



STORY TIME

Great Life Lessons from the Parables of Jesus



#2 "It Pays To Pray"

Matthew 13:34 (NIV) Jesus spoke all these things to the crowd in parables; he did not say anything to them without using a parable.

Luke 11:5-13 (NIV) 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. 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. 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!"

Luke 18:1-8 (NIV) Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. He said: "In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared what people thought. And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, 'Grant me justice against my adversary.' For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or care what people think, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won't eventually come and attack me!'" And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?"

Luke 18:1 (NIV) Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up.

**1. Prayer is about _____ with God, not a
_____ with God.**

Acts 1:14 (NIV) They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

Acts 2:42 (NIV) They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Colossians 4:2 (NIV) Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.

1 Thessalonians 5:17 (NIV) Pray continually.

2. Some prayers are only answered _____.

2 Peter 3:8 (NIV) But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day.

- We're fighting against dark evil forces – there is resistance to God's will.

Ephesians 6:12 (NIV) For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

2 Corinthians 10:3-4 (NIV) For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.

- We don't always know how to pray.

Romans 8:26 (NIV) In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.

- We don't always ask for the right things.

James 4:3 (NIV) When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

- We're not always ready for the answer.

Matthew 23:37 (NIV) Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing.

- Our will and timing are often different than God's.

Matthew 6:9-10 (NIV) This, then, is how you should pray: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

Acts 16:6-8 (NIV) Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas.

3. Continued prayer _____ us.

Zechariah 13:9 (NIV) This third I will put into the fire; I will refine them like silver and test them like gold. They will call on my name and I will answer them; I will say, "They are my people," and they will say, "The LORD is our God."

Psalm 37:4 (NIV) Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart.

Psalm 84:11 (NIV) For the LORD God is a sun and shield; the LORD bestows favor and honor; no good thing does he withhold from those whose walk is blameless.

James 1:2-4 (NIV) Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

2 Peter 3:9 (NIV) The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

Delayed answers to prayer:

- Grow your character.
- Build your spiritual muscles.
- Purify your motives.
- Transform your desires.
- Teach you patience.

4. Continued prayer _____ our world.

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