Text: Luke 11:1-13

“*Lord Teach us How to Pray (Part 1)*”

Frontpiece: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen. Our text has been caused by the Holy Spirit to be written by the Evangelist Luke the Gospel reading. Dear brothers and sisters in Christ.

1. We can’t learn how to pray on our own.

Across the US, boys and girls come in herds in the summer to learn the discipline of ball. Sportsmanship, leadership, persistence, toughness and above all respect is somehow taught to the likes of the same kids you see running wild on the playground or falling asleep with the aid of a nightlight. Learning the fundamentals of the game is essential for both playing in the field, when your up to bat, or when you take the mound. The methodology is tried and true: kids learn by doing. It’s true on the farm, it’s true on the ball field, and it’s true when it comes to prayer.

Have you ever wondered if there is some fundamentals when it comes to prayer? Have you ever wondered after you’re all done, if what you just said was a good prayer? Have you ever asked for something but you don’t think God ever got back to you? These are all similar questions the disciples may have had. Like us they were unsure of how to pray. Go back to the ball analogy, many of us can pick up a bat, a ball, or a glove and kind of get it right, but not really. We need someone to teach us how to hold the bat, how to throw a curve, the discipline of keeping the eye on the ball alllll the way into the glove, and where and how the rest of our body should be at any given time. We need to be taught the proper form of prayer. As in nearly any earthly craft, there are fundamentals, that if we’re not taught –we end up developing disastrous habits. Each of us have swung and missed in our prayers to God.

This isn’t to say that prayer isn’t instinctive or natural to us humans. People who have never been baptized or never darkened the doors of the church, still find themselves crying out to God, pleading to someone, someone greater than they are for help. Just as we all have some innate desire to play the game so we have an inherent need to pray.

One of the first prayers of the Bible, is spoken by our father Adam. And it comes immediately after He has turned away from God’s Word along with Eve. It is as if they have deliberately changed their stance, from what their Father taught them. They ate the fruit on a whim, trusting their own talent rather than in God. Adam and Eve hid themselves. They who once were on good terms with God—with perfect form and prayer—now have cut off communication. After sin, we are fearful to pray to God, and we don’t know how.

2. We can’t pray however we want.

A spontaneous ball player who just makes it up as she goes, can be a very fun to watch. She can show unique charisma that captures our attention and even entertains us, but eventually those bad habits where we do what we want instead of what were taught catch up to us. This is true on the diamond in Charter Oak and Ft. Dodge and in our faith. Listen to Adam’s spontaneous prayer:

**the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. 9 But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" 10 And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself." 11 He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" 12 The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate."**

First Adam expresses fear in God and then he blames God and his wife for his sin. That’s his prayer. God it’s your fault. He’s honest about how he feels. But He’s dead wrong. Do not leave your prayers up in the air…just on a whim…or on a hunch…like maybe this is what I should say. The devil loves our spontaneity…reinvention of my religion…and do it yourself prayers. Because He can turn our words upside down so easily. He can even make it seem like our sin is really God’s fault. God why did you let this happen….How could you God? The devil can turn God’s gifts into curses: the woman you gave to be with me, she did it to me. And the devil can turn our free formed words of faith into disbelief. I was afraid and I hid myself.

Everything goes wrong with Adam and Eve because of their sin, but the way to fix it cannot be done by them or their self formed prayers. They can’t find the right words to say in their hearts because their hearts are broken. They can’t do it on their own. Let us root out this myth about prayer for what it is: We are not free to pray however we want (repeat). That is as stupid as a person who goes into the batter’s box but has the bat upside down facing the stands instead of the mound. In fact, when we just wing it, we so often dig ourselves in deeper. Bad habits in the batters box come back to sting us when the game is on the line. And with prayer this is precisely how all false gods and false religions have come into form and practice: by man doing and praying the wrong way…our own way…so much so that we make for ourselves our own gods. For a ball player, what could be more disrespectful than doing it your way, instead of the fundamentals that dad and coach spent years ingraining into you. For God what could be more disrespectful than throwing away the words of grace given to you by Jesus.

1. Our prayer begins with God’s grace.

This means that the LORD’s prayer, is a gift of God. Certainly it is a command. Jesus says, when you pray, say: then He gives us the LORD’s Prayer. Absolutely that is a command. There is law there. A rule, and command of God. But that command is given, because God doesn’t want us to go into hiding. When our old Adam strikes back and strikes out God doesn’t want us hiding, fearful in our homes on Sunday mornings or Saturday nights…afraid of what we have done. So much so that we won’t pray to Him because of our sin.

God has done something far greater than our sin. He has struck it out. He has played the perfect game with the perfect life. He has pitched the perfect game and transferred it to our record. And He has done this by grace. He really did it in Jesus’ life, and He really gives it to your life in your baptism, in His supper, in His Word. Luther writes *If He did not intend to answer you, He would not have ordered you to pray and backed it up with such a strict commandment* (LC). The reason why you are to pray is because God tells you to. And the reason God tells you to is because we need Him to save us from our errors. And the reason why He can always save us from anything we’ve done wrong is because of Jesus. And so the final reason to pray isn’t just because God says so but also because He promises to listen and answer by grace in Jesus. So the reason you pray is because you know what Jesus has done for you.

So Jesus gives us His Words, not so that we have to say them perfectly, precisely or else… Jesus gives us His Words so that we can rely totally on His words instead of ours. We must be taught how to pray like we are taught the fundamentals of the game. This is not for God; it is for us. The LORD’s prayer is not so God can entertain or amuse Himself…yes…yes they are saying the words I told them. It is for us…so that we know the right things to say…to ask for…to desire…to trust and believe in.

**PRAY TO GOD WHO GIVES GOOD GIFTS BY GRACE IN JESUS.**

1. Jesus gives us His Father to pray to.

The Christian who prays rightly does not try to contrive for himself his own faith in order to pray. No. Now that we are baptized we don’t just wing it. Instead, the baptized Christian relies on the life of Christ even in prayer. So that we call God Father, because Jesus has made Him our Father by His cross which canceled all our errors and sins in order that we not fear that he’s going to kick us out of heaven. We need not hid from him in our homes, or pray anxiously like coach is mad at us. We need not fear that we have to figure out how to pray on my own in order to appease God. No. you’ll screw it up. You’ll screw it up. We rely totally on Christ’s faith given to us in baptism who makes us truly God’s Children, and Him truly our Father so that with all boldness we really can call God, Father. You really can call God dad. The LORD of heaven and earth. The holy, holy, holy LORD God. The creator of all. Who was, is and ever shall be. With all power, all glory, all honor, all majesty. The one, true and only God is your dad. He has made Himself your dad, in Jesus, your Savior. Isn’t that something, so much so that here’s what he teaches you to call Him. Father. My father, our father. What? How can that be? It is by grace in Jesus.

1. Jesus gives us the Words to pray.

So you are taught how to pray be hearing the Gospel. By receiving the love of God in Christ Jesus. You can’t pray rightly otherwise. All other prayer tries to make it up or figure it out on our own. All other prayer, prays out of need but doesn’t pray relying on Christ. Therefore, before you go off and say prayers in front of hundreds of people or just by yourself in your bedroom. Return the fundamentals Jesus taught you. Relying not on your attitude, your desire, or your bumbling words, you’re going to mess it up. So learn the fundamentals. Jesus is the only natural when it comes to prayer: because He’s actually God’s Son and He tells us how to pray like a true son. Say the words Jesus told us to say. Pray the prayer Jesus taught us to pray. It’s not vain repetition, it’s faith in Jesus. (catechism).

Now listen how Jesus explains the faith in teaching this prayer. You’ve woken up in the middle of the night by a neighbor, they had a late night guest and they are plum out of food for their wearied traveler. Which of you wouldn’t get up and give the guy a loaf of bread…and we’re human…we’re sinful…we’re selfish, even evil at times. My heart really wants to tell the guy. What the heck are you waking me up for…it’s the middle of the night. Yet, we still do the right thing. Jesus’ point: God is purely good. So that when we ask, how much more will God give the Holy Spirit. So God makes us rest assured that like our Father Abraham we can shamelessly persistently pursue God in prayer and ask.

As we preach and hear about prayer for the next 4 weeks we will see how the things Jesus tells us to pray are always good. His words are perfect, so that of course we can ask for anything, even bread, or fish, or an egg. And even our parents who are sinful won’t give us stones, and snakes, and scorpions, evil imitations of these things. So God will give us even better than what we ask for, when we pray those things, that He teaches us are good.

The fundamentals of the game teach us the right way to do things. The right way to play. Jesus teaches us the right way to pray. His words to use. His desires to want. His faith to know God always gives good things. So that in praying Jesus prayer we are formed into Christ...His children by grace in Jesus. Amen.

right words, attitude, or

Don’t get me wrong. We are not saying that in order to be a good Christian or good at prayer, it all depends on your work. That is the exact opposite of what I’m saying. The more you pray the more you learn how poor you are at it. The more you learn how easily distracted you are.

We must be taught

If you want to pray rightly do it. But do it as Jesus teaches.

saying the same words over and over again and again. Week after week. Day after day. Yes it is repetitive. Yes it is a discipline and can seem trying and times, boring at times, even work at times against our old Adam who just wants to do things His way. But

**Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.” 2And he said to them, “When you pray, say:**

**“Father, hallowed be your name.**

**Your kingdom come.**

**3Give us each day our daily bread,**

**4and forgive us our sins,**

**for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us.**

**And lead us not into temptation.”**

**5And he said to them, “Which of you who has a friend will go to him at midnight and say to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves, 6for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him’; 7and he will answer from within, ‘Do not bother me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed. I cannot get up and give you anything’? 8I tell you, though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his impudence he will rise and give him whatever he needs. 9And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 10For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. 11What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; 12or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? 13If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”**

Pray in thanksgiving for altar and pulpit fellowship with Lutheran church in Norway. And Lutheran church of Uruguay 7/11/16

PRAY TO GOD WHO GIVES GOOD GIFTS BY GRACE IN JESUS.

1. All prayer begins with God’s grace (unearned favor from God in Christ).

Myth: We can pray however we want.

PRAYER TO OTHER GODS

UNCHRISTIAN PRAYER TO GOD.

PRAYER IN GRACE AND ROOTED IN THE GOSPEL IS NOT FILLED WITH EXCUSES FOR WRONG DOING. Adam. LGBTQ,

Faithful prayer turns back the clock on our old adam. Where we are no longer saying to God. The woman you gave me. The food you gave me. The disease you gave me. The thing you did against me God.

Proper prayer begins with God (He commands us to pray…he makes us…He gives to us. He invites us to pray. He promises to hear and answer.)

Abraham shows he has nothing to offer to God. He is but dust and ashes, still asks and asks and asks God out of His grace and mercy.

Pray in the Holy Spirit is praying the way God teaches us and what He promises to give us.

Being baptized, as God’s children, we speak the words of the New Adam, the words of God’s Son, Jesus. When we say: Father. Hallowed by thy name.

Prayer begins knowing the grace of God. In the early church only baptismal catechumens were taught the LORD’s Prayer. In our day, most of us teach our children the Lord’s prayer. But who among us has the creed memorized word for word. But when you look at morning and evening prayer, we say first the creed and then the Lord’s Prayer. Why? Because we begin with the grace of God. Not only does the creed remind us who Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are and what they have done and do for us. But they also summarize the Gospel so that we know why we call God Father. Becaue He has made himself our loving Father and reconciled us despite our sin and rebellion.

So it is part of the ongoing life of the Christian that we pray the creed and Lord’s prayer often. For I change reluctantly and constantly sin even though I believe am baptized and hear God’s Word. Still I sin. So still I need to hear the Gosple and be instructed in how to pray, speak, believe, and act. And want.

Mother’s in the grocery store can certainly buy food for their children. But as the children grow and learn what candy is they desire it more than any other food. So it is that a mother is given to teach their children what to want. Even though candy may taste best, it is not the best food for them. They are taught what food to want by the mother.

And when a teenage boy grows into a young man desiring those traits of a woman that appeal to the eye of men. It is the father’s job, not to elbow the kid in order to check out a hottie that walks by. But instead, the father teaches the boy to desire a woman of faith. That the beauty of a woman isn’t simply seen by her voluptuous curves, but as Peter says: a woman with a gentle quiet spirit, who submits out of faith in Christ Jesus (1 Pet. 3:3-5). Just as children need to be taught to desire good things instead of evil. So do all Christians.

Christ teaches us what is good and what is good to ask God for in the Lord’s Prayer…therefore you need not doubt…Gee, is this a good prayer. Will God hear me? Will he be pleased? We know, God listens to us in Christ. And we know God gives good things. Just as a parent is pleased to see their child do what their told, desiring good food, and good boyfriends/girlfriends husbands and wives. So too, God is pleased when we pray, desire, and ask for those things He has taught us to be good.

Why pray:

1. God commanded it.
2. God promises to hear.
3. God gives us good and pleasing words of Christ to pray.
4. God reminds us of our need and His mercy in love through prayer.

Backpiece: In the name of the Father, and of the **†** Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

PRAY TO GOD WHO GIVES GOOD GIFTS BY GRACE IN JESUS.

1. All prayer begins with God’s grace (unearned favor from God in Christ).

Myth: We can pray however we want.

Pentecost 8 (11th Sunday after Pentecost)

Luke 9:51-62

**PRAY TO GOD WHOSE KINGDOM COMES BY GRACE IN JESUS.**

1. Myth: God answers our requests based off the merit or eloquence of our prayers.

PRAY TO GOD WHO KNOWS YOUR NEED AND GIVES DAILY BREAD BY GRACE IN JESUS.

1. God knows what you need before you ask.
2. Father sees kid riding the bike, coming in with a bloody knee and already knows what happened.

Myth: God gives you more/better “daily bread” because of your life.

God only gives daily bread or in good gift because of Jesus. Salvation because of the faith he’s given to you.

Not worrying doesn’t mean you’re perfectly happy in this life. You need not worry for God gives you the kingdom in Christ Jesus.

**Luke 12:22-34 Faithful PRAYER CONCERNs EARTH. Pet. 4-7**

PRAY TO GOD WHO JUDGES RIGHTLY AND GIVES ULTIMATELY PEACE BY GRACE IN JESUS.

Myth: We should pray for world peace.

World peace is not a petition God can grant in this sinful world.

Imprecatory psalms/prayers

**Luke 12:49-53 Faithful Prayer trusts God’s judgement and ultimately gives peace. Collect**

PRAY TO GOD WHO DELIVERS US FROM EVIL BY GRACE IN JESUS.

1. Fearfully faithful prayer acknowledges who God is and what He says goes.
2. He told us to pray this way.
3. He has delivered His salvation to us in baptism and the Lord’ Supper – what He says goes.
4. So we do the same thing over and over, because what He says goes—we rely on His work not ours.

MYTH: We can’t tell God what to do.

We can tell God what to do, in prayer, when we pray for those things he tells us to, in Jesus.

**Luke 13:22-30 Faithful prayer is evangelical. Prayer of the Church. Nunc Dimmittus.**