

# Prayer Prioritizes Your Purchases

Luke 11:1-13

INTRO:

- Tension: Everyone wants a formula for faith and finances.
  - Should I get this house, car, shirt, shoes, boat, waffle-maker?
  - We want to know the rule so we can follow the rule. We don't like the ambiguity of silence, and it often feels like God is silent.
    - How does he feel about rich people? How does he feel about poor people? Should all of us sell everything and give to the poor or just the rich young ruler?
- The truth is that the Bible is confusing:
  - Times when the rich are rebuked...
  - The kings, for all their blunders, weren't rebuked for their wealth...
  - Times when the poor are applauded...
  - Times when Jesus says not to worry about money... Times when he says to give it all away... Times when he acts like he doesn't need money... Times when he says it is a root of all kinds of evils...
- So what's a person to do who is trying to do the right thing? How do you decide?
  - Especially when it seems that God wants different things for different people. For one, getting that XYZ is wrong. For another, it isn't
  - This might seem contradictory, but it's not. The issue is not the rule (which is what we want), but your heart.
  - And specifically to what you are surrendering... what you are chasing for purpose... to what you are committed to... from where you draw your identity... What defines your life's pursuit...
- Jesus' teachings on prayer can help shed light on this situation
  - Most of our prayer is born out of a desire for something
  - But Jesus' model - the Lord's prayer - is born out of surrender
  - "Financial sanity doesn't begin with hard work and careful budgeting, although both are beneficial. Money sanity begins with surrender, a surrender that rescues us from ourselves and frees us to use what God has provided in the way he intended." (Paul Tripp)

**SCRIPTURE: Luke 11:1-13**

- **Father in Heaven - IDENTITY**

- The identity that you assign yourself determines how you think about life and how you respond to everything that comes your way.
- Perhaps the truest form of "privilege" is being raised in a loving family
- When you trust in and follow Jesus, some seismic shifts happen in your identity

○ **He is your Father...**

- In Christ, we are adopted into God's family. This means more than being forgiven and having a future home. It comes w/ a new identity rooted in a new family.
- Not just in the future, but today, you are called a child of God w/ all the rights and privileges of Jesus as your co-heir
- This redefines everything that we are and how we should look at life.

○ **Your Father is in heaven...**

- He has a bird's eye view that you cannot truly appreciate. He knows what you need, when you need it, how you need it, etc.
- His ways are not your ways, his thoughts are not your thoughts
- These realities scream at you to surrender.
- Relax, trust, submit, stop fighting and let dad take the reins. You have a new identity from your family
- But this new identity also means a few more things

○ **Your position is rooted in your family.**

- Your potential isn't attached to your money.
- My value isn't determined by how much money I have or don't have
  - Ex: Isn't this why so many people feel the need to buy certain things, fix their house up a certain way? All the pressure of pinterest parties, social media, etc

○ **The one who provides you with all that you need knows you better than you know yourself and he loves you as a good father**

- This is what Jesus argues when he says that b/c God is good you don't have to worry about tomorrow
  - You are free from being slave to your finances and instead you can give and use them for what your Father says they should be used for b/c if he asks you to spend your resources on something specific (glory of God, good of your neighbor, the gospel), you can rest assured that he will provide you with what you need
  - Ex: Story of Barrie Flitcroft from EQUIP in Vietnam
- As we pray to our father in heaven, we surrender our money plans to his wisdom, love, and care. We know who we are and whose we are.

● **Your name be honored as holy - MY PURPOSE**

- The words, "Your name be honored as holy" isn't wistful thinking - "Boy, I hope people respect you, God"

○ **This prayer is a personal surrender to the reality that your purpose is to spend your time, energy, and resources to see Jesus become famous.**

- You spend money every day to further someone else's name
- You spend money on yourself to make your name great (clothes, homes, neighborhoods, vehicles, fashion, status)
    - E.g. you don't just go on vacation, you take pics to show people

- You spend money on your kids to make their name great (clubs, schools, sports, hobbies, education, tutoring)
      - E.g. you take pictures of your child's successes so that others can celebrate them too
  - But have you ever stopped to wonder if this is the purpose of your money? What if your finances aren't so that people would applaud you or your kids, but would applaud God - revere his name and reputation?
    - It's not wrong to have nice things, enjoy a vacation, or buy your kid new shoes. Doing those things is honoring to God and good
  - But the point is this: we tend to use our money more for our own enjoyment than for its actual purpose → to make holy and reverent the name of God
  - When we pray, we are reminded of this reality (or should be)
  - As we pray, we surrender our money to furthering the glory of one greater than myself. His name should be honored, not mine.
- **May your kingdom come [and your will be done] - MY COMMITMENT**
  - We are all building a kingdom, but when we build the wrong kingdom it can end up destroying you
    - Marriages have been destroyed while constructing the kingdom of pleasure found outside the marriage bed
    - Families have been ruined by dads who devote all their energy to building the kingdom of vocational success
    - People are crushed as they pursue building their own kingdom of cards, investing in things that will rot, rust, and perish
  - With honesty, ask yourself which kingdom you are living for? **Are you seeking to build God's kingdom or your own empire?**
    - Every decision we make is doing one or the other
    - This is what Jesus said when he taught that you cannot serve two masters (God and money), that whoever isn't for him is against him, and that where your treasure is there your heart will be
  - God has given you resources (abilities, time, money, etc) and you are either investing those resources in the temporary life or in eternal reality
  - The world tells you that true life and joy is found in living for yourself and today, but Jesus says the opposite. Lose your life to gain it. Give it all to gain.
  - As we pray we surrender to the reality that it's not about my kingdom
    - The moment I pray it I am convicted. I crave grace in response.
  - How differently would you spend your money if you truly loved God's kingdom the way that it should be loved?
    - What if you wanted to spend more money on God's kingdom than your house? Your car? Your fashion? Your pleasure? Your food?
    - If you budgeted towards that end, how differently would you live? How less likely would we be to impulse shop, go overboard at Christmas, etc?
  - **As we pray, we realize that in order to surrender to God's kingdom purposes, we need to abandon our empires.**

- **Give me my bread for tomorrow - MY WARTIME LIFESTYLE**

- If you know who you are... if you know whose you are... if you know that his glory is more important than life... if you truly want his kingdom to come more than anything that you could possibly experience in this world... something happens, something changes.
- I'm not here yet. I'm not so arrogant to pretend that I am, but if you surrender to God like we just described, maybe we can actually have the courage to pray these words, "Give me bread for tomorrow..."
- Because in this prayer is a realization that I need to trust God for each day's provision and if I care for his kingdom I can, w/ confidence, trust each day to itself
  - Terrifying. Isn't it?
- The heart that prays this is content w/ the meager, the measly, the minimal;
- this is a desire for **"Just give me what I need so I can devote the rest to the Lord..."**
- Honestly, I am afraid to pray this prayer b/c the answer is scary
- To pray this prayer is to ask God to satisfy you so much so in him, that daily rations are enough for you b/c you have something greater!
- And just when you are thinking, "How could anyone pray this?" I love how Jesus ties up the train of thought in verses 5-13
  - God knows what you need... He's a better dad than you... don't you think he too will give good gifts? When you ask for money, for bread, for provision, don't you think that he too will give you. . . . . the Holy Spirit?
  - Snap. Wasn't expecting that.
  - Reminds us of last week. We think that the treasure is in the gold and silver, but it's actually in Eden - the presence of God
  - We think we need \$50 more a week, another \$2 an hour and God says, "Don't you think I know what you need? Don't you think I will be pleased to let the fullness of the trinity live within you? Don't worry, I have something better in store for you..."
- Praying this leads us to the cross, doesn't it? Lord, create in me a new heart, a clean heart! How desperately I need you, how wicked I am without you. How deceptive my own heart is! Lord, lead me to the cross.

If this is all true, what do we do?

- **We pray because prayer prioritizes our purchases.** It reorients our hearts to the right things, the crucial things, the important things of God's glory and goodness.
- Let me give you a challenge this week: **pray before you purchase**
  - No, I am not talking about groceries and gasoline unless you drive a hummer while eating caviar encrusted lobster. You know the type of things that I am talking about
- As you pray, wrestle with key questions:
  - **Will this purchase satisfy me more than God?**
  - **Is this thing better than the Holy Spirit?**

- Will this give me more meaning and a greater self-worth than being a son of God?
- Am I buying this in order to get something that I can be provided for in God? (e.g. comfort when I am stressed or afraid)
- Is this for God's glory and reputation or is it for my own?
- Is this about building my empire or is it about furthering God's kingdom?
- Can (Will) this thing be used to glorify God and show love to my neighbor?
  - A house, a vehicle, a trip, a nice dinner → all those things CAN be used for the glory of God and the good of others if they are kept in check
  - You can enjoy a cigar to the glory of God, or a nice glass of wine → or you can worship those things as ends to themselves
- Am I trusting in God for my provision and future or am I trying to insulate myself from needing to trust in him?

Prayer prioritizes your purchases.