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**Luke: Journey to Jerusalem**

“Dare to Call Him Father”

Luke 11:1-13

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**Thoughts to Shape and Spark Discussion:**

*“Prayer is an expression of who we are . . . We are a living incompleteness. We are a gap, an emptiness that calls for fulfillment.”* - Thomas Merton

*“If you are not praying, then you are quietly confident that time, money, and talent are all you need in life . . . Learned desperation is at the heart of a praying life.”* - Paul Miller

*“Believers do not pray with the view of informing God about things unknown to him, or of exciting him to do his duty, or of urging him as though he were reluctant. On the contrary, they pray in order that they may arouse themselves to seek him, that they may exercise their faith in meditating on his promises, that they may relieve themselves from their anxieties by pouring them into his bosom; in a word, that they may declare that from him alone they can hope and expect, both for themselves and for others, all good things.”*  
- John Calvin

*“God, of your goodness give me yourself, for you are enough for me. And only in you do I have everything. Amen.”* - Lady Julian of Norwich

**Themes and Questions to Guide Reflection and Response:**

- What from the Scripture passage or the sermon made an impression upon you? Do you have unanswered questions about the passage?
- What is God showing you about Himself and yourself in this passage?
- The Bible teaches that we are made for relationship and conversation with God, that “we are a living incompleteness” (Merton, above) that praying fulfills.
  - Have you ever experienced that desire to talk with God, personally and intimately? What enables it? What complicates and frustrates that desire?
  - Is prayer as a conversation in which your life and your God meet the way you conceive of prayer and actually pray?
- Paul Miller asserts that “if you are not praying, then you are quietly confident that time, money, and talent are all you need in life.”
  - Is that a fair assessment? Why or why not?
  - Why is it essential to begin with our neediness?
  - What does he mean that “learned desperation is at the heart of a praying life”?
  - How aware of and comfortable with your neediness are you?
- Verses 5-10 of chapter 11 give us a pretty strange picture of asking, knocking, and seeking and an exhortation to keep on asking, seeking, knocking.
  - What gets in your way of asking?
  - What does the invitation to keep asking for the long haul and the 9 repetitions of the word “give” tell us about God’s willingness and eagerness to help us?
- How is the privilege of calling God “Father” unique among the religions of the world?
  - How did Jesus win back that privilege for us? What did it cost him in terms of his relationship to and intimacy with the Father?
  - How does the gift of the Holy Spirit strike you as the climax of the passage? Is it a dud?
  - How does it point us to God’s generosity and what we truly need?