

Inspired to Pray

Key Verse: *“I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.”*
—**Luke 11:9**

Selected Scripture:
Luke 11:5-13

TODAY’S LESSON BEGINS

with a parable spoken by Jesus to his disciples. “He said to them, Suppose one of you shall have a friend, and goes to him at midnight, and says to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine has come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him’; and from inside he answers and says, ‘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*.’ 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.”—Luke 11:5-8, *New American Standard Bible*

In the parable of the friend at midnight, the person who needed bread to feed his unexpected visitor pictures those who are the consecrated followers of God who continually seek after him for spiritual food and guidance in their lives. The friend whose house he went to at midnight pictures God. One of the lessons contained in the parable is the time of day this took place, at midnight, a time you would least expect someone to be knocking at the door of his neighbor, even if they are friends. This shows that those who are truly God’s people may come to him in prayer and supplication at any time and under

any circumstances. Note that, in the parable, the friend in the house did not give the one who came to his door anything just because he was his friend, but did so when he saw his persistence. This is symbolic of the fact that our Heavenly Father, although glad to give us everything we need to make our calling and election sure, is most pleased when we consistently, and persistently, come to him in prayer. This attitude shows the Father that we truly are interested in receiving his help in every time of need, and his guidance in every experience. This is what God wants from us. He doesn't want a passive attitude in which we say, 'I'll go to the Father once about this, but if I don't get a quick answer I'll do what I want to do.'

The Key Verse of our lesson tells us that God is willing to give us all things needful for our spiritual growth and development. As the verse says, asking, seeking, and knocking shows persistence, and when we approach God in this way, as shown in the parable, he will gladly answer our request. We will receive what we ask for, find what we seek for, and have doors of providence, opportunity, and service opened up to us, all of course in accordance with his will.

The remaining verses of our lesson point out another important feature of God's care for his people. "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? Or *if* he is asked for an egg, he will not give him a scorpion, will he? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?" (Luke 11:11-13, NASB) If we ask aright, and in harmony with our spiritual needs, God will always answer us in a way which will help supply those needs, through the working of his Holy Spirit. How thankful we should be for the privilege of prayer and its wonderful benefits to us. ■