Tell It Slant: Parables as Spiritual Direction

Session 4

Spiritualities of Poverty & Wealth

**Spirituality of Poverty—The Lord’s Prayer and the Parables of Friend and Father Lk 11:1-13**

Six Observations

1. We have to pray *where Jesus was praying.*
2. This is the only time in the Gospel the disciples asked to be taught:

“*Teach us to pray. . .”*

1. Jesus responds by presenting a model prayer, parables, and comments.
2. The instruction is brief: a 30 words prayer.
3. Jesus commands his disciples, in praying,
   1. Voice: imperative. Aim at changing the status quo; not acquiescence; begins in poverty: not wanting more but what we need
   2. Personal speech. Addressing “the Father” and “Friend.”
4. Centrality of “the bread.” Luke deleted some parts of Matthew’s version of the Lord’s Prayer:

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| Luke | Matthew |
| Father,  Hallowed be your name,  Your kingdom come.  Give us each day our daily bread  Forgive us our sins,  for we also forgive everyone who sins against us.  And lead us not into temptation | Our Father in heaven,  Hallowed be your name,  Your kingdom come,  Your will be done  on earth as it is in heaven.  Give us today our daily bread.  Forgive us our debts,  as we also have forgiven our debtors.  And lead us not into temptation,  but deliver us from the evil one. |

* The deletions have two effects
  + Tightens the focus
  + Bring “bread” in the centre [through the chiastic structure]
* Matthew’s 6 = 3 ( ) + 3 ( )

Luke’s 5 = “Give us this day our daily bread”, thus, the prominence of “bread” in the parables

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| Robert Bellah, et al. *Habits of the Heart*. |

**Spirituality of Wealth—The Parable of the Rich Fool Lk 12:13-34**

* The condition of wealth

Four Observations

1. A man is being defrauded. Yet Jesus rejects his request.

* The man is doing everything right: he is praying to Jesus in a personal way (Lk 11)—“to ask, to seek, and to knock.”

1. Jesus’ discernment of covetousness (15)
2. The Parable is a bit “off”.
3. Covetousness is an invisible sin that we all are liable.