

THE MISSING INGREDIENT

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Luke 11:1-13

1. Most recipes have a number of ingredients.
 - a. Some are more important than others are.
 - b. Some are optional.
 - c. Some are essential.
2. There are various ingredients that go into a successful and effective Christian life.
 - a. The first two are repentance towards God and a faith response to the Gospel.
NOTE: Jesus declared, "The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the Gospel." Mark 1:15
 - b. A growing knowledge of the Bible.
 - c. Obedience to God and His Word. 1 John 2:3-6
By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. 4 The one who says, "I have come to know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; 5 but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him: 6 the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.
3. The missing ingredient in the lives of many professing Christians and churches is persistent and prevailing prayer.
4. The point of the illustrations Jesus shared in this passage is that if persistence gets results with an unwilling and reluctant friend, how much more will persistence accomplish when we approach our Heavenly Father in prayer?
5. Jesus' prayer life was such that it inspired within the disciples a desire to be more effective in prayer.
6. In response Jesus repeated, with some minor changes, the model prayer that He had shared with His disciples in Matthew 6:9-13.
7. Our prayers should demonstrate:
 - a. Our desire to see God's name glorified and revered.
 - b. Our desire to see the Kingdom of God become a growing reality in our lives, and in the lives of others.
 - c. Our absolute trust in God related to our daily needs.
 - d. Our willingness to confess and forsake sin.
 - e. Our desire for victory over all forms of temptation.
8. I could have titled this message, "Four Friends," because there are four friends alluded to in this passage.

I. The visiting friend.

- A. He was on a journey and arrived at the home of a friend late at night, tired and hungry.
- B. He came to his friend:
 1. Unannounced.
 2. At a bad time—midnight.
NOTE: Ministry opportunities are often unannounced and inconvenient.

- C. He was not ashamed to avail himself of his friend's hospitality in a time of need.
 - 1. We are sometimes reluctant to share our needs with others.
 - 2. We prefer to live our own private lives.
 - 3. As a Body of Believers we should have a mutual dependency on, and regard for, each other.

II. The persistent friend.

- A. Had nothing to set before his friend.
- B. Realizing his inability to meet the visiting friend's need, he turned to a friend of his who was also a neighbor; someone close by.
- C. Hospitality was important in Jewish culture, and being unable to meet a friend's need for food would be an embarrassment.
- D. Getting what he needed to provide for his friend was not going to be easy because of the time of day.
- E. However, he was up to the task because of his persistence (importunity, shamelessness).
- F. If we are going to make a difference in people's lives we need to recognize our utter dependence upon God. John 15:5
 - “I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.”
- G. The visiting friend needed someone to intercede for him.

III. The unwilling friend.

- A. Had what was needed but did not want to disturb his family.
- B. Finally decided that it would be better to get up and give his neighbor what he needed, because it became evident that his neighbor was not going to go away.
- C. Most children learn at a relatively young age that persistence often pays off.

IV. The willing Friend.

- A. Jesus applied the principle He was trying to get across by stating that our lives should be characterized by persistent and ongoing asking, seeking, and knocking.
- B. “For everyone who (persistently) asks, receives; and he who (persistently) seeks, finds; and to him who (persistently) knocks, it will be opened.”
- C. Jesus reinforced His point in verses 11-13.
 - 1. Earthly fathers, although evil in comparison to God, know how to give good gifts to their children.
 - 2. “How much more will your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?”
 - a. It is the Holy Spirit who helps and enables us to pray. Ephesians 6:18-20
 - With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints, 19 and pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in proclaiming it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.
 - b. The Holy Spirit manifest His presence and power in the lives of those who genuinely want to be God's instrument in the lives of others.

APPLICATION

1. Luke 18:1-8 is closely related to the passage before us.
2. It begins with, “Now He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart.”
3. It ends with a question, “However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith (the faith that perseveres in prayer) on the earth?”
4. We need to come to God in faith with:
 - a. A sense of continual, personal need.
 - b. An unflinching desire to receive what God knows we need.
 - c. An unshakable faith that He has in store what I need.
 - d. An unshakable faith that He has what my family, friends, and neighbors need.
 - e. A consciousness that though He sometimes withholds awhile, He loves to be asked, and asked again.
 - g. A firm belief that if we ask, believing, we will receive.