

*1 And it came about that while He was praying in a certain place, after He had finished, one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray just as John also taught his disciples." 2 And He said to them, "When you pray, say:  
'Father, hallowed be Thy name.  
Thy kingdom come.*

*3 'Give us each day our daily bread.*

*4 'And forgive us our sins,  
For we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us.  
And lead us not into temptation.'"*

*5 And He said to them, "Suppose one of you shall have a friend, and shall go to him at midnight, and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves; 6 for a friend of mine has come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; 7 and from inside he shall answer and say, 'Do not bother me; the door has already been shut and my children and I are in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything.' 8 "I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will get up and give him as much as he needs. 9 "And I say to you, ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. 10 "For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it shall be opened. 11 "Now suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he? 12 "Or if he is asked for an egg, he will not give him a scorpion, will he? 13 "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?"*

We've spent the last 2 weeks studying the Lord's prayer. The disciples asked Jesus to teach them how to pray. He had been praying and they observed from a distance and His prayers were different from anything they had been taught in their religious world.

So they ask Him to teach them how to pray effectively. John the baptist had

taught his followers how to pray. They begin by saying can you teach us to pray, even as John taught his disciples to pray? And Jesus launches in with the prayer we have before us this morning.

It's the same prayer that He taught to the multitude very early in His ministry at Galilee during the Sermon on the mount. We don't pray like the heathens, bobbing up and down with repetitive chantings with our brains disconnected.

We don't pray like the hypocrites who orchestrate their prayers to be seen by men. That's phony. We pray in private, in a place where there are no distractions. And God who hears His children in private, answers their prayers.

A third prayer that we'll get to in Luke comes to mind. In Luke 18 Jesus tells of two men who went to pray, and the first He says was praying to himself. He wasn't praying to God, he was praying to himself who was obviously his god.

*9 And He also told this parable to certain ones who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and viewed others with contempt: 10 "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee, and the other a tax-gatherer. 11 "The Pharisee stood and was **praying thus to himself**, 'God, I thank Thee that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax-gatherer.*

Jesus is quick to tell us, some prayers make the connection, and some do not. Humility. Acknowledging that God is father but that His name is to be hallowed. And praying for His kingdom and His power and His glory. These are the pattern for our prayer according to Jesus.

God gives His children an expense account that is limitless with a book of signed blank checks. But there is a caveat. We are stewards of **His** business. We are left in this world as overseers of **His** kingdom. We have a book of blank signed checks connected to a limitless account to spend on the oversight of His kingdom business.

The Lord's prayer begins with His Kingdom's business. Immediately after we acknowledge who He is and who we are. He is Father, we are humble children. He has a name that is hallowed above all names. He is separated in more glory and more holiness than anything created which has all come from Him.

Then we pray, Thy Kingdom come. Bring your rule and reign and holiness to this fallen world. Come and reign over us. Depose and judge all of the wickedness and evil of this place. Bring your authority to reign as opposed to Satan's and rule here so that your will is done on earth.

Those of us who address God as Father are those who have come out from under the rule of sin which held us captive. We have in a sense come out of Satan's kingdom, his authority to reign, and come under God's authority to reign. He has adopted us as His children, made perfect with a righteousness given to us freely in Christ His son.

The righteousness of Christ has been imputed to our accounts. But we are left in this fallen world to do the King's business. We have come out of Satan's kingdom and we are working for the advance of God's kingdom. That is our main business here in this world.

We approach prayer with that mindset. Thy Kingdom come. And then we get specific about what it is we think we need. Daily bread is good. Forgive us for our sins. We still stumble and sin as long as we have these fleshly bodies. We need daily forgiveness and restoration. We predicate the forgiveness we ask for on us likewise forgiving others.

And we pray for security. Safety as it were in this world. If in fact we are busy with the Kings business in this world that is ruled by Satan, that means we are enemy combatants in this world working against the current ruler of this place. We need security. We need safety. Keep us from trouble in this world Father. Deliver us from evil and the evil one.

We learn from Satan's argument with God over Job that God had built a hedge of protection around Job. Satan had to seek permission to invade that hedge of protection in order to bring the trouble to Job that would prove his righteousness and steadfastness.

Satan requested to sift Peter like wheat. We pray for that protection, that safety, that hedge around us. Deliver us from evil. Help us to work towards your kingdom and your glory by keeping us from evil.

Those are just a quick review of the elements of the Lord's prayer. It is meant to be an outline of sorts. Categories if you will that we flesh out with our daily needs and desires. Soldiers on a battlefield radioing to the field office telling of their current situation and needs in order to advance.

Jesus addresses the cares of this world. What will we eat? What will we wear? and He basically says, it's OK to pray for that stuff, but God already knows what your needs are. God feeds every bird of the air. You are more valuable than birds. God clothes the wildflowers in unmatched elegance. You're more important than flowers that are here today and gone tomorrow.

What do we pray for. Let's get real. Family. We love our families and we pray for our loved ones. We pray for wellness. We pray for relief from illness for ourselves and our loved ones. We pray for our marriages and our children's marriages. We pray for our jobs. Our school. Different tests.

Make a list of everything you've prayed for lately and ask yourself, what have I prayed for that directly is related to and has an impact on advancing the Authority to reign of Jesus in this world. That's our business. That's what the blank checks are for. Prayer should be about Jesus kingdom and Jesus business in this world.

In America we have a hard time separating wants and needs. We need almost nothing. Salt. Water. Food. I'm old enough to remember the Morton Salt girl before the one we have now which hasn't been changed since 1968. The girl with the umbrella bringing home a canister of salt and it's spilling the

whole way.

The idea first illustrated in 1914 is a symbol of how easy it was to fulfil that basic human need. Go to the store. Get some. If it spills on the way home, no worries. Go get some more. We'll never run out. That wasn't always so. Salt used to be a necessity that was difficult to obtain and had great value.

We turn a knob and water comes out. We have salt in the cupboard. We have food in the pantry. We have everything at our immediate disposal to maintain a level of health and comfort never before realized.

If we run out of money I'll fill out some forms and the government will take some of your money and give it to me so I can keep salt in my cupboard and food in my pantry and water in my pipes to flush my toilet and run through my heater so I can have my daily hot shower.

My prayer regarding daily bread should be about 99% thanks for the overabundance and maybe 1% for something I can't think of just now as I write.

What am I doing to advance Christ's kingdom, His authority to reign in this world, and how am I praying for that cause? We Americans need to ask ourselves that question every day. I've been given gifts to use in that stewardship. What exactly am I doing that's advancing the Lord's kingdom? Is that my first priority before all else in this world? Are my prayers in line with that priority, that business that is His, not mine. I'm just the steward.

John 14:14 simply states; *"If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it."* That promise is a blank cheque with one caveat. What does it mean to ask for something, anything, in-My-name?

It means we have a magnificent cheque book connected to a limitless account that will never run out of supply full of cheques signed by Jesus in John 14:14 to be written and spent on . . . His name. His Kingdom. His business.

James 4 indicts us; 4:2 *You crave what you do not have; you kill and covet,*

*but are unable to obtain it. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask. 3 And when you do ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may squander it on your pleasures. 4 You adulteresses!*

You don't have because you don't ask. And when you do ask you don't receive because you ask in order to squander the Lord's resources on what? Yourself.

Lord, what I really need to advance your name in the world is a private jet out in a hangar by the runway with at least 3 employees to keep it maintained and ready for me to go where I please. In your name. And Lord, while you're at it, we're going to need a really creative tax accountant team. In your name.

We get angry when we here of CEO's who blatantly drain the corporate resources into island accounts year after year and then they put on their golden parachute and parachute onto their private island to spend other peoples money. We here those stories on the news and we get angry at the injustice of the thing.

But what are we praying for in "Jesus name" that really has nothing to do with His kingdom's advance in this world. We're writing all these cheques with His signature attached . . . for what?? Lord, can you please get me out of this mess? Can you please have someone going the opposite direction go past that cop at an even greater excess of speed than mine? Get him off of my tail. In your name, amen.

James says, *You adulteresses*. In our vernacular. You whores. Actually that's the old King James vernacular about the hebrews who were forever leaving their God for other lovers. The prophets spoke often of the hebrews who had gone whoring. Unfaithful to God. Attached to other lovers.

That's the image James paints of "christians" in quotes who ask for things, with God's chequebook to spend on themselves.

That's our introduction this morning, and a wake up call that I want in the front of your minds when we study what Jesus is going to say next about prayer. Because what Jesus is going to say has nothing to do with what I just said. His framework for the kind of praying that He will describe in the next two word pictures is not for those praying for stuff for themselves at all.

He's still working within the framework of the Lord's prayer. We are humble children. Our Father's name is to be hallowed. Set apart in holiness. We are praying for the advancement of His Kingdom in this world. Our needs are incidental to that. The Kingdom of God brought in judgement to this world is the main thing we're praying for in this prayer.

And the next words from Jesus tell us how to ask for the legitimate stuff. And I'm going to give the whole point of the parable away up front. Spoiler alert. Here's what Jesus is going to teach us about prayer. Be audacious. When you're spending God's money for His kingdom; be audacious. Be ridiculous. Be shameless in the vastness of what you ask for . . . when it's for the advance of His kingdom business in this world. Go nuts.

*5 And He said to them, "Suppose one of you shall have a friend, and shall go to him at midnight, and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves; 6 for a friend of mine has come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; 7 and from inside he shall answer and say, 'Do not bother me; the door has already been shut and my children and I are in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything.' 8 "I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will get up and give him as much as he needs.*

Wow, apparently I'm a nuisance friend to God just pestering Him for stuff that is inconvenient to Him. I'm just nuisance noise banging on His door. Is that what this means.

Not at all. Not at all. Especially if you're asking for needs that will advance His Kingdom business here. That isn't what this parable is about.

This parable is about one word in vs. 8. See it there. Have you found the single word that Jesus is describing in the story? Persistence. anaideia (an-ah'-ee-die-ah')

This is the only time this word is used in the new testament. The single occurrence. And it's a marvelous word. Ah = NO or Not, and aidos = shame. So what we have here is *without shame*.

The guy pounding on the door continuously has no shame. It's the middle of the night. The proprietor is asleep. His family is asleep. Just the fact that this guy comes banging on the door at midnight is pretty audacious. We don't do that. I don't do that. To a fault I don't do that!

I'm incredibly timid. Some guy has something that I covet for my ridiculous junk collection and I don't knock on his door. I'm timid. Later the thing is gone because the whole world is less timid than me and someone has asked if it's for sale and bought it. Probably got it cheap. I should have been the guy who did that. I'm usually not that guy. I don't like to bother people.

In fact I have an inferiority complex so that raises my timidity. I'm not very bold at all. This guy is audacious. Go beat on someone's door at midnight because you want something. It better be because your house is on fire. Or your wife quit breathing. Then I may call for help at midnight. Or if I locked my keys in my car. Then you can call Jeff anytime of the night. Right??

This guy is crazy audacious. Shamelessly audacious. What in the world. What is it that he needs so bad in the middle of the night that he goes beating on someone's door waking them up along with their entire household??

Bread. Flatbread. He wants three pieces of flatbread. About the size of 3 pancakes. Really?? You wake up everybody in your friends house in the middle of the night for 3 pieces of flat bread? And notice, he doesn't want to buy the bread, he wants to borrow it. Even more audacious! Shameless nerve this guy has. In our vernacular we would say, "this is **NOT** OK." Waking me up in the middle of the night so you can "borrow??" 3 pieces of flatbread for

you and your nutty friend who came banging on your door is NOT OK. What kind of a nut does that??

So you shout at him to go away. Beat it you idiot. We're sleeping. The door is locked. Scram. Come back during business hours. With cash. Or bullets. We take bullets or cash.

But he doesn't go away. He's banging and shouting and banging and beating on the door and shouting and begging and . . . the only way you're ever going to get any peace is to give him what he wants. The guy is shamelessly bold. He won't go away until he gets what he came for.

Jesus says, when you're praying for the advance of My Kingdom. Don't write little checks. Write shamelessly bold ones. Ask for audacious things! And keep asking until you get the answer.

If I were you folks, I'd be banging on the door praying for a better preacher. Lord, we've got this timid preacher that isn't doing much. Can you please bring us a better preacher. You guys should be praying for that! For the advance of the Kingdom of God, we need a better preacher. And we're not going to let up until you give us a better preacher. You should be praying for that.

Here's what might happen. He might make me a better preacher in answer to your prayers. God wouldn't necessarily need to replace me to give you that request. He could send His Spirit and make me a better preacher. His Spirit could make me effective. His Spirit could draw people from this community into this church. The sky's the limit people.

First rule. Pray for the advance of His Kingdom, His desires that He has stated plainly in this book. Second rule. Pray audaciously. Pray shamelessly. Pray huge. Third rule. Keep doing it. Keep banging on the door to heaven. Audaciously and continually. Shameless audacity. Shamelessly bold.

**Repeat.** Then repeat some more.

9 *“And I say to you, ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. 10 “For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it shall be opened.*

Ask, seek, knock. These are what were called action verbs when some poor teacher was trying to teach me my own language. Mostly fruitless. I did however become a decent speller under one old teacher named Miss Lyons.

We would have these endless painfully boring spelling bee's, days at a time. It was torture. I would mis-spell the word on purpose so I could get out of line and go sit down with my other dumb friends who were already all sitting down.

My turn. Spell 'of'. "uv" Then she would give you a whack with a paddle. These days the school would be sued. It actually was effective. I'm a good speller even if a poor grammarist. Ask, seek, knock are action verbs and if you'll ponder them for just a moment you can see a normal increase in intensity from the first to the second to the third.

It's actually what Jesus showed us in His story of the audacious friend. First we ask. That's the first level of intensity. Ask. Can I have this please.

Next we take it up a notch. Seeking is a step beyond asking. Now I'm looking for the thing I want. There is more effort. I'm out turning rocks upside down. Seeking what I'm after.

Then more intensity. Knock. Now I'm making noise trying to get the thing I want. If it's me, I'm timidly knocking, hoping you aren't home so I can just go away. That's sort of my modus operandi. That isn't this.

Jesus says, don't stop with the knocking, keep knocking making noise until you force the issue. Knock with audacity. Boldly. Shamelessly keep knocking. Louder and louder in the middle of the night! That's how to pray.

You say, is that effective? Does that work? 9 *“And I say to you, ask, and it*

*shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. 10 “For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it shall be opened.”*

Those are promises you can take to the bank. IF it's Kingdom related. If what you want aligns with God's will and purposes. Write those cheques. Make them audacious. Keep banging on the door.

If God desires the thing, and one of His beloved children desires the thing, and it advances His kingdom in this world, His causes for this world, the promise is YES.

*11 “Now suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he? 12 “Or if he is asked for an egg, he will not give him a scorpion, will he? 13 “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?”*

I'm a dad. I love being a dad. And my girls never hesitated to ask me for things. Usually it was can I do this, more than can I have this. Your kids come seeking permission for whatever it is they have in their mind to do.

You've worked for these guys whose default answer is always no. The answer to your question is NO. We all have. With those guys I usually just do and then apologize later.

My default as dad was always yes. In my mind I'd be thinking, please ask me for something I can say yes to, because I want to say yes. I love my kids and my default is yes. If any way possible. I loved giving my girls what they asked for. Because I love my kids. It gives me pleasure to give them what they want.

One time they came and asked for permission to go shoot baskets at the Mormon church with the mormon kids. Nice people those mormons. Super nice. Clean cut. Good decent families with excellent work ethic. But that

was a trap. You go play with their kids. You get comfortable with them in their church. If that goes on long enough, by osmosis you become one of them.

That's actually the default of mega church evangelicalism. We've got cool music and good coffee. Come on down. We'll make sure you're totally comfortable. We won't challenge anything. Come as you are, whatever you're life situation and we'll be accepting. And then over time by osmosis, you'll be an evangelical too. I get it. I understand the concept. That isn't biblical, it wasn't what Jesus did, but that's how mega church's work.

That was one time when I had to say no to my kids. No, you may not. I know it's just kids having fun. Sorry, no, you'll have to trust me, but no.

Dad, can I go ride in the back of a pickup truck on dynamite road with kids that have been drinking? That one I didn't get to say no to. Almost lost that kid. Us parents do what we can, and we thank God for his angels that keep gaurd over our wayward kids.

*If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, . . .*

No argument here. I am evil. I see within myself a continuous pull towards evil. I inherited that from my parents who were evil who got it from their parents and my kids got it from me.

But my default was always to give good things to my kids. Still is. My hearts desire is to be a positive influence for the good of my kids. And grandkids. And Jesus point is well taken. And it's the common jewish argument, if this, how much more then, this. It's the argument from the least to the greater.

I'm evil, but I'll work all day to give the best things I can give to my kids. How much more then, God who is NOT evil, and who loves beyond any kind of love I have, how much more will He give good things to His kids.

This is how you pray. Acknowledge God is who He is and you are who you

are. Humble children to a loving Father who dwells seperated in holiness above all creation.

Align yourself with His authority to reign. His kingdom. We're praying for the advancement and ultimate fulfilling of that Kingdom. His authority on earth, as it is in heaven.

Give us our daily needs. Forgive us our sins. Restore us to your fellowship as we forgive others who sin against us. Protect us while we're sojourning in this world. Lead us out of harm and into safety.

And then get shameless. Ask for the heavens to be opened regarding the Kingdom of God in this place. The sky's the limit. Ask for audacious stuff. Keep asking and never stop asking until He answers. He loves you more and better than any evil earthly father ever could. His default answer is yes! Pray for anything your heart can dream up that glorifies our God in this world.

The verb tense is continuous. Keep asking. Keep seeking. Keep knocking. Never quit. Ask for the impossible. See what happens.

*13 "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?"*

We've been talking about eternal things. Accomplishing things that have eternal consequence. Think about this with me. Some day in eternal bliss with the Lord Jesus I'm going to have the opportunity to thank a whole host of other saints that had a part in my being there.

Sunday school teachers, and neighbors who made sure they had a place for me in the station wagon so I could ride down to church. My mom, my grandma, the preacher who happened to be speaking the night the Lord flipped the switch and the lights came on.

You could argue predestination was set from the foundations of the world,

your name was written, you'd be there even without those people. I don't think it works that way. In fact I know it doesn't. Not that it couldn't mind you. God is God and He does whatever pleases Him.

But it turns out, it pleased Him to do this thing by using lots and lots of ordinary sinners, purchased by His blood, and empowered to wage this war against the enemy. Sin, the flesh, the devil, death.

We are in an ages long battle with an evil spiritual realm. Who am I to engage in that battle. Think about that for a minute. Who am I to be a soldier, a rook in a chess game between God almighty and all of the forces of evil?

My life is 5 minutes long. I can't see my enemy. I can't speak to them. How do I engage in this battle that the Lord has commissioned me, and yes, you, to fight in for His glory and the advance of His kingdom.

How can I accomplish spiritual gains. The battle is a spiritual battle. How do I fight a spiritual war? I hear the wind, but I can't see it and I can't do battle with it. The pneumos. How does that work? Well I'm glad you asked;

In this little teaching session about prayer, Jesus unveils the single effective weapon I can employ in spiritual warfare. Prayer brings God down out of heaven to do battle, with me, and for me.

*“If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?”*

It's a spirit war. Without the Holy Spirit, I'm helpless. Completely useless. But with the Holy Spirit, I'm invincible.

For some reason, it pleased God to use helpless people to accomplish the impossible in the war between God and Satan over this planet. It makes sense in a way. Because I'm useless and everybody knows it. The devil knows it, God knows it, I know it. And it pleases God, and glorifies Him, to combine

somebody useless with His Holy Spirit and go slay thousands.

He's God. That's how He rolls. Takes somebody useless like you, and like me, fills them with His Holy Spirit, and wages war in spiritual realms and accomplishes the impossible.

Read the book. That's how it works. Read the chapter about the heroes of faith in Hebrews 11. Those weren't giants. They were ordinary useless people just like you and just like me who God sent into battles, and His Spirit brought the victories.

That's what the verse means. That's what it has meant for 2000 years, and I don't see any retraction notices. This is available for all Christians. The bank account of heaven is waiting for us to make some audacious withdrawals. We have all the resources and all the power of heaven available to us to spend on the glory of Jesus. His kingdom come.