46; 23:46

Jesus was often found in prayer. Always before some big decision or experience He spent quality time in prayer. Luke shares some of those moments:

Luke 3:21 – Jesus prayed at His baptism, “entering on the conflict of His life.” (Desire of Ages, p. 111). **Luke 6:12, 13** – Jesus prayed before choosing His 12 disciples who would be called to an office “second only to that of Christ Himself.” (Ibid., p. 291) **Luke 9:18** – Jesus prayed for His disciples that they would completely identify with His person and His mission. **Luke 9:28, 29** – Jesus prayed before His transfiguration where He received the second endorsement from the Father of His Son-ship.

Luke 22:39-46 – Jesus prayed in Gethsemane, perhaps the most important pray of all. In this prayer we see 3 important principles: 1. the superiority of God's will; 2. the commitment to follow through on God's will even at the risk of giving up life; 3. The strength to be victorious toward accomplishing God's will and purpose. **Luke 23:46** – Jesus prayed, committing His life into the hands of God. Here Jesus give us the ultimate purpose of prayer – the vehicle by which we remain surrendered to God's purposes and plans for our lives.

What do these examples from Jesus' prayer life tell you about your own prayer life?

“In a life wholly devoted to the good of others, the Saviour found it necessary to withdraw from the thoroughfares of travel and from the throng that followed Him day after day. He must turn aside from a life of ceaseless activity and contact with human needs, to seek retirement and unbroken communion with His Father.

“As one with us, a sharer in our needs and weaknesses, He was wholly dependent upon God, and in the secret place of prayer He sought divine strength, that He might go forth braced for duty and trial. In a world of sin Jesus endured struggles and torture of soul. In communion with God He could unburden the sorrows that were crushing Him. Here He found comfort and joy.

“In Christ the cry of humanity reached the Father of infinite pity. As a man He supplicated the throne of God till His humanity was charged with a heavenly current that should connect humanity with divinity. Through continual communion He received life from God, that He might impart life to the world. His experience is to be ours.” (Desire of Ages, p. 362, 363)

Tuesday – The Model Prayer, Part 1

Luke 11:1-4

Jesus is praying and His disciples return from being away and hear Him entreating His Heavenly Father. They are impressed and want to learn how to pray like Jesus prays. **Read Luke 11:1-4. How does this model prayer teach us how to pray?** What elements are in this prayer that we should incorporate ours?

1. “Father in heaven” – This was Jesus favorite way to refer to God (mentioned about 170 times in the gospels). Recognition that God exists and that He is a personal God (versus a philosophical idea or a pantheistic notion) who cares for His children. His ways and thoughts are much higher than ours. Recognition that we are all members of one family.
2. “Hallowed be Your name” – Recognition that God is first and foremost holy then everything else. This is not encouragement that we should try and figure out the exact name of God and then refer to Him by it (after all, if we knew God’s name we would seldom use it when referring to the Majesty of Heaven). This is a call to hallow His name by representing His character in word and deed (Ex. 34:6, 7). To say we follow Him and not obey Him is to tarnish that name (see Matt. 7:21-23).
3. “Your kingdom come” – Recognition that Jesus came to establish His kingdom in the hearts of men, the kingdom of His grace (see Luke 17:21). Recognition that there will be an end to the kingdoms of this world when God sets up His kingdom (see Dan. 2: 44). Without entering the first kingdom there can be no entry into the second.
4. “Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven” – Recognition of the reality that just as angels in heaven delight to do God’s will, we, by God’s grace, can do God’s will also. It must begin with you and me. After the millennium heaven will come to earth (Matt. 5:5).

This is no ordinary prayer. This type of praying involves more than repetitious or rote prayers, more than shallow or frothy prayers. This type of praying involves the heart and the mind. It’s a call to an ongoing, intimate, saving relationship with God.

Wednesday – The Model Prayer, Part 2

Luke 11:9-13

5. “Give us this day our daily bread” – Recognition of our absolute dependency on our Father’s benevolence to provide for our basic necessities. If he cares for the sparrow, you can know He will care for you. Praying this prayer doesn’t in any way diminish honest, hard work. It also acknowledges that our ability to provide comes from God.
6. “Forgive us our sins” – Recognition of our humanity, our need of grace, and our need of compassion and forgiveness toward others. Forgiving others gives evidence that we have received the forgiveness of God in our hearts. Sometimes people will take advantage of your kindness toward them, therefore we must pray for more grace.
7. “Do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us” – Recognition of our need of good sense to not put ourselves in the way of temptation, and need of power to overcome temptation that find us. Please note: 1. Temptation is not sin. It is not the product, but the process used to lead to the product. Succumbing to temptation however is sin. 2. God is not the author of temptation. He may allow it to come but He does not nor will not allure us toward sin.

How willing is God to provide for our needs? In the heart of God we see an incomparably greater character than man, an infinite throbbing to make our dreams come true. God who is able to fulfill your greatest expectations and grant you the desires of your heart.

Luke 11:9-13. He will grant our request according to His will (1 John 5:14). He will provide for our needs as we put Him first (Matt. 6:33). He will give to us the desires of our hearts as we delight in Him (Ps. 37:4). He will give us our greatest need - the Holy Spirit - if we but ask. More than anything else God wants us to have the Holy Spirit. This is the day of latter rain. This is the seasons of refreshing. Let us pray for rain!

Thursday – More Lessons on Prayer

Luke 11:5-13; 18:9-14

By teaching and example Jesus expected His followers to engage in a life of prayer. Through prayer they could: 1. Experience the nearness of God; 2. Be actively engaged in missions; 3. Be victorious in their struggle against self, sin, and the world. **What kind of prayer life should we have?** Luke provides some important principles and elements of prayer.

1. **General principles that should guide our prayer life** – pray for your enemies (Luke 6:38); pray for God’s worldwide work and to be a participant in it (Luke 10:2); pray for spiritual courage (Luke 18:1); pray with confession and humility (vss. 10-14) – “Meekness and lowliness are the conditions of success and victory. A crown of glory awaits those who bow at the foot of the

cross.” (Prophets & King, p. 590); pray always (Luke 21:36); pray not to be defeated by temptation (Luke 22:40, 46).

2. **The model prayer** (Luke 11:1-4) – The Lord’s Prayer recognizes the preeminence of God and that prayer must start there or it’s not prayer. It also involves us, the one praying. On the one hand we recognize God’s supremacy, His kingdom priorities, and His will’s permanency. On the other, we ask to be taken care of and the power to overcome.
3. **Qualities that should characterize our prayer life** – Next to the Lord’s Prayer, our prayer life should have at its core the attitude that says, “Not my will, but your will be done.” When that happens the ingredients of meaningful prayer follow – thanksgiving, continual dependence on God, persistence, penitence, humility, faith, etc. (see Luke 11:5-8; 18:9-14).

If God knows and cares, why persevere in prayer? I mean, does persisting change God’s heart, His mind? Does God need persuading to our will? Of course not. But listen carefully, persistent prayer, while it doesn’t change God’s mind it often changes ours. And while persistent prayer doesn’t persuade God to do our will it does help us understand God’s will concerning the things we are praying for. Like someone said, “Prayer is heavens means to educate our desires.”

“The soul that turns to God for its help, its support, its power, by daily, earnest prayer, will have noble aspirations, clear perceptions of truth and duty, lofty purposes of action, and a continual hungering and thirsting after righteousness. By maintaining a connection with God, we shall be enabled to diffuse to others, through our association with them, the light, the peace, the serenity, that rule in our hearts.

“The strength acquired in prayer to God, united with persevering effort in training the mind in thoughtfulness and care-taking, prepares one for daily duties and keeps the spirit in peace under all circumstances.

“If we draw near to God, He will put a word in our mouth to speak for Him, even praise unto His name. He will teach us a strain from the song of the angels, even thanksgiving to our heavenly Father. In every act of life, the light and love of an indwelling Saviour will be revealed. Outward troubles cannot reach the life that is lived by faith in the Son of God.” (Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, p. 85)

Appeal: The life of a Christian is born and nourished by the Holy Spirit, and is imperative that this life be sustained through ongoing prayer (praise, thanksgiving, intercession, and dependence on God) and the study of God’s word. Won’t you give more time to prayer, be more earnest about receiving more of the Holy Spirit, and open God’s Word on a more regular basis?