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Praying with Confidence
Jesus
Luke 11:1-13

Confidence is a vital factor in human relationships. The confidence that we can trust our friends to keep a promise or to help us out in difficult circumstances enables us to feel secure. And more important, it enables our friendships to grow in an environment of openness.

Just should also characterize our relationship with God. Even though we let him down, he wants us to live in the knowledge that he is absolutely reliable. He hears our prayers, longs to answer them in accordance with his will and is totally fair.

GROUP DISCUSSION. What sorts of things hinder Christians from finding intimacy with God?

PERSONAL REFLECTION. What aspects of the character of God and prayer would you most like reassurance about?

Jesus responds to his disciples: request that he teach them to pray. *Read Luke 11:1-13.*

1. What different aspects of prayer can you see within the model that Jesus gave his disciples in verses 2-4??

2. In what ways do the different aspects and emphases in the prayer provide a model for your own prayer life?

3. Why do you think the friend overcomes his initial reluctance to help his neighbor (vv. 5-8)?

4. The friend gives his neighbor "as much as he needs" in answer to his request (v. 8). What does this passage teach us about how and why our prayers are answered?

5. Luke 11:9-10 considers the issue of persistence in prayer. What does it say that persistence in prayer involves?

6. Jesus teaches on prayer because a disciple asks for teaching in verse 1 Luke 18:1 he reminds them that "they should always pray and not give up." We are all tempted to not pray or stop praying when we should pray. In what practical ways can we resist such temptation?

7. In what ways does this passage help you to be more confident about prayer?

8. What aspects of prayer do you find easier, and what harder? Try and explain why you think that might be so.

9. Studies one through six of this Life Guide concentrate on examples of intercession. What other types of prayer have you learned about in studies seven through twelve?

10. What practical steps do you need to take (individually or as a group) to develop your prayer life?

Commit yourself to God by offering a prayer like the following: "Dear God, help me to know that you long for me to communicate with you, and that it is your delight to lead me deeper into your love and purposes. Forgive me when I doubt that. Amen."

Now or Later

Reread line by line the prayer in Luke 11:2-4, pausing between each line to personalize it in some way. For example, after "our Father" you might like to thank God that he has chosen you to be his child.