

How to get something from someone

How do you get a bone from a dog?

How do you get a hamburger from McDonalds?

How do you get a grant from the National Science Foundation?

How do you get a politician to pay attention to your request?

How do you get an art judge to give you an art award?

How do you get a stingy person to give you something you need?

How do we get God to answer our prayers?

What is something you need from God today?

1



Our Generous Father

Luke 11:1-13

bib.ly/Lu11.NIV
tiny.cc/cmchandouts

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Luke

Luke's big purpose

- That we would **live by the certainty** that Jesus is the Son of God who lived a perfect life, died for us, and rose to life again to **rule over all creation through His work in the church**

The “Travel Narrative” in Luke (9:51-19:27)

- An **advanced class in being a disciple (follower) of Jesus**
- **They had learned:** Jesus is God's Messiah, the One who is God and will bring God's Kingdom to humanity
- **They hadn't yet learned:** how to live it out
- “sit at the feet of Jesus”=let Jesus set the agenda
- **PLUS...**

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Luke 11:1-4

One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.”

He said to them, “When you pray, say:

“Father,
hallowed be your name,
 your kingdom come.
 Give us each day our daily bread.
 Forgive us our sins,
 for we also forgive everyone who sins against us.
 And lead us not into temptation.””

hallowed = honored, treated as holy

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Luke 11:5-8

Then Jesus said to them, “Suppose you have a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have no food to offer him.’ And suppose the one inside answers, ‘Don’t bother me. The door is already locked, and my children and I are in bed. I can’t get up and give you anything.’ I tell you, even though he will not get up and give you the bread because of friendship, yet because of your shameless audacity he will surely get up and give you as much as you need.

shameless audacity = asking even when it would be bothersome

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Luke 11:9-10

“So I say to you:

Ask and it will be **given** to you;

seek and you will **find**;

knock and the door will be **opened** to you.

For

everyone who **asks receives**;

the one who **seeks finds**;

and to the one who **knocks**, the door will be **opened**.

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Luke 11:11-13

“Which of you fathers,
if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead?
Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion?

If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”

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John the Baptist

- A popular preacher who was also very forceful!
 - “John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, ‘You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.’ ” *Luke 3:7-8*
- Well known for high demands: **prayer and fasting**
 - “They said to him, ‘**John’s disciples often fast and pray**, and so do the disciples of the Pharisees, but yours go on eating and drinking.’ ” *Luke 5:33*

brood of vipers = nest of poisonous snakes

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Luke 11:1-4

One day Jesus was teaching in one of his disciples' houses, just as John the Baptist had said. He said to them, "Father, hallowed be your kingdom. Give us each day our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, for we also sin against you. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one."

Teaching on prayer came when they asked

Shorter than what is recorded in Matthew

- The specific words aren't the point

Amazing: we are to address God the Father the same way Jesus did!

- A prayer for genuine children of God in Christ

First: focus on God

- His glory, reign, and rule: incrementally and completely

- Requests only make sense that fit this focus

Second: humble requests for help

- Trust is needed every day!

- Ongoing need to experience forgiveness, and give it

- Recognizes our weakness toward sin:

"Protect us from and in situations where sin is more likely"

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Luke 11:5-8

Then Jesus said to them, "Suppose you have a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, because my friend and I have no bread inside our house.' He will get up and give you the bread, because of the friendship between you and him. How much more will a good and generous God who is your Father do for you when you ask him for help?"

Context of required village hospitality

"Suppose" is actually a question:

"Can you imagine someone refusing this request?"

A possible modern parallel:

- Imagine your house is on fire and the fire department can't come

- You go to your neighbor asking to use their garden hose and water

- Would they say: "We're all in bed, and if we let you use the hose, it will wake up our kids"??

Even a lazy neighbor, who is not your friend, at an inconvenient time, would do what you ask!

How much more will a good and generous God who is your Father!

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Luke 11:9-10

“So I say to you:

Ask and it will be given to you
seek and you will find it
knock and the door will be opened to you

For

everyone who **asks** the Father
 the one who **seeks** Him
 and to the one who **knocks**

The point: **Ask God** for what you need!!!

3 equivalent statements: emphasis

Repeated!

This is how God designed the world

- We tend not to find things when we aren't looking
- But that isn't an arbitrary part of the world...

It is because God is a God who gives to people who are seeking what they need in and from Him

- Divine passives: God gives, reveals, and opens
- Of course, God isn't a "vending machine" giving whatever we happen to ask for
 - The point of this teaching is God's eagerness to give to people who ask

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Luke 11:11-13

“Which of you fathers,
 if your son asks for a loaf of bread,
 Or if he asks for an egg,

If you then, though you are fathers,
 do not give the good things to your children,
 how will you give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?

Even sinful fathers give children good things,
 especially when they ask

“How much more” will God!

The best possible gift: the Holy Spirit

- We often take the Holy Spirit for granted
- They expected that only the greatest people can hope to have the Holy Spirit of the living God in them
- Every one who trusts in Jesus as Savior receives the Spirit of God forever
- Yet “being filled with the Spirit” (experiencing His fruit and power) is a special gift of God we are to ask for and expect to receive generously

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“Father” raises different emotions & ideas

- Every human father is **made in the image of God** and is **infected and affected by sin**
- How we think about our fathers (absent, loving, harsh, gentle, oppressive, supportive, impossible to please, ...) can have a huge impact on how we think about God
- Jesus said: God is our perfect heavenly Father
- To know God the Father, Jesus needs to show us
 - Here: He is generous and is eager to give good gifts to His children who ask

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Jesus’ answer to “Teach us to pray”

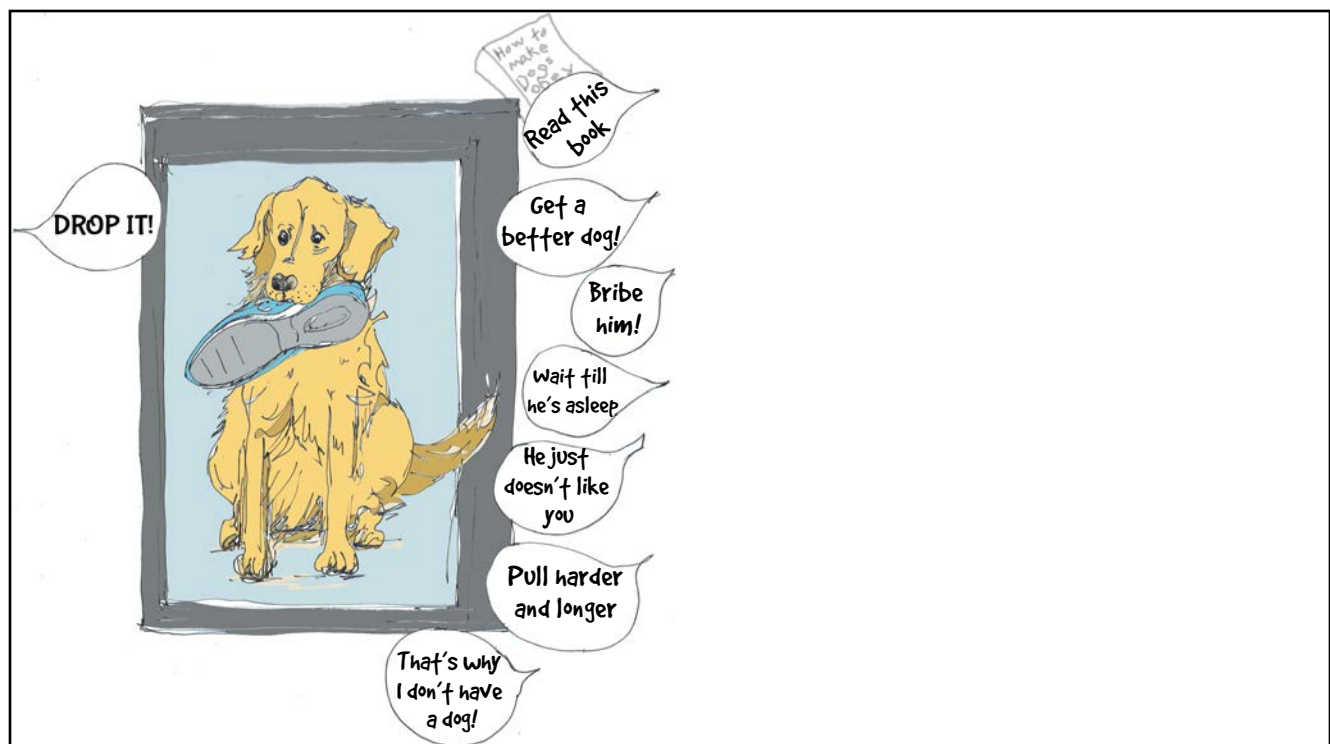
God is incredibly good and generous and eager to give the best gifts, especially the Holy Spirit, to every one of His children who simply, humbly, and boldly ask

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Getting things from *idols and other “gods”*

- Give them what they want so they give you what you want
- They don't care about you, just what you give them
- They can get sleepy or distracted so you have to get their attention
- They might resist, so you have to wear them down by repeated asking
- If you ask poorly, they might ignore you or even attack you
- Like getting something from a dog...

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When we pray...

Help me!

Yet my struggles are still here.

So we ask:
"Lord, teach us to pray better."

Learn this technique to get better results...

Maybe God isn't as good as they say...

Promise to give God something in exchange

Get what you need your own way, when He's not looking

Maybe He doesn't like you, or maybe you aren't important enough (so get more and better people to pray for you)

Maybe you need to pray longer, or use more religious words

Maybe you should just give up...

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Jesus' surprising response to this request

- Disciples' request: "Lord, teach us to pray"
- Jesus' response:
 - Pray simply, humbly, and boldly
 - **Because...**
 - God is good and generous and eager to give the best gifts to every one of His children who ask
- Prayer expresses our theology
 - What do our prayers reveal about our beliefs about God?

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Jesus' answer to "Teach us to pray"

God is incredibly good and generous and eager to give the best gifts, especially the Holy Spirit, to every one of His children who simply, humbly, and boldly ask

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Application #1

Pray. Simply. Humbly. Boldly

- **Foundation: trust in the generous goodness of God**
 - No need for tricks or special techniques
 - No need for manipulation or promises
 - No need to keep asking until He gets tired of our asking
 - No special power in getting many people to pray for us
 - No need for long prayers or religious words
- **Ask / Seek / Knock: pursue what you need in and from God**
 - For ordinary things (like daily bread)
 - For seemingly impossible things (like hope, new life, healing, ...)
- **Keep praying as long as the need is there**
 - Not to wear Him down
 - But because we need to trust Him as long as the need is there

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Application #2

Be willing to accept an upgrade (that may not feel like one)

- **Joseph (in Genesis)**
 - His good actions repeatedly got punished
 - He lived as a prisoner for 13 years
 - Others harmed him, yet eventually he saw: "God meant it for good"
- **Paul (in 2 Corinthians 12)**
 - Begged God to remove a "thorn" that brought suffering
 - God gave a better gift: God's strength in Paul's weakness
- **The best upgrade:**
God freely gives the Holy Spirit when we ask

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The Holy Spirit

So easy to overlook or ignore this mind boggling gift!

He is THE source of power for life and ministry *Luke 4:1; Acts 1:8*

He helps us in our weakness *Romans 8:26*

He prays for us when we don't know how *Romans 8:26*

He gives powerful gifts for ministry *1 Corinthians 12:11*

He is the source of the greatest gifts *Galatians 5:22-25*

- love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control

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The Fruit of the Spirit or riches of this age

“Better a **little with the fear of the Lord**
than **great wealth with turmoil.**

Better a **small serving of vegetables with love**
than a **fattened calf with hatred.**” *Proverbs 15:16-17*

“Better a **dry crust with peace and quiet**
than a house **full of feasting, with strife.**” *Proverbs 17:1*

So often we ask for external conditions rather than internal blessing
Without internal blessing (the Spirit), external conditions are empty

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Application #2

Be willing to accept an upgrade (that often doesn't feel like one)

- **When we aren't getting or experiencing the thing we seek**
 - **Trust that God is giving a greater gift**
 - **This is not a simple thing**
 - **Yet it is a real part of life**
 - **Sitting at the feet of Jesus, we trust His plan over ours**
 - **“For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.” *2 Corinthians 4:17-18***
 - **We should “overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit”**
Romans 15:13

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Application #3

Live according to what we are asking God to do

- **Have a forgiving heart**
 - **We cannot simultaneously seek forgiveness and fail to give it**
 - **A repentant heart cannot at the same time hold claim against others**
 - **Literally “we are forgiving all the ones who owe us something”**
- **Be generous to others**
- **Be seeking in Christ the thing we are asking for in Christ**
 - **Like “daily bread”**
 - **Sitting at the feet of Jesus is not passivity**
 - **It is both submission and trust, in head, heart, and hands**

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Jesus’ answer to “Teach us to pray”

God is incredibly good and generous and eager to give the best gifts, especially the Holy Spirit, to His children

who simply, humbly, and boldly ask

What is something you need from God today?

What do you believe about God related to your request?

Seek what you need in and from Him, knowing that

He is eager to give the best gifts to His children who ask

And then watch for His work, and give Him praise!

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