

THE REST OF THE STORY
(Deeper Understanding & Application of Sunday Sermons)
Luke 11:1-13

Prayers to Die For

The three-day (Trillium) holiday of the Roman Catholic Church is all about honoring, praying for, and seeking the release of the souls of the dead in purgatory. Halloween (Holy evening) is for prayers on behalf of Catholics who have died with unreconciled sin in their life. Hallowmas (All Saints Day) is the day following in which dead Catholic martyrs are honored and prayed for that they may be released from purgatory for entry into heaven and All Souls Day is the third and final holiday to remember and pray for deceased Christians in general.

It is a 3-day Catholic (*and some Lutheran groups*) religious observance that claims to bring merit (*indulgence / future purgatory time to be deducted at death*) to whoever faithfully attends church services and visits cemeteries during this time of seeking the release of souls from the fictitious location called purgatory (*place to purify of unpardoned sins*).

The truth is that there is no such place as purgatory according to Scripture, and furthermore it is a very serious sin to attempt communication with or about souls of the deceased (***Leviticus 19:31, 20:27; Deuteronomy 18: 9-13***). Since all who die are either saved by grace in heaven or hopelessly lost in hell, it is not the deceased who are being contacted, but rather demonic spirits imitating the dead (*mediums, seances, tarot card readers / 1 Corinthians 10:20*). To do so shows the unsaved estate of the one doing it.

Nowhere in God's Word is there any command or example of God's people praying to or for the dead, lighting candles for them, or doing anything to contact those whose souls have left their body and are now forever consigned to eternal bliss or eternal destruction (***Luke 16:19-31***). In this passage spoken by the Lord Jesus, there is no relocation of the souls of the dead and the intermediate place between Paradise and Perdition is ***'a great gulf fixed (the abyss / 2 Peter 2:4), so that those who want to pass from here to there, cannot...'*** (***Luke 16:26***), not a Catholic imaginary half-way house called *Purgatory!*

This fictitious place has led to a false sense of second chances for Catholics, Lutherans, and others who lived in sin hoping to take care of it in purgatory after death. What a horrible surprise to those who die without true repentance and conversion to Christ – no purgatory, no hope of release, only hell now and the Lake of Fire to come! This religious lie of Catholicism has doomed multitudes of misled Catholics and continues to do so.

In summary, it is pointless to pray for the dead or to the dead or use the devil's little helpers (mediums, etc.) to mediate – the dead are gone and beyond reach in their final destiny. **Prayer to them or for them is flagrant disobedience carrying the most severe eternal death sentence**, because doing so is consorting with demons impersonating the dead.

Scripture is clearly unambiguous – ***"There is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus..."*** (***1 Timothy 2:5***). All other mediums including Mary, angels, apostles, dead Christians, etc. are condemned in Scripture. The Lord Jesus Christ commanded: ***"...whatever you ask the Father in My Name He will give you...Ask and you will receive that your joy will be full..."*** (***John 16:23-24***)

PtL

'Your Heart to God's Ear'

(Prayer – The Disciple's Password to God's Presence)

Luke 11:1-13

The Disciples' Prayer

(The Shortened 'Church Age' Version of Matthew 6:9-13)

- Although this is not a prayer to be repeated mechanically, but rather a pattern of what a good, thorough talk with God should include, why is it good to pray about these things in the order Jesus listed them?
- Talk about each line and how differently people would live if they really thought about what they are asking for.

The Disciple's Persistence

(The Spiritual Skill of Relentless, Reverent Intercession)

In Jesus' story about 'persistence' in prayer, the friend who wouldn't grant his friend's request, is a picture of how it seems when God doesn't immediately answer our prayers.

- When you don't see answers to prayer immediately how do you feel? (My request isn't very important to my Father, He is too busy with other more important things, I'm not good enough to expect anything from Him, etc.) Why are these wrong conclusions?
- Knowing God the Father according to the Bible, what are some good reasons He may make us wait for answers to our prayers and desires?
- What are some good spiritual qualities that God may use *waiting* to develop in disciples?
- Talk about the acrostic about prayer - P.U.S.H. (pray until something happens). Is this a good trustworthy way to '*pray without ceasing*' (*1 Thessalonians 5:17, James 5:16-18*)?

The Disciple's Persuasion

(The Earnest Expectation of Biblically-Based Prayer)

- Discuss the importance of having a thorough knowledge of God's character and ways in hopefully anticipating answers to prayer (*James 1:16-18*).
- Describe the differences between asking, seeking and knocking when we pray. How does asking, seeking and knocking help thwart 'doubting' (*James 1:5-8*)?
- In the Sermon on the Mount by Jesus about 3 years before He said we can be sure God will give 'good things' (*Matthew 6:11*). But in *Luke 11:13* Jesus, 3 years later, said God will give 'the Holy Spirit' to those who ask Him. How do you explain this difference? What does it matter (*Romans 8:26-27*)?
- How has this study on prayer challenged you to upgrade and revitalize your prayer life?