

1. In vss. 23-28 Jesus speaks primarily of Pentecost, the Spirit's guidance in the Book of Acts and the giving of the New Testament. That's what He means by "in that day" (vss. 23 and 26). He ends this with vs. 28: The divine Jesus came from the Father and entered the world as a true man, suffered, died, rose from the dead, ascended into heaven. In vss. 29-30, though the disciples believe, they are mistaken in thinking what Jesus promised in vss. 23-28 has already taken place. And so, in vss. 31-33 He both warns and comforts them. He warns them about what they are on the verge of doing in Gethsemane (Mt. 26:31). In vs. 32 He is saying that they would run but He would not run. He ends in vs. 33 with words of wonderful comfort.
2. In vss. 23 and 26 the original Greek uses two distinctly different words for "ask" or "request". Context decides the meaning of words. In vs. 23a the word for "ask" means "ask questions of doctrine" but in 23b the word for "ask" means to make requests for spiritual and physical gifts in the name of Jesus. In 23a Jesus means that there will be no further revelation after the N.T. has been written. (The gift of languages was not for further revelation but for preaching the Gospel.) When we have a question about what God says we simply go to the Bible and search for the answer. But when we have particular spiritual or physical needs then we should request in Jesus' name. Jesus makes an emphatic point of this in 23b, 24 and 26.
3. As mentioned under # 2 above, two different verbs are used in vss. 23 and 26. The verb used in 23a is used again in 26b and the one used in 23b is used in 26a. The verbs used in 23b and 26a have the same meaning, making a request for particular spiritual or physical needs. But the verbs in 23a and 26b have different meanings. In 26b it means a request of an equal to an equal. Jesus says He will not request the Father about the disciples. He explains immediately in vs. 27. Because of the disciples' love for, and faith in, Jesus they are very close to the Father and stand in His presence. For example, when we pray the Lord's prayer we say: "Our Father" without adding Jesus' name. We can now approach our heavenly Father just as children approach their earthly fathers without fear and trembling. Jesus is not denying, but further affirming, that He is our Mediator between God and man. See I Tim. 2:5. To summarize: vs. 23a says that with the coming of the Holy Spirit in Acts and the remainder of the N.T. we need ask no more questions or seek further revelation. It's all in the Scriptures. But in 23b, 24 and 26a Jesus is strongly urging us to bring all our requests, spiritual and physical to Him because of the completed work of redemption in vs. 28. Vs. 26b is a firm assurance of our oneness with the Father through Jesus.
4. In vss. 29-30 the disciples mistakenly think that Jesus has now fulfilled all. But they mention only "that You have come forth from God." They do not mention that He was about to leave the world and return to the Father. They believe, but in their enthusiasm they omit Jesus' suffering, death, resurrection and ascension and also the coming of the Spirit on Pentecost and the giving of the N.T. Jesus gently asks them in vs. 31: "Do you believe now?" Their belief is mixed with emotional enthusiasm. Then in vs. 32 He tells them the awful truth about their deserting Him in Gethsemane, Gabbatha (before Pilate) and Golgatha (on the cross). They will prove to be faithless but He will remain faithful. He says that He is not alone but that the Father is with Him. And then in vs. 33 He speaks very comforting words. He has spoken to them so that they have the peace of God mentioned in Rom. 5:1 and 8:16ff. In this life they will have affliction. But remember, Jesus has overcome the world. I Jn. 5:4; Rom. 8:37. We are often like the disciples and need listen to His warnings and comfort.

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Sermon Outline on Jn. 16:23-33, Easter V (we have included vss. 31-33)

Theme: JESUS' COMPASSIONATE HELP FOR THE IMMATURE IN THE FAITH

Introduction: On Thursday evening, just before He suffered and died, Jesus celebrated the Lord's Supper with the disciples and spoke His last words to them as a group, Jn. 13-16. Our text is the final section of what He said to them. The disciples seemed confident but they were still immature. But Jesus does not cast them aside. After this section follows Jesus' prayer to the Father, Jn. 17, but His words to the disciples have come to an end.

I-THE DISCIPLES' IMMATUREITY AND PROOF THEREOF

A-The Disciples' Immaturity. During the three years of Jesus' ministry the disciples showed their immaturity again and again. For example, when He fed the 5000 He presented the problem to them but they were at a loss as to what to do. In the Synoptic Gospels (Mt., Mk. Lk.) Jesus announced His betrayal, suffering, death, resurrection and ascension three times (Mt. 16:21;17:22; 20:18) but it only grieved the disciples. On this Thursday evening the disciples asked immature questions: See 13:36; 14:5; 14:8. And at the end of this discourse in their immaturity the disciples think that what Jesus had just prophesied about the time, when they would have fuller knowledge, had already come. Read vss. 29-30. They ~~seemed~~ very confident. But Jesus criticizes. He asks: "Do you now believe?" And then in vs. 32 He warns them of their immaturity.

B-The proof of their immaturity. What Jesus said in vs. 32 happened exactly as He had predicted. Because of their lack of faith they abandoned Him in the Garden of Gethsemane. They failed to attend His trial. Except for John they did not go to Calvary. And on Saturday and Sunday they locked themselves into their room. They proved their lack of faith and immaturity.

II-JESUS' COMPASSIONATE HELP FOR THESE DISCIPLES

A-Jesus' immediate help. Read vs. 33. Only a few hours later, in the Garden, the disciples ran from the Jewish authorities and the Roman soldiers. They were in tribulation. Though they did not realize it, the peace of God went with them. What is this peace? First read Rom. 5:1. Because we are justified by faith in Jesus, God is not angry with us. They thought God was angry but He was not. This peace of God guarded their minds and hearts in Christ Jesus. Php. 4:7. It was the peace of God, not of the world. Jn. 14:27. And, though they were about to desert Him, He says: "Be of good courage, I have overcome the world." Read I Jn. 5:4. Our flesh and the world overcome us. But He has overcome the world.

B-What He promises them in the future. We are at an advantage over the disciples during Jesus' lifetime. We still live in the Pentecost, in the time that has the whole Word of God in the Bible, in the time of the great Reformation of the Church. All of this Jesus promises in vss. 23-28:

1-The time will come when they will ask no questions of doctrine. What does He mean? Jesus sent the Holy Spirit Who gave us the Holy Scriptures. They lead us in all truth. We do not and should not ask for further revelation because the Triune God has given us the whole Truth in the New Testament which is the fulfillment of the Truth.

2-The time will come when they can bring any spiritual or physical need to Jesus and He assures us that He will answer. That's what He means in vss. 23b, 24 and 26a. In fact, Jesus Mediatorship is so complete that we can now go directly to the Father. We are the Father's dear children in Christ Jesus. That's what Jesus means in vss. 26 and 27. As Luther says: "We can come to our heavenly Father as earthly children approach their earthly father." Read Heb. 10:19-22.

Conclusion: Don't wish yourself back to the days of the disciples. Do enjoy what the Triune God has done for you!

1. While Jesus was praying, one of the disciples made a request (vs. 1) but vs. 5 says Jesus addressed them, more than one.
2. This is the only instance in the Gospels of a request to Jesus for teaching people. And vs. 1 tells us that the Baptist taught His disciples.
3. The Lord's Prayer was spoken by Jesus one year earlier at Mt. 6:9-13. That was in Galilee. This second time in Lk. 11 occurred very likely in Judea. This is a shorter form of the Lord's Prayer.
4. Jesus begins with the word "Father" (vs. 2) and ends with the same word (vs. 13). Jesus spoke often of His Father all the way from Lk. 2:49 to Lk. 23:43. The N.T. is full of the word "Father". Only Christians, those who believe in Christ, address God as "Father". Muslims and Jews do not use the word.
5. Only Lutherans, on the basis of the Bible, believe that the Word and the Sacraments are means of grace, ways by which God comes to us. For example Rom. 10:17; I Pet. 1:23; Eph. 5:26; Mt. 26:28. Prayer is not called a means of grace. At Lk. 8:11 Jesus said: "The seed is the Word." He did not say: "The seed is prayer." The means of grace bring us forgiveness of sins and salvation. Prayer is an exercise of faith, a response of the Christian to God. Parents feed their children daily bread. The children respond by speaking to their parents.
6. Because the Lord's Prayer is the model prayer in which Jesus enumerates all our needs, Luther made it one of the chief parts of both the Small and the Large Catechism. Before you preach on Luke 11 read again pp. 17-20 in the Russian Lutheran Catechism. At Lk. 11:2 the better manuscripts of the N.T. do not include the third petition. Evidently, Jesus taught the Lord's Prayer often but did not always use the same form. Prayer is not rigid and mechanical. In the Lord's Prayer Jesus teaches us what we should pray for. Vss. 5-13 tell us how we are to pray.
7. Vss. 5-8 and 11-13 are examples of what is called "the lesser to the greater" figure of speech. The illustration in vss. 5-8 says that if a mere earthly friend will grant the request of his friend not on the basis only of friendship but also because of the unashamed persistence of the friend, how much more will not the heavenly Father grant the request of one of His children. We know that He is our Friend. But we must persist in our prayers as did the friend in need in vs. 5-8. A similar illustration is found at Lk. 18:1-8. Vss. 11-13 are also a "lesser to greater" argument. If sinful earthly parents know how to give good gifts to their children, how much more will not our Holy, Loving, Heavenly Father give good gifts to His children! Vss. 9-10 look both to vss. 5-8 and to vss. 11-13. A child of God keeps on praying to his Father because He confidently believes that his Father will answer his prayer. See Jas. 5:16 Ps. 50:15. Like Jesus at Jn. 11:41-42 he says: "Father I thank you that You heard me. And I know that you always hear me." And when we are too weak to pray the Holy Spirit prays in us. Rom. 8:26-27. Lk. 11:9-10 do not denote different kinds of prayer but the persistence of the Christian.
8. In vss. 5-8 we have three friends in the illustration: One, the friend in need of bread; second, the friend who came from a journey and caused need; third, the friend to whom the first friend goes for bread. But in application there are only two friends: God and the praying Christian. The word "friend" is used four times. But the friendship was not the reason for which the request was answered. The unashamed persistence of friend # 1, vs. 8, caused # 3 to get out of bed and grant the request. The point of the illustration is the persistent, faithful prayer of a Christian. As said above, Lk. 18:1-8 is very similar.
9. John the Baptist and Jesus taught their disciples the art of prayer. Now we have the recorded Word of God which teaches us. It teaches us to pray without ceasing. I Thess. 5:17. We should pray always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit. Eph. 6:18. If God is for us, who can be against us. Indeed, He Who did not spare His own Son but gave Him for us, will also give us all needed good things. Rom. 8:31-32.

Sermon Outline on Lk. 11:1-13, Easter V

Theme: LORD, TEACH US TO PRAY

Introduction: The Gospel and the Sacraments show us what God, in Christ, has done and still does to save us. Prayer is not what God has done for us but it is our response to God's love and mercy in Christ. But prayer is very important. Faith without works is dead. Prayer is the result of our remaining in Christ. Jesus said: "If anyone does not remain in Me, he is cast out as the branch and burned." Jn. 15:6. There's something wrong with a child that does not speak to its parents. The pleas and requests of a child are welcomed by the parents. LORD, TEACH US TO PRAY.

I-HE TEACHES US WHAT WE SHOULD PRAY FOR. The Lord's Prayer is found twice in the Bible. Mt. 6:9-13 and Lk. 11:2-4. We should memorize it and use it often. Luther devoted one section of the Catechism to this prayer and explained it well. It dwells on our prayers for our Lord and for ourselves.

A-Our Prayers For Our Lord.

1-Hallowed Be Thy Name. Jas. 3:10 says "From the same mouth comes blessing and curse. My brothers, this ought not be." Daily we hear people use God's name frivolously and cursing. That is sin. God's Name should be used only in prayer and to praise Him. We have much to repent over. Let us flee to the Lord.

2-Thy Kingdom Come. Here we pray for the extension of the Christian Church all over the world. That is done by preaching and teaching people God's Word, especially the Gospel of forgiveness of sins.

3-Thy Will be Done On Earth As It Is In Heaven. That petition is not found in Lk. but only in Mt. But it must be mentioned. When Adam and Eve sinned they did Satan's will. When Jesus was tempted He did only God's will. He is our model. Let us flee to the Lord.

B-Our Prayers For Ourselves.

1-Give Us Day By Day Our Daily Bread. This petition covers everything which we need for our bodies in this life. He feeds us daily as He feeds the birds and animals. We must realize that.

2-Forgive Us our Sins For Indeed We Forgive Everyone Who Sins Against Us. The forgiveness of our sins is God's greatest spiritual gift to us. That's why we hear the Gospel. That's why we go to the Lord's Supper.

3-Lead Us Not Into Temptation. God tempts no one. This is God's way of reminding us that we are surrounded by temptations.

II-HE TEACHES US HOW WE SHOULD PRAY. Vss. 9-10 tell us to pray constantly and they promise that God will hear us. Prayer is God's command and promise.

A-We should pray confidently, in Christian Faith. Here we look at vss. 11-13. An earthly father does not give a snake when a fish is asked. He will not give a scorpion when asked for an egg. How much more will not Our Father in heaven give us the Holy Spirit, that is, all needed spiritual gifts.

B-We should pray persistently. Here we look at vss. 5-8. If an earthly friend will get up at midnight and give his neighbor-friend some bread not because of friendship but because he would not stop asking, how much more will not our Heavenly Father hear the prayers of His children who cry day and night to Him? For a similar thought read Lk. 18:1-8.

C-We should always pray to Our Father. The Lord's Prayer begins with the words "Our Father". He is my Father because He is Jesus' Father. Jesus included me when He said "Our Father". Even on the cross Jesus' first and last words began with "Father". See Lk. 23:34 and 46. His first recorded words say "My Father", Lk. 2:49, and the Gospels are full of Jesus' references to His Father. "You are all children of God by faith in Christ Jesus for as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Gal. 3:26.

Conclusion: God has commanded us to pray. And He has promised to hear us. We sin when we do not trust in Him and pray to Him. "Do not worry about anything but in everything let your requests be known to God."