

“Father”: The Entry Point of All Prayer

Luke: All Things New



Series Goal

That Mercy Hill Church would be made new as we follow the One who is making all things new!



Sermon Text

Luke 11:1-4



Big Idea

Knowing God as “Father” is, according to Jesus, the entry point of all prayer. “Here,” He says, “is the place where true prayer starts.” Knowing God as a child does a Father should shape and inform all that prayer is for us.

Mark #1: Relationship

We often make prayer this strange kind of thing. We get into strange postures. We use strange words. We use strange tones of voice. Sometimes we follow outlines, or repeat things we’ve memorized. We use beads, or cards, or candles. All of these various things can be fine when done with the right heart, but we have to be careful that we don’t lose the fact that the very essence of prayer is *relationship*.

Mark #2: Affection

Prayer is the place where we come in boldly and, quite frankly, let God love us back to life. And do you know what happens when you start to let this in? You start to grow more and more affectionate for Him. His love for you warms your heart with love for Him.

Mark #3: Unrefinement

This mark, really builds off of the previous idea of Affection. For now that we realize that we are safe as we come to God in this relationship with Him, we can be unrefined, raw, real. We can bring our real selves to a real God and find real help for our real needs.

Mark #4: Dependence

We are dependent on God for everything. Prayer is an expression of that dependence. We talk to Him about our day. We talk to Him about our fears, about our temptations, about our desires, about our jealousies. We thank Him for food and breath and life and everything.

Mark #5: Hope

“Many Christians haven’t stopped believing in God, we have just become functional deists, living with God at a distance. . . . But as we learn to pray well, we’ll discover that this is my Father’s world. Because my Father controls everything, I can ask, and he will listen and act. Since I am his child, change is possible—and hope is born” (Paul Miller, *A Praying Life*).

Mark #6: Grace

Jesus was temporarily cut from all lines of communication, disinherited, rejected, abandoned, the wrath of God poured out on Him for our negligence and sin, so that the lines could be opened back up for us.

Reflection Questions



- What have you found most confusing, difficult, even troubling about prayer? In what ways do you think you need Jesus to teach you how to pray? How did this sermon start to help? In what ways are you still confused?
- Looking back at this past week, how would you describe your prayer life? Which of the six marks do you feel you most need to grow in? Why do you think?
- Why would coming to God with “Toddler-Talk” be so important? Do your prayers ever become like Jesus’ with “loud cries and tears” (Heb 5:7). Do you come to God as you are—honest, unrefined? Why is this so important? How is this actually reverent and pleasing to God?