

Luke 11:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.

Analysis

Because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth
—The Greek noun ἀναίδεια (anaideia), translated **importunity**, literally means 'shamelessness' or 'bold persistence.' It's the audacity to keep knocking despite initial refusal. Some scholars translate it as 'persistence' or 'avoidance of shame' (the friend outside would bring shame on the household if turned away).

The parable's climax: persistence overcomes reluctance. Jesus's point is *kal v'chomer* (light and heavy), a rabbinical argument: if persistence works with a **reluctant** friend, how much more with God who is eager to give? The phrase **as many as he needeth** (ὅσων χρήζει, hosōn chrēzei) indicates abundant provision beyond mere minimum—God doesn't give grudgingly but generously. This anticipates verses 9-13: ask, seek, knock—verbs in present tense implying continuous action. Persistent prayer isn't overcoming divine reluctance but aligning our hearts with God's will and timing.

Historical Context

Ancient Jewish prayer culture included persistent intercession (Abraham bargaining for Sodom, Jacob wrestling with God, Moses pleading for Israel). The rabbis taught that shamelessness (chutzpah) in approaching God was praiseworthy, not presumptuous—reflecting covenant relationship, not servile

distance. Jesus affirms this tradition while surpassing it through Father-child intimacy.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does 'holy shamelessness' (bold persistence) differ from presumption in your approach to God in prayer?
2. What situations require you to persist in prayer even when immediate answers aren't visible?
3. How does knowing God's eagerness (unlike the reluctant friend) free you to pray with confidence rather than anxiety?

Interlinear Text

λέγω	ὑμῖν	εἰ	καὶ	οὐ	δώσει	αὐτῷ	ἀναστὰς	διά
I say	unto you	G1487	G2532	not	and give	him	he will rise	because
G3004	G5213			G3756	G1325	G846	G450	G1223
τὸ	εῖναι	αὐτῷ	φίλον	διά	γε	τὴν	ἀναίδειαν	αὐτῷ
G3588	he is	him	friend	because	yet	G3588	importunity	him
G1511	G846	G5384		G1223	G1065		G335	G846
ἐγερθεὶς	δώσει	αὐτῷ	ὅσων	χρήζει				
he will	and give	him	as many as	he needeth				
G1453	G1325	G846	G3745	G5535				

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 32:26 (Parallel theme): And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.

Colossians 4:12 (Parallel theme): Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.

Romans 15:30 (Parallel theme): Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me;

Colossians 2:1 (Parallel theme): For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh;

2 Corinthians 12:8 (Parallel theme): For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

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