

- I. The Audacity of Prayer; Sunday, November 09, 2014
(Sunnyslope)

Psalm 19:14

May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be
pleasing in your sight, O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.

- A. "Good morning, church!"
- B. Today: so easy to get what we want (ask and receive)
1. Order a pizza on a cell phone app
 2. Find any information online in seconds
 3. Older things:
 - a) Click a remote control and change the channel
 - b) Pick up a phone and call someone
- C. Our expectations are that things will work and we deserve immediate customer support when things go wrong
1. People in general are becoming less tolerant and less patient with service outages
 - a) Electricity outages
 - b) Internet outages
- D. There's also a lack of distance between the sovereign and the subject
1. We criticize our leaders with greater equality of position
 2. Socially, we see the Queen of England as just a person
 3. When meeting a famous person, they're just a person
- E. Contrast this to the world 2 thousand years ago

1. Kings and subjects lived in different worlds
 - a) To encounter a ruler was scary, foreboding
 - b) You wouldn't dare ask the ruler for anything
 - c) Fane being happy, that nothing is wrong

II. God today is seen as spiritual butler

- A. Misperception: God as spiritual butler
 1. He does what we ask; then leaves us alone
 2. "Pray for what you want"
- B. We miss the point of the audacity of prayer
- C. 2 thousand years ago, there would have been great awareness of how audacious it would be to ask God for anything
 1. Prayers 2 thousand years ago (that were recorded) predominately contained praise to God, worship, adoration, and submission
 2. Prayers now (that are written) predominately ask God for things
- D. Into this context we need to understand why Jesus told a particular parable, to combat the fear of being too audacious; that being audacious was OK (so long as we are humble and submissive)

Luke 11:5-8

5 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; 6 a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have no food to offer him.' 7 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.' 8 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.

- E. 6-year-old; missed bus; walked into arch-diocese church office to call mom
 - 1. I didn't realize the audacity of what I was doing
 - 2. I was audacious, but I was still humble and submissive
 - F. The problem with most prayer today is that it does not come from a position of humility and submissiveness
 - 1. We treat God like a divine butler who's there to do what we ask
 - 2. We don't really and truly consider we are speaking with the Almighty Creator of The Universe
- III. Jesus said that when we ask, we should ask repeatedly; and that when we ask, we will receive
- A. Ask repeatedly: Luke 18 parable about the persistent widow who kept bugging a judge repeatedly until he gave in to what she wanted
 - 1. Not to mean God has a stingy side
 - 2. Rather, Jesus is making the point that persistent, repeated asking results in success; so we should do it
 - B. Another thing = Ask and given; not yes, no, maybe (which doesn't exist in Scripture anywhere)
 - 1. Ask and you will receive (as long as you're asking in alignment with God's will)

1 John 14-15

14 This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. 15 And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.

- C. With that in mind, let's look back at Luke chapter 11

Luke 11:9-10

9 “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. 10 For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

- D. Now this next part seems fairly obvious to us and easy to understand (but that’s because of our being modern)

Luke 11:11-13

11 “Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? 12 Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? 13 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!”

1. Remember that we don’t really comprehend the audacity of prayer
2. However, people 2 thousand years ago absolutely would be aware of the audacity of prayer
3. And there would be concern that if they asked a sovereign for bread, they might get a stone instead (for being so audacious as to bother the sovereign with such a request)

IV. Today, I don’t think we need to learn the lesson that it’s OK to be audacious when praying to God

- A. In many ways, I think we need to remember that we ought to be audacious but aware of our audaciousness
- B. Which is to say that we respect and fear God as the Almighty
- C. That we understand and appreciate the gap between who we are and who God is

D. And yet even in that context of difference, Jesus tell us to as God for bread

Luke 11:2-4

2 He said to them, “When you pray, say:

“Father,

hallowed be your name,

your kingdom come.

3 Give us each day our daily bread.

4 Forgive us our sins,

for we also forgive everyone who sins against us.

And lead us not into temptation.””