

Luke 11 -- Terrible as an army with banners

11 One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples." **2** He said to them, "When you pray, say: "Father, hallowed be your name, Michael Jordan reminded people again and again that his hope when he first came to Chicago was that the basketball team in Chicago would be as respected as Boston, LA and Philadelphia. This is where our prayers originate, from a hope we have. He saw those other teams as the legacy, the fathers of faith, and he wanted his team to be honored just as they were. This hope became a prayer that he lived out. Elizabeth's prayer was concerning the "mother of my Lord". She prayed that Mary would be blessed and that the "fruit of her womb" would be blessed. "Blessed is she that believed; for there shall be a fulfilment of the things which have been spoken to her from the Lord." Mary prayed that the Lord would be magnified in her. She had a vision that although she was in a low estate, from henceforth all generations shall call her blessed. "Those who honor me I will honor" (1Sam 2:30). She proclaimed that He was doing mighty things. She proclaimed His mercy. He scattered the proud and exalted them of low degree. This is what it means to hallow the Lord's name and this is the prayer that she lived. **your kingdom come.** Zacharias was focused on God who had wrought redemption and salvation. He praised God for His faithfulness in remembering the covenant with Israel. He prophesied that John would have a mission to go before the Lord to make ready His way, to give knowledge of salvation, and to guide our feet in the way of peace. **3 Give us each day our daily bread.** Scottie Pippen was ranked 2nd on the Bulls in scoring, 2nd in rebounding, 2nd in minutes played, 1st in assists, 1st in steals, and 6th in salary. He was 122nd in the league in salary. He was a hall of fame player, he played on the Dream team, one of the 11 best players in the league at the time, and he was undeniably underpaid. We aren't praying to "get what is ours" we are praying for our daily bread. The reason Scottie was underpaid was simple, he had two people in his family in wheelchairs, and he had a very large family (11 brothers and sisters) depending on him. Therefore he signed a long contract (8 years) for \$18 million to make sure everyone was taken care of. He was advised that this was a bad contract, but he felt in his situation security was the most important. Let's keep our prayers simple, just to be given our daily bread.

Everyone in his family said clearly that they had been given their daily bread. There are many, many athletes who go broke after having huge contracts. Scottie didn't go broke because he knew from day one that this money had to take care of everyone. **4 Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us. And lead us not into temptation.**"

The case with Scottie Pippen is very instructive. The owner knew he was being underpaid, but his principle was "once you sign a contract that is it, don't come back to me". So righteousness without any forgiveness. One might think the owner was righteous in sticking to his principles. Really? A few years earlier Jordan had retired to play baseball. The owner paid him \$3 million a year which was not required in any contract, he said he did it because Jordan had been underpaid. This is hypocrisy. Pippen saw the hypocrisy and insult to him as a sin. How did he react? Scottie ruptured his tendon at the end of the 1997 season. He could have had an operation that would have had him ready to play on day one of the next season, but instead he waited till the summer was over. As a result he had to sit out for three months in the next season. 'You don't care about me, why should I care about you'? He succumbed to this temptation and that hurt everyone else on the team, not simply the owner. Righteousness without forgiveness, without mercy is very cold. Suppose the owner had gone to Scottie and said "I feel terrible about this contract, it is an embarrassment to me that you are so underpaid and it is giving others the impression I am stingy. Therefore I would like to renegotiate our contract if that is alright with you, for the sake of my good name." Yes, he would have paid a few more million a year to Scottie, but everyone would have been much happier, his reputation would have been much better, and it is very possible they would have all been able to work out a deal where they won a 7th championship. When you take that attitude that you are righteous without considering forgiving others you will be led into temptation. **5 Then Jesus said to them, "Suppose you have a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; 6 a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have no food to offer him.' 7 And suppose the one inside answers, 'Don't bother me. The door is already locked, and my children and I are in bed. I can't get up and give you anything.' 8 I tell you, even though he will not get up and give you the bread because of friendship, yet because of your shameless audacity he will surely get up and give you as much as you need.** There is a wonderful example of shameless audacity with Jordan. He broke his foot, the doctor's wanted him to remain out the entire season because there was a 10% chance he'd reinjure the foot. Owner didn't want to take the chance,

so he went public making a big stink that they were just doing this to get better draft picks. Ultimately they relented. So even though the owner wouldn't relent because of his friendship with Jordan, ultimately he did because of his shameless audacity. Another example of shameless audacity is Dennis Rodman. In the last season they were playing Utah in the championship. Dennis had to guard Karl Malone, a hall of fame forward. Dennis was also a hall of famer, but Karl Malone was the real deal and at the very top of his game. Dennis needed to grow, to expand, to become the "Rodmanator". In the middle of the series he leaves, goes to Vegas and is seen with Hulk Hogan in a wrestlemania show and was christened "the Rodmanator". To leave without permission, skip out on practice during the championship was both shameless and audacious. This is why no other team would have anything to do with Rodman. But he upped his game and met the challenge. He also was praying that this team would be honored. When they won he told people they needed to respect this team. He lived that prayer even if he resorted to shameless audacity. **9** "So I say to you: How many people miss this part? The rest of the promise is based on this shameless audacity. **Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.** **10** For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

Ask

"Hi, my name is Cathy and I'm calling from Green Bay, Wisconsin. I think some of the most exciting answers to prayer are the ones that our children witness. Once while traveling with my two boys we stopped to stretch our legs and when we came back to our car it wouldn't start. We were three hours from home and two hours from our destination and we didn't know a soul where we were. After trying to start the car several more times, I looked over at my oldest son Tim who was five at the time and I said, "We need to pray and ask God to make our car start." After we prayed, I looked at Tim and I said "Well here we go." Would you believe the car started on the very first try. I wish you could have seen the look of surprise and wonder in my sons' face. Because of that object lesson from heaven, he will never forget that God really does hear and answer our prayers. Whether for

something very important or as simple as making a car start.”
(<http://www.2christ.org/prayer/>)

Seek

“Hi, I’m Sandy Tivits from Worster, Ohio and in the fall of 1994, I was reading Dr. Dobson’s book, "When God doesn’t Make Sense" when I was diagnosed with a brain tumor. I was a single parent with two teenage sons and worked as a registered nurse at a job with no paid sick leave. Christians from many denominations started prayer chains and rallied around us. The surgery lasted 14-1/2 hours with my neuro-surgeon having no partner to assist him. My family was shocked with the news that I might not make it through the night and my dear friend Dianne gathered my small family in her arms in that waiting room and said "We’re going to pray right now." God knew all along that I was to be used as His vessel as He cradled me in His loving arms. He did answer those prayers. I was out of the hospital in eleven days and back to work in three months. He also saw fit to meet all of our financial needs during my recovery. My doctor tells me I’m a miracle; that I’ve been given a second chance in life.” (<http://www.2christ.org/prayer/>)

Find

“I’m Pamela. I’m calling from Greenville, SC and my ten year old son Robby got a black lab for his tenth birthday. Robby named him Ben. It was his best friend in life. He had him for about ten months and then the following summer, we went for a bike ride and he got hot and stayed under a shade tree and he didn’t come home. And we went looking for him a little bit later and we never saw him since. Tuesday in April of this year 1998, exactly ten months after Ben had been gone, Robby was doing the dishes in the morning and looked out the window and there’s Ben sitting there looking at the window. So, Ben is back now and Robby is just so thrilled. He said he prayed every day. He said the last time he prayed was the night before he came home. For ten months, he never stopped praying.”
(<http://www.2christ.org/prayer/>)

11 “Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? **12** Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? **13** If you

then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" It was eye opening to me to see this verse. God gives us good gifts, He doesn't give us snakes and scorpions. One time our church asked the young people to prepare and share a message. Each of us was given a portion to prepare and we had one week. I immediately went home and prayed in great detail over my portion that God would give me an experience that week that would help me make that portion real. Then the night before we were to share I went before the Lord "How come you didn't answer that prayer?" He said "I did". I was like, "what, where, when?" I had to think back over the week and one experience stood out. It wasn't immediately obvious what the connection was to what I was sharing but as I prayed over it the Lord opened my eyes and gave me a whole new perspective on the verses I was covering. That helped me to "pray believing you will receive". When the Bulls got Dennis Rodman that was a "good gift". No other team in the league would take him, to any other team they saw him as a snake or a scorpion. First you pray, second you allow God to blow your mind with the answer to that prayer. **14 Jesus was driving out a demon that was mute. When the demon left, the man who had been mute spoke, and the crowd was amazed.** How? There is no details about this at all? But remember, Jesus ministry is the prototype, the second section is the multiplication of this prototype. So then did any other mutes get healed in the book of Luke? I am reminded of Zacharias. He was mute and I had an experience very similar to his, so let's look at those and see if they help us with this case. Zacharias was a priest in the temple. He was wearing the Ephod and received a word from God that was for the people. However, he reasoned it away. In response the angel said that you won't speak anything until you share this. Sure enough he was mute from that point until the minute his son was born. He was then able to speak. I also had an experience where I was sharing the gospel to a van load of my classmates in college. We had come to a very tense moment, and at that moment the Lord was inside of me saying "tell them they could die today". Like Zacharias I also reasoned it away, refusing to speak. Then the Lord said "I don't have time for you" and at that moment the driver pulled out to pass the car in front of us. He crossed the double yellow line and we were going up a hill. At that moment I hung my head in shame. I couldn't say anything then because it would appear I was trying to distract the driver. As we pulled even with the car we were passing an oncoming car appeared at the top of the hill. We were all traveling around 65 mph. Everyone in that van

was terrified, except for me, I was repenting. Now what was it that caused me to tell the Lord I would not speak what He told me to speak? No doubt it was rebellion but what caused it? I had received a doctrine, a doctrine that I tossed in the trash from that day, perhaps it was a doctrine of demons. This word is for us who are on team Jesus, headed to Jerusalem for the last dance. **15** But some of them said, "By Beelzebul, the prince of demons, he is driving out demons." In sports this is known as trash talking. You tell the Lord Jesus, the guy who walks on water and raises the dead, and makes the mute to speak that this is due to some false idol! OK, now it is on. **16** Others tested him by asking for a sign from heaven. What?! Zacharias prophecy and the birth of John wasn't a sign? Jesus being born of a virgin wasn't a sign? Healing the mute, healing the kid with seizures, these aren't signs? John the Baptist's preaching wasn't a sign? He drove out impure spirits, He healed many, He healed a leper, He healed a paralytic, He healed the Centurion's servant, He raised the widow's son from death, He raised a dead girl, He restored a demon possessed man. There are four categories of those that respond to Jesus. Mary receives the word by faith, Zacharias that receives the word but questions and needs to see the imprint of the nails like doubting Thomas, then you will have those that are superstitious and ascribe all kinds of voodoo explanations, and finally you have these arrogant ones that set themselves up as teachers who get to test you. **17** Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them: "Any kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and a house divided against itself will fall. **18** If Satan is divided against himself, how can his kingdom stand? I say this because you claim that I drive out demons by Beelzebul. **19** Now if I drive out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your followers drive them out? So then, they will be your judges. **20** But if I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. They have woken up the beast. No one is better at "posterizing" you than the Lord. He'll humiliate them with their own kids who will judge them. He will humiliate them with his little finger. The kingdom of God is already come upon them and they are clueless, can't see it. **21** "When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are safe. **22** But when someone stronger attacks and overpowers him, he takes away the armor in which the man trusted and divides up his plunder. It is time for the church to wake up. Who is the superpower today? There is no country on this planet where the people trust the leader the way Christians trust Jesus. 2,000 years ago Jesus said His kingdom was not of this earth, but during the Millennial kingdom His kingdom will be. At the end of this age God will come in and "take away the

armor that this evil age has trusted in". The economies will collapse, their currency will be worthless, their name and their word will be shame and disgrace. The US has shown greater regard for money and wealth than they have for their own people. That was quite obvious in the Mortgage crisis, that was obvious in the NAFTA agreement, and that is why we see protests all over the country. At the end of the age the Lord will plunder the nations. Jesus appreciates people and sees money as something to be used to help restore those who have been beaten and robbed by this evil age. The way of the world is to trust in the economy, to trust in their army, to trust in an iron fist. They value wealth, not righteousness, peace and joy. This approach has always led to collapse throughout all human history. In contrast the church values people, it values the souls of men. The country is nothing without its people. If you had a choice why would you choose a leader that would sacrifice you without a second's hesitation, over a leader who sacrificed Himself so that you could be saved? Our message is much stronger than anything the world has. It is time we overcome this evil age with the gospel. This journey to Jerusalem, it is an attack on this evil age.

23 "Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters. Oh yeah, there is one other group. The Rick Calipari's of the world. Rick was a coach who knew not to say one word to Michael Jordan, wouldn't even look at him for fear of provoking him. They aren't asking for a sign. They are afraid to say one word. They definitely aren't talking trash. So what about them? If you aren't with Jesus, you are against Him. If you aren't gathering, same as if you are scattering. **24**

"When an impure spirit comes out of a person, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. Then it says, 'I will return to the house I left.' **25** When it arrives, it finds the house swept clean and put in order. **26** Then it goes and takes seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that person is worse than the first."

There is a saying "terrible as an army with banners". It isn't "terrible as an army with a banner" but with "banners". Every single year someone will win the championship, technically winning a championship is enough to make you a "champion". But the real proof is if you can do it again. True, someone has to win a championship each year, but there is no reason that team would win it twice unless they were truly champions. How many have started well but didn't persist, and they didn't end well? Maybe "shameless audacity" was where they drew the line, they wouldn't go that far. Maybe they weren't prepared to be accused of casting out demons by Beelezebul. Whatever the reason, Jesus is Lord at the beginning of this age, and He is

Lord at the end of this age. **27** As Jesus was saying these things, a woman in the crowd called out, "Blessed is the mother who gave you birth and nursed you." **28** He replied, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it." Mary heard the word and did it. Zacharias heard the word and ultimately did it. The apostles, the others, the witnesses, they heard the word and did it. There is a blessing on these ones, they are the children of God, Jesus is their big brother, He calls them friends. **29** As the crowds increased, Jesus said, "This is a wicked generation. It asks for a sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah. **30** For as Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites, so also will the Son of Man be to this generation. **31** The Queen of the South will rise at the judgment with the people of this generation and condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon's wisdom; and now something greater than Solomon is here. **32** The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and now something greater than Jonah is here. The Queen of the South was a true seeker, she had heard of Solomon, didn't believe it, but came to check him out. Sure enough she repented. The Ninevites were your prototypical sinners, and they saw Jonah and repented. This evil generation has the pretense to being seekers, they'll be condemned. They pretend they need just one more sign and they'll believe they will be condemned. They have provoked God to wrath. **33** "No one lights a lamp and puts it in a place where it will be hidden, or under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, so that those who come in may see the light. **34** Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eyes are healthy, your whole body also is full of light. But when they are unhealthy, your body also is full of darkness. **35** See to it, then, that the light within you is not darkness. **36** Therefore, if your whole body is full of light, and no part of it dark, it will be just as full of light as when a lamp shines its light on you." We all have a certain light, an inspiration that lights our way. For some that light is darkness, how to scam and cheat others. I call this the pinocchio effect. People who are liars develop an extra sensitive nose to detect liars. Consider the guy they made the movie "Catch me if you can" about. He had a heightened sense to detect counterfeiters. It works great to detect cheats, but it is useless at detecting the Lord of Glory. With every lie pinocchio told his nose got longer, he could smell a liar. These three types of people are unable to see the Lord of Glory, it is because the light within them is darkness. Their eyes are not healthy. **37** When Jesus had finished speaking, a Pharisee invited him to eat with him; so he went in and reclined at the table. **38** But the

Pharisee was surprised when he noticed that Jesus did not first wash before the meal. **39** Then the Lord said to him, "Now then, you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness. **40** You foolish people! Did not the one who made the outside make the inside also? **41** But now as for what is inside you—be generous to the poor, and everything will be clean for you. They started it. They said he was casting out demons by Beelezebul, "Lord of the flies" or "Lord of the dunghill". Their kids will be their judge, they will be posterized by the finger of God, they are liars, and now we learn they are filled with greed and wickedness. 'Oh you need to wash your hands before you eat, how could you not wash your hands'? He responds how can you hope to sit at the table to eat with God in the kingdom with a heart full of greed and wickedness? **42** "Woe to you Pharisees, because you give God a tenth of your mint, rue and all other kinds of garden herbs, but you neglect justice and the love of God. You should have practiced the latter without leaving the former undone. **43** "Woe to you Pharisees, because you love the most important seats in the synagogues and respectful greetings in the marketplaces. Our prayer "Father, hallowed be your name" while the Pharisees prayer was that their name would be hallowed. I teach in Brooklyn, in the inner city, and 80% of my students are boys. So I have heard this argument about who is the "GOAT". When I was a kid no one wanted to be the "goat", but now it is all they talk about. There are three candidates: Lebron, MJ and Kobe. So I listened to what MJ said. When he first joined the Bulls he said his hope was that this team would become a great franchise like Boston, LA and Philadelphia. You can tell looking at his face that he realized how it was shameless audacity for him to say such a thing. Then when he won the first championship he was so happy that he had joined the same club as Magic and Bird. Every time the Bulls won a championship he reminded Chicago of that hope that he had stated when he arrived. After the sixth championship he told Phil that "he had had faith" and he told Chicago that he loved them. He lived a prayer that his father would be honored. This life was a life of faith, hope and love. He saw that what he was doing was continuing a legacy of Bird and Magic. He was honoring his father. Then I listened to Kobe and he said he was offended by the question, he said what we see in him and the five championships LA got he received from MJ. He saw that his career was honoring those that came before him. With one short sentence the Lord demolished the entire "GOAT" debate. The life that these Pharisees were living was the expression of a prayer that their name would be honored. When I first was baptized

Christians and the church were ridiculed and despised on the Rice campus. I was a freshman and they were of no account. My senior year the April fools issue of the campus paper had every article related to Christians and the gospel. What are you going to do about Jesus and the gospel became the focal issue on that campus. My prayer was that God's name would be honored, it is a life time prayer. They asked Him for a sign and He is demolishing them. All this stupid "GOAT" debate asking for a "sign". They keep pulling up these statistics trying to figure out which statistics will prove their point. Who honored their father here on earth? That is the one that God will honor. **44** "Woe to you, because you are like unmarked graves, which people walk over without knowing it." People who came in contact with them would be corrupted by them and made unclean. We have seen this in the history of the church. The worst example is this situation with the Catholic church where approximately 6% of all priests were pedophiles. The reason for this is that they had a doctrine of demons, that priests could not marry. As a result many priests had secret relationships (about 50% had sexual relationships), they weren't pedophiles, but if their relationship became known they would be defrocked. So this doctrine creates an environment of secrecy. This is why they couldn't deal with the pedophiles because if they did the entire house of cards would come down. Instead the Bishops would shuffle the pedophile priests around and secretly settle with those who had been abused. Instead of warning people that this person was a predator they simply move them from one parish to another. So they were like unmarked graves. They said He cast out demons by Beelzebub. They on the other hand had these demons hidden within them. **45** One of the experts in the law answered him, "Teacher, when you say these things, you insult us also." This debate about "GOAT" doesn't originate with the players, it originates with the media. They feed it, they stoke the fire, they are the ones that throw logs on the fire of this debate. Likewise how was it that the pedophile priests could be "unmarked". There was an entire cottage industry set up where they settle these cases quietly, secretly, not allowing the records to go public. Lawyers were fully involved in the process and were fully culpable. In the movie Spotlight they point out that even the paper was culpable. Like they said if it takes a village to raise a child it takes a village to allow one to be abused. In the movie Spotlight the paper goes to the lawyer and says "we have two stories here which one do you want us to run? One story is about degenerate priests abusing kids, another is about lawyers turning pedophile priests into a cottage industry." **46** Jesus replied, "And you experts in the law, woe to you, because you load

people down with burdens they can hardly carry, and you yourselves will not lift one finger to help them. We are praying that God would give us our daily bread. Meanwhile the lawyers are giving us burden upon burden. The Dred Scott case is a wonderful example of how lawyers do this. The Supreme court ruled that all Americans of African descent were not citizens and had no right to sue. Living in a State where slavery was against the law was secondary to the fact that his ancestors were from Africa and therefore they ruled he would be a slave. The law was already in place, all they had to do was lift one little finger to say he was free because slavery was illegal in that state, they wouldn't even do that. **47** "Woe to you, because you build tombs for the prophets, and it was your ancestors who killed them. **48** So you testify that you approve of what your ancestors did; they killed the prophets, and you build their tombs. **49** Because of this, God in his wisdom said, 'I will send them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and others they will persecute.' **50** Therefore this generation will be held responsible for the blood of all the prophets that has been shed since the beginning of the world, **51** from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who was killed between the altar and the sanctuary. Yes, I tell you, this generation will be held responsible for it all. It is a team effort. Think of the JFK assassination. Some people planned it, some carried it out, others strong armed the body of JFK out of the hospital so they couldn't perform the autopsy there, some snatched up the car and cleaned it out of any evidence, but in the end you need some to sell the whole thing to the American people. They are all on the same team, they are all responsible for what they did. The Warren commission rubber stamped the assassination, they were every bit as culpable as those that pulled the trigger. **52** "Woe to you experts in the law, because you have taken away the key to knowledge. You yourselves have not entered, and you have hindered those who were entering." Education in America has been set up to hinder those who would enter. If you are rich and part of the elite you get an inside track to going to an elite school. Separate but Equal was set up to hinder Blacks from entering. Jim Crow laws were set up to hinder Blacks from entering. But the fundamental battle is over preventing people from knowing the truth. It used to be only a few were educated enough to read the Bible, only a few had access to it. The printing press made a big difference. Once people began reading the Bible democracy came in. This ultimately led to the American experiment, people fleeing to this country because they were being hindered in their own country from knowing the truth. It was due to Hitler that the US ultimately became the center of

knowledge. Scientists who fled from him came to the US. **53** When Jesus went outside, the Pharisees and the teachers of the law began to oppose him fiercely and to besiege him with questions, **54** waiting to catch him in something he might say. It is time to stop being on the defensive. This is an evil age. Imagine a leader among the religion invites Jesus to eat at his house, meanwhile, secretly he is shuffling pedophile priests around, maybe even a hundred priests, and he is settling with the victims sweeping the crimes under the rug. Jesus doesn't wash his hands before dinner and this religious man is shocked, how can you do that? Jesus responds, how can you invite me to eat with you and you haven't even repented of these wicked sins? Your heart is filled with greed and wickedness and you think you can sit at the table with God? You want to learn how to pray? Your life is the expression of your prayer. Are you praying that your name would be hallowed, or are you praying that your Father's name would be hallowed? Are you willing to have shameless audacity in your prayer or are you going to quit when people are mean to you? These ones who are attacking Jesus, they are speaking with a forked tongue. One tip is accusing Him of acting based on some secret evil, Bezelbul, the other tip is tempting Him to show them a sign that His ministry is all about glorifying Himself. They have a keen sense for picking up snakes and rats. But they are blind when it comes to seeing the Lord of Glory. It isn't just the religious leaders, the lawyers, the word smiths, the political leaders, they are all part of the team "evil age". We are on a journey with the Lord to Jerusalem. He is going to overpower the strong man, and the church is His army. This is the last dance. The Lord and the church are "terrible as an army with banners". We have conquered and we are going up to conquer.