

777 DT – Commands of Christ – Pray – Story 4

As followers of Jesus, we want to obey His commands. It is our desire to know Him, to know His commands and experience the peace, power, and provision from God through our relationship with Jesus. But, how can we be obedient unless we know what His commands are? So far, we have learned of Jesus' commands to accept Him, to be baptized, and to love. Now we are ready to learn and be obedient to another of Jesus' commands – to pray.

Story - Pray

(Biblical Anchor – Luke 11:1-13)

Truths Being Communicated:

- Through prayer, we should communicate with God our worship, our needs, and our requests.
- God is faithful and hears our prayers and answers them.
- We should pray with persistence and a pure heart.

Teaser:

If you went to your capital city and asked to talk to the president do you think they would open the door and gladly welcome you to speak freely with the president anytime you wanted? Of course not! If you could, what would you ask of them? We may not be able to speak to presidents and kings anytime we like, but we can speak to God, who is creator and ruler over the whole world. He actually wants to listen to us and speak to us!

Setting:

Jesus and His disciples had been doing much travel to different places sharing the message of God. Many miracles were being done and great things were happening. Even many of the disciples had gone out and performed miracles in Jesus' name. However, the disciples were still confused about how to pray. In this story we will learn how Jesus tells His followers to pray.

Listening Assignments:

- What happens in this story?
- What do we learn about who God is from this story?
- How does Jesus teach us to pray and why?
- How does God hear and answer our prayers?
- How will you obey Jesus' command to pray like we see in this story?

Story:

One day after Jesus finished praying, one of His followers came and asked Him, "Jesus, will you teach us to pray?" So Jesus began to teach His disciples about prayer and said, "Pray in a pattern like this...

'God, you are my Father and I worship you because you are holy. Do Your will for this world and do Your will for my life. Provide for my needs every day. Forgive me of all the sin and shame I have done. I also forgive all the people who have done

wrong against me. Give me strength to stay far away from sin and keep me from evil.'

After Jesus gave this example of how to pray, He continued to teach His followers and said,

"Imagine you have a friend who arrives at your house at midnight after a long journey but you don't have any food for them. So you go to your neighbor friend and say, 'My friend has come from far away and I have no food. Can I borrow some bread?' But your neighbor answers from inside, 'Don't bother me. It is late and we are all already sleeping. I can't give you anything!' Even though he may never give you bread just because you are his friend, he will answer if you keep asking him long enough. If you are persistent and keep knocking, he will give you whatever you need."

Jesus then told His followers, "I want you to know, if you ask God for something, he will give it to you. If you look for something, God will help you find it. If you knock on the door, God will open it. So do not give up. Keep asking, keep looking, keep knocking! God will hear you and help you."

Jesus said, "If you are a father and your son asks you for some fish to eat, would you give him a snake to eat instead? Or if he asks for an egg to eat would you give him a scorpion to eat instead? No, you would never do that! So if you, who are a sinner, know how to give good gifts to your children, imagine how much greater things God will give to you when you ask Him because He is our perfect Father!"

Dialog:

- **Who are the people in the story?**
- **Let's discuss what happened in the story and retell it together.**
- **How is God described in this story?** *(For storyteller: Bring out character traits from the story)*
 - How does He hear and answer prayer?
 - How does He view those who follow Him and ask for help?
- **What does the story teach us about Jesus' command to pray?**
 - How does Jesus tell us to pray – for what and how?
 - How often should we pray – listening and talking to God? *(For storyteller: Bring out truths from Jesus' story about the neighbor visiting in the night?)*
- **What does this story teach us about how we should pray?**
 - What do you need to change about how you pray?
 - Do you need to pray exact words or be perfect like Jesus to pray?
 - How should you pray because of this teaching?
- **How can you develop an attitude and habits to pray regularly like we see in this story?**
 - How will you pray alone and with other followers of Jesus?
 - What needs to change in your life to be able to pray like Jesus commanded?

- **For storyteller: Now spend some time as a group in prayer.**
 - Go around the group and have each person say a 10-15 second prayer of worship to God like Jesus did. *(For Storyteller: Remind them to simply pray like Jesus, keeping it simple and focused on worship. Note: Especially for Christian/church background people, remind them not to just pray what they usually pray, but according to the story.)*
 - After worship prayers, do as before but have them ask God to take care of their daily needs.

Conclusion and Linking to Story 5:

In this story we have learned how to listen to God, hear from God, speak to God and be heard by Him. Now let us be obedient to Christ and pray without ceasing! (Read or quote Phil. 3:6-7.) Next, we learn how we can go to others to make disciples!