

Proper 12c
Pentecost 7
24 July 2022

**I speak to you in the name of the
Creating God who redeems and sustains.
Amen**

**I'm interested in the way that Luke sets
up the idea of prayer and what it is and
what it means to pray in the same of
Jesus. The story begins with Jesus'
disciples coming to him and asking him
to teach them to pray. And they want to**

As followers
pray as followers of Jesus not ~~of~~ John or
any other prophet. The inference is that
we are defined by our prayers: and Jesus
disciples would pray differently than
John's disciples. *Insert*

I notice several things: One, while the
disciples request that Jesus teach them
to pray, Jesus doesn't give them words
to pray but a container of what prayer
ought to include. In fact it is a method
for how to be intimate with God in the

same manner that Jesus is intimate with God.

So what do we learn from this: One is that prayer is something that one learns, something that can be taught. This is difficult at times because a potential stumbling block in understanding what we traditionally call the “Lord’s Prayer”. It wasn’t his prayer, was it? It wasn’t what he prayed. It was his response to a disciple’s request to be given a formula for praying to be given some instruction,

a. Method. How often we introduced this prayer in worship saying, “And now as our Savior taught us, we are bold to say,”?

So is it the Lord’s prayer? Well yes, And no, He didn’t teach ~~its~~ ^{taught} his prayer but ~~a~~ a way to pray and what to pray for. He gave it to his disciples as a way to formulate prayer.

There is another point about this prayer that is sometimes missed. This is a

community prayer, not private prayer. It is a prayer that first praises God, and then makes three petitions of the ones praying. The language of “us” “we” assumes that the community shares the longing for the final coming of the kingdom.

This puts a bit of an eschatological thrust on the prayer. The people who formed the early church believed with all their hearts and hoped that Jesus was coming back to lift them out of the

oppression any day. They expected that the kingdom would be established in their lifetime, and that they would live with God. Hence, the community prayed the way Jesus instructed them.

Another point. The daily bread piece in Luke more accurately reads, “day by day give us, or “continue giving us” or “each day give us.” It seems that Luke wasn’t looking for a glorified bread in an eventual kingdom but sustenance for the day, food ^{for} ~~doe~~ those ^w ~~A~~ho were

encouraged to take ^{up}~~sip~~ the cross daily,
and who were expected to travel on
missionary journeys with only what is
needed for the day.

In Luke, the one praying asks for God's
forgiveness of sins, – not debts – while
promising to forgive others their debts.
This may be a reflection of Luke's
concern that possessions not get in the
way of community relationships. It may
also be a reminder that God is the only

one able to forgive sins, and that we are away in debt one to another.

Ultimately, the importance of the Lord's prayer is not only that Jesus gave it to his disciples, but that it was picked up by early Christian worshippers and incorporated into their understanding of how God shall be praised and what is right to ask for. And it is especially important that it has been handed down through generations to bind our community together.

How does Jesus teach his disciples to pray? Boldly, Courageously, Expectantly.

Praise God. Place your needs before God. The prayer begins in boldness. It is a prayer of great courage, both praising God and placing demands upon God's goodness. God's justice. It is the prayer of community.

We hear a lot these days about Jesus as "personal saviour", and it is common to hear the question "Have you been

saved?” But that would have been a foreign notion to the Jewish community, and out of character with Jesus’ teaching. It is all about community not you and me individually.

Pray in boldness, my friends, Stand strong. Lift up your head. Praise your voice. Never mistake that our God is a strong God ready to hear us. And pray together for the community. That is what Jesus taught. Amen.

Discussion Questions
17th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Year C
July 24, 2022
Anne Osdieck



Reading I: Genesis 18:20-32a
Responsorial Psalm 138:1-2, 2-3, 6-7, 7-8
Reading II: Colossians 2:12-14
Gospel: Luke 11:1-13

First Reading

Genesis 18:20-32a

1. What do you learn about God in this story? How does God respond to Abraham's persistence? If God has entered into a covenant with humankind does he grant them power over his heart?
2. What do you learn about Abraham in the story? What behavior of his would you like to imitate? How important were persistence and candor to him? God and Abraham: what is each one willing to do because of this covenant?

Second Reading

Colossians 2:12-14

1. "... (H)e brought you to life along with him, having forgiven us ... our transgressions; obliterating the bond against us ... " Why would this action of Christ (the complete demolition or razing of the wall between God and mankind) allow the children of God to ask the Father for all they need, or allow us to ask—and know we will receive, as in today's Gospel?

2. Compare translations: our translation from the liturgy refers to Jesus "having forgiven us all our transgressions; obliterating the bond against us ... " The New Jerusalem Bible renders this as "... he has forgiven us every one of our sins. He has wiped out the record of our debt to the Law, which stood against us." Does one of these translations make it easier for you to appreciate what Jesus did for us?

Gospel

Luke 11:1-13

1. How is the sleepy father in the parable similar to God? How are they different? Do you have confidence that God will hear you knock on his door? What do the readings this week do for your confidence? Do you think God already knows all your prayers of petition? Are your prayers of thanksgiving and praise spontaneous or studied?