



## **Gary Inrig – The Parables (Asking My Father)**

*Read the Chapter in Advance of the Weekly Study. Make a Mental Note or Jot Down Something That Struck You – “Strange, New or Different”.*

### **Week 9 – Read Chapter Nine: “Asking My Father” (The Midnight Caller) Read – Luke 11:1-13**

**Opening Prayer: Begin by inviting God's presence and asking the Holy Spirit to guide your discussion and deepen your understanding of prayer.**

**Overview:** Prayer is an essential, constant necessity of the Christian life – not just an emergency resource. (**“Break glass in case of emergency”**). In using the analogy of prayer as oxygen - versus an oxygen mask, Gary emphasizes that prayer is not just a privilege but an indispensable part of walking with God. When we unpack Luke 11:1-13, we see that Christ's teaching of the Lord's Prayer connects to His parable of the midnight caller – banging on God's heavenly door. Effective prayer flows from understanding God's character as a loving Father – and is no “reluctant” door answerer. This chapter addresses common struggles with prayer and points out that our problems with prayer often stem from misconceptions about God. The ultimate purpose of prayer is to develop an intimate relationship with the Father - who delights to be in communion with His children.

***“In the morning, prayer is the key that opens to us the treasures of God's mercies and blessings; in the evening, it is the key that shuts us up under His protection and safeguard.” - Billy Graham***

### **SOME KEY POINTS:**

- ❖ **Prayer is Essential, Not Optional.** Prayer is like oxygen – not an oxygen mask.
- ❖ **Prayer is About Relationship with the Father.**
- ❖ **The Lord's Prayer begins with “Our Father,”** showing intimacy & relationship to The Father including Jesus and one another. He is “our Father”.
- ❖ **Access to the Father in prayer - comes through Jesus Christ.**
- ❖ **Three Aspects of Effective Prayer:** 1. It is God-Centered: Honoring the Father's name and kingdom. 2. Needs Focused: We bring our daily needs, as well - we can ask for forgiveness and protection. 3. Persistent: To - ask, seek, and knock without ceasing.
- ❖ **God is Not a Reluctant or a Sleepy Neighbor.** He is eager to respond, not irritated by our knocking at any hour of the night.
- ❖ **What we need most isn't just answer to prayer, but God Himself working in us - Holy Spirit.**



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What was your earliest memory or experience with prayer? What did you learn about prayer growing up? Do you recall your first prayer?

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2. Why do you think the disciples specifically asked Jesus to teach them to pray? What does this tell us about the importance of learning from Christ's example?

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3. Gary states that most of our problems with prayer are due to misconceptions about God. What are some common misconceptions people have about God that might hinder their prayer life?

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4. Gary describes prayer as "the language of intimacy" with our Father. On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate the intimacy of your current prayer life? What makes prayer feel intimate or distant for you?

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5. "To be a Christian without prayer is no more possible than to be alive without breathing?"  
Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not? What does your prayer life reveal about your spiritual health? (Are you alive and thriving or "barely breathing? - 😊 )

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6. Which of these three prayer principles resonates most with your prayer life right now?  
A. **Persistence** (to keep asking, seeking, knocking) B. **Confidence** (trusting that a good – good Father will always “come through” with what we need in His perfect timing) C. **Assistance** (seeking Holy Spirit's work and direction in our lives)? D. **Thankfulness** (remembering to thank God while praying – regardless of whether He says – “yes – no or not now”).



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7. The book - mentions that some things we prayed for in the past now seem "foolish or even harmful in retrospect." Can you share an example (if comfortable) of a time when God's "no" or delay was actually better than what you originally asked for?
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### **Things to Think On - Try to Do At Least One This Week**

- **The Pattern of Prayer:** Examine the pattern of the prayer Jesus taught during your prayer time. Using the Lord's Prayer as a framework: **1. Father** - Begin by recognizing God as your loving Father – but also that *-Hallowed is His name* – start prayer with Worshiping God for who He is. **2. Your Kingdom Come** - Pray for God's purposes/His will in the world and your life. **3. Daily Bread** - Bring your physical/practical needs to mind and to Him – He cares. **4. Forgiveness** - Confess any known sin and extend your complete forgiveness to others. **5. Lead Me Not** - Ask for His spiritual protection and strength. ***See How “Purposefully Praying” – increases your intimacy with a loving Father!***
  - **Midnight Prayers:** Identify one significant need in your life or in someone else's life. Commit to praying "boldly" about it every day this week—not nagging God but coming with confidence that He hears and cares. “Be the persistent widow”. – (Luke 18:1-8)
  - **Holy Spirit Focus:** Instead of presenting a list of requests this week, spend your prayer time asking the Holy Spirit to: ***Give you wisdom and revelation to know God better. Strengthen you with power in your inner being. Work in specific areas where you feel lost, weak or inadequate.***
  - **Prayer Journal:** Begin a prayer journal. Write out your prayers as you pray. Note how God has answered, or is at work, (even in small ways), what He’s showing you – teaching you.
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**Closing Prayer:** *(this prayer is only a suggestion - please be encouraged to pray your own as the Holy Spirit leads) - Lord – we thank You for this time together to contemplate –our prayer life – continue to teach us How to pray – help us in every way – to pray every day – and to be bold and trust You more and more with a thankful heart - for our every need and for those we love – and especially even for those we might meet – along the way ... for You are our good – good Abba - In Jesus name we pray!*