

## STAGE 2: OF the GOING back to the Father

1. The Journey leads to the house of Martha and Mary.

Here we face the **PRIORITY OF THE LORD'S WORD on the Journey:** (10:38-42)

- **Two responses of disciples are clarified:**

- (i) The contemplative listening: the Lord is with you; listen to him!

- (ii) Distracted serving: The Lord is present, but you are not listening to him.

(NB) Jesus diagnosed the **REAL** problem for Martha (10:41) as **"worry and fretting"**

- **worrying** and **fretting** over **material** details **dissipates** the soul's energy

- **contemplative listening** to the Word **engages** the soul's energy

(NB) Martha **is** serving her neighbour (Jesus) (10:37) **but in a way that does not help herself.**

She receives Jesus and his disciples into her home and gives them hospitality, But, as she sees it

a) The demands of hospitality are too great

b) She alone is fulfilling them

c) And, the Lord fails to notice her problem...

d) She wants Jesus... to notice... and take her side ordering Mary to help!

**Jesus:** Does not accept Martha's assessment of the problem

a) Nor her solution to the problem

b) He goes to the heart of the problem – her anxiety

c) Disciples need to have their **PRIORITIES** in order... her problem is not that she has too much to do, but that she is making herself too busy with secondary matters.

d) Jesus' solution is what Mary is doing! Join her; don't criticise her!

**What is Luke trying to say to us?** When the Church meets for table fellowship in the Eucharist **the primacy is** the Lord's Presence and his Holy Word; this also spills out into our daily life experience!

Therefore, **Food for the Soul** takes precedence over **food for the body.**

Cf. 8:21 **HEAR and DO THE WORD**

8:37 **HEAR the CRY and DO THE SERVICE**

**The Place of Prayer on the Journey:** (11:1-13)

**THE LORD'S PRAYER**

For Luke, prayer is intimately bound up with The Word, the Common Life, Table Fellowship and Hospitality.

Cf. Lk 10:38-42; Acts 2:42; Acts 6:1-7, so now, we move from the Lord's Word to the Lord's Prayer...

- This is the prayer of those who accept to follow Jesus on the Spiritual Journey... the Way to Heaven
- It identifies Jesus' disciples...

- They saw Jesus as **a man of Prayer:** 3:21-22; 4:1-14; 4: 42-44; 5:16; 6:12; 9:10, 18, 28-36; 10:21; 11:1, etc

- This means that his personal relationship with the Father was **the Source of his Ministry** and the Power behind his works of mercy.
- The episode with Martha and Mary showed that a disciple's **FIRST PRIORITY** was to sit at the Lord's Feet and absorb His Word.
- now the **SECOND** priority is our **RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD: Prayer**

- (NB) **The way we pray** is all-important. They had witnessed Jesus praying
- but what was he praying **for?**
  - We are Baptised **INTO CHRIST**. We are part of Him **and** His Mission...
  - We address the Majesty of God **as Father** because we are His adopted children: **Avinu!**
  - We must pray **as Jesus did**
    - for God's **Kingdom** to come on Earth
    - for God's **Will** to be done
    - for God's Name to be honoured / glorified

- A. • **Our prayer** therefore is that God be given His rightful place in **His own** creation...
- that His Name (Person) be honoured and glorified by all His creatures...
  - That the power be snatched from Satan (4:6-7) and given back to God, so that His Reign over the hearts of His children be restored.
  - \* This is our duty as sons of God and of the Covenant.

B. **The second half** of the prayer is for the Church and the world (**us**)

- a) to be fed with the 3 breads – of the body, mind (Word of God) and Spirit (Eucharist)
- b) to be forgiven for our daily sins and faults... **AS we also forgive others!!**
- c) Not to be “put to the test” - persecution for the sake of the Kingdom of God. We want to be like Jesus (4:1-13).

- (NB) Since it was necessary for Jesus to return to be with the Father: (2:49; 24:51) the **“Our Father”** becomes the prayer of the Church, Baptised in the Holy Spirit: (11:13; Acts 1:4-5)

**The Problem of Perseverance in Prayer:** (11:5-8)

Jesus makes the point that we **must** not give up even if it seems that our prayer is not answered.

- Prayer is **always** answered, but in **God's time** (Kairos), not ours.
  - (NB) **“shameless insistence overcomes resistance”!** (Lk 18:1-8)
- The Church has to persevere through all the centuries of history, so that, in God's time the Victory over Satan and evil will come about.
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- We have to persevere in our own lives for the Victory over sin and death.

**Effective Prayer:** (11:9:13) **ASK!** We are sons of the Father, brothers and sisters of Jesus, heirs to the Kingdom of God

- so, the one who **ASKS...** always receives  
**SEEKS...** always finds  
**KNOCKS...** always has the door opened to/for him

- We just have to remember God's **INFINITE**, immeasurable Goodness, Love and Mercy to know that He will give us His **HIGHEST** and **BEST** cf. 11:13: **"His Holy Spirit"!!**

### **The Gift of the Holy Spirit:** (11:13)

Ezek 36:26-27: Promised new life through the gift of the Holy Spirit

Joel 2:28-32: Promised that God would pour out his Spirit on all Humanity

Acts 2:16: This happened on Pentecost - its first fulfillment

Amos 9:13: Joel 4:18: **"The mountains will flow with new wine and the hills flow with milk"**

- (NB) How earnestly did Israel pray for the Gift of the Holy Spirit?  
How earnestly do we pray for the Gift of the fullness of the Holy Spirit?

### **The Lord's Power:** (11:14-26)

After treating the Lord's Word, and the Lord's Prayer, we now move on to the Lord's Power :11:14-36

His power comes from the Holy Spirit: 4:14 - who empowers him to deal with evil: 4:1

and to proclaim the Good News effectively: 4:18.

Some don't acknowledge **that the Holy Spirit IS in Jesus** – they accuse him of working through the evil spirit! In their way of thinking Jesus' fruits are evil!! 11:11-13

- Jesus sets one of Satan's captives free (4:18). Many people are not aware of their captivity to Satan but are aware of their antipathy to God
- Their refusal to pray to God leads to their inability either to speak about Him or to proclaim Him.....
- But Jesus requires his disciples **TO PROCLAIM THE WORD:** (9:1-6; 10:1-20)

**11:14** Jesus delivers the man out of sheer compassion, showing that He was Satan's Victor and Lord... Disciples who truly believe, who pray and obey his Word... will do the same...

### (NB) **TROUBLE! The People React:**

- vs 14: most of the people marvel at Jesus' power
- vs 15: Some accuse Jesus of using Satan's power to cast out Satan! A contradiction in terms!
- vs 16: Others asked for a sign – **to TEST** him – to prove his Source of Power!

This shows that they have shifted from their marvelling to doubt and questioning... even hostility!

- Jesus reads their thoughts (vs 17-18): **if Satan is at war with himself** he will destroy himself and his kingdom. There would be no **need** for Jesus to do anything but **wait!**

- vs 19: What power do the **Jewish Exorcists** use?!
- vs 20: In fact, **this is “the Finger of God”** (Ex 8:15). This means that the Power of the Holy Spirit is present. God has restored His Son.

Cf. Is 5:20 (NB) If they accuse God of being Satan; of Good as being evil, they have committed the **unpardonable sin**. There is no hope for them.

### Jesus explains his Exorcisms: (11:21-22)

- Satan is a strong man guarding the territory **humans give him by sin**
  - Jesus is **THE STRONGER ONE** who attacks and defeats him: (10:17-20)
- **AND DISARMS** him, taking his captives and setting them free: **This is spiritual warfare.**

vs 23: We are either on Jesus’ side – or on Satan’s side.

- We cannot be undecided or we fall under Satan’s influence.

### Recovery after Exorcism: (11:24-26)

It is not enough to be delivered from demonic influence.

- The demons **refuse** to go back to Hell. They wander around looking for another human soul to inhabit...
- If the delivered person is **NOT now full of the Holy Spirit** and Grace, the demons will return, bringing other wicked spirits to cement their hold on that individual... **who may be a lost soul by then.**

### The Truly Blessed: (11:27-28)

Those who hear the Word of God (10:38-42) **AND** put it into practice!

\*Hearing is not enough: living it is the response: (8:15)

### What does “Hearing the Word of God” mean? (11:29-32)

- The crowds seek a sign → but **so many** have **already** been given!
- Jesus asks them to learn from History:
  - 1) Jesus **is** the rejected Sign (2:34)
  - 2) **The Sign of Jonah** – the ‘dead and risen’ prophet points to Jesus’ **Sign**
    - this dead and risen prophet **BECAME** a sign to the foreigners in Ninevah: (2 Chron 9:1-12)
  - 3) The **Queen of the South** (Sheba) came a great distance to hear wisdom from the King of the Jews : Jesus is Incarnate Wisdom...
    - : Jesus is **THE** King of the Jews

(NB) Jonah preached / Nineveh repented (ie) **HEARD** the Word **AND ACTED** on it.

### Second Parable of the Lamp

(cf. 8:16-18 – the lamp of revelation is to be shared with everyone, not hidden)

- Here the parable is a warning to Christian disciples not to let their wisdom turn to folly... their enlightenment become darkness...
- \* We distort God’s Word **through** prejudice, sin, disobedience to God’s Word, etc.