



## DO WE HAVE TO BEG GOD ?

In Luke 11, verses 5-8, Jesus shared a parable that's commonly used to teach prayer.

*« Suppose one of you has a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, because a friend of mine has stopped here while on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him.' Then he will reply from inside, 'Do not bother me. The door is already shut, and my children and I are in bed. I cannot get up and give you anything.' I tell you, even though the man inside will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of the first man's sheer persistence, he will get up and give him whatever he needs. »*

This passage is commonly taught that God is like this "friend." You go to Him when you have a need, but He may answer "No !" or "I'm not ready." Therefore, you must badger Him and persistently pray your request over and over again until you make Him give you what you need. Sometimes you may even need to involve other people and by bombarding the gates of Heaven in joint prayer with a hundred others, you will manage to twist God's arm and He will be forced to answer !

Even though many believers actually believe this, it's not what this parable is saying.

Jesus was making a contrast, not a comparison. What would you think of such a "friend" who would tell you to go away when you seek help for an urgent need ? Friends don't treat each other that callously !

Jesus used this physical example to show that if a real friend would treat you better than this, why would you think God must be badgered, begged, and pled with to meet your need ? Why would your heavenly Father, who loves you infinitely more than anyone else ever could, treat you worse than a selfish human being ?

Even though we are all sinners and imperfect, we do not have to approach God like He's this grumpy, inconvenienced, sleeping "friend" who's reluctant to help us. He's not up there in heaven with His arms folded, demanding, "Beg a little harder. Once you've suffered enough, then I'll answer...maybe !" No ! God's not like that. He is a good God, a loving Father, willing and motivated to meet your needs.

Yet this attitude of begging God has been widely taught and practiced as "prayer."

But Jesus was making a contrast! After giving the parable, He immediately pressed His point :  
*« 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. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. »*

Then He illustrated this truth even further by using the same logic with another human relationship. « *Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion ? 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 good things to those who ask Him ! »*

Can you see the difference ? When you ask God for anything according to His will, He will give it. You never have to beg Him for help, He has open hands and an open heart of care for you and your family.