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NEWS & EVENTS – AUGUST 2021

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*1 It happened that while Jesus was praying in a certain place, after He had finished, one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, **teach us to pray** just as John also taught his disciples." 2 And He said to them, "**When you pray**, say: 'Father, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. 3 'Give us each day our daily bread. 4 'And forgive us our sins, For we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation.'"*

*5 Then He said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend, and goes to him at midnight and says to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves; 6 for a friend of mine has come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; 7 and from inside he answers and says, 'Do not bother me; the door has already been shut and my children and I are in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything.' 8 "I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his **persistence** he will get up and give him as much as he needs. 9 "So I say to you, **ask**, and it will be given to you; **seek**, and you will find; **knock**, and it will be opened to you. 10 "For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it will be opened. 11 "Now suppose one of you **fathers is asked by his son** for a fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he? 12 "Or if he is asked for an egg, he will not give him a scorpion, will he? 13 "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the **Holy Spirit** to those who ask Him?" (Luke 11:1-13)*

To be taught we must be in a learning mode...we must know that we need to know. Exposure to the life of Christ makes a man want to pray. The pagans need to know the process. Sorcerers need to know the secrets. Witches need to know spells and incantations. Disciples need to know...how do we pray and communicate with our God? There must be a pattern...a method...a system...a ritual...right? Jesus answered with simply coming to an understanding. To know how to pray you must first understand the relationship. Does God hear the prayer of someone disconnected to Him? Do we need to have a relationship before we are connected? Prayer *is* the relationship. Prayer *is* the connection. If we aren't praying, we are missing the vital connection.

Consider the parable. Jesus teaches the disciples by telling the story. When we are in need, even seeking help on the behalf of others, we need a friend we can approach at midnight, when darkness is entirely surrounding us, and ask for help. The disciples are asking for help when they are asking to learn to pray. In the story, even though one approaches a friend, we must always remember our Friend is Holy...His name is Holy. And our Friend is our Father. Praying is like knocking on a Father's door in the middle of the night to ask for help. And your Father helps because you ask, and you are a friend in need. The Friend and the Father responds in the story because of the persistence of the one knocking. He cannot walk away from the appeal. The One being petitioned has the power to answer and meet the need. Jesus wants His disciples to know they are talking to their Father...Who is holy, Who owns a kingdom, Who is their Provider, Forgiver, and Leader.

Because He is all these things, He intimately knows our need and how to meet it. The disciples hear that their greatest need is to have the Holy Spirit...to live the Spirit Life. This is our connection. We will not come into an understanding of God as a Father and how to relate to Him, especially in prayer, without the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit illuminates the holiness of God in the darkest and direst of circumstances. The Spirit helps us understand our relationship as a child to a father. The Holy Spirit leads us to Christ. He helps us to see the King in the Kingdom that is coming. We are taught in the Spirit that the Lord our God is always available, He is familiar and familial in His relationship to us. He provides what we need, even if we are asking for something else. This Holy God, who is Our Father, gives us all we need to be connected to Him. He helps us see the contrast of earthly and heavenly thoughts, intentions, and motivations. Let us pray...and remember Who it is we are talking with and listening to...fish and eggs are what we need ...snakes and scorpions are *not* what we want. The gods of the pagans specialize in giving us what we don't need or want...it's time to really come to know the One to Whom we pray...

Teach Us To Pray O MOST HIGH GOD...For Fish and Eggs...Not Snakes and Scorpions.

Blessings to you,
Pastor Sam