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LUKAN PENTECOSTAL THEOLOGY OF PRAYER:
IS PERSISTENT PRAYER NOT BIBLICAL?

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It is widely known that one of the most salient features in Korean Pentecostalism is its emphasis on persistence in prayer.¹ This practice of the persistent prayer by the Pentecostal churches has been severely criticized by those in non-Pentecostal circles, because they believe it does not have any biblical foundation. This study concerns the above issue and attempts to show that the practice of persistent prayer has a sound biblical foundation, in that it is an important part of the Lukan theology of prayer. The parable of the friend at midnight (Luke 11:5-8) will be dealt with in depth as a test case to prove my thesis.

Regarding the parable of the friend at midnight, there have been important debates on such matters as 1) the relationship between this parable and the parable of the importunate widow (18:1-8);² 2) the source (Q or Lukan special source);³ 3) literary unity between vv. 5-7

¹ This study is a revised version of the paper read at the Gospels section of the SBL International Meeting held in Cambridge on July 23, 2003.

² See K. Berger, "Materialien zu Form und Überlieferungsgeschichte neutestamentlicher Gleichnisse," *Novum Testamentum* 15 (1973), pp. 1-37 (33-34); W. Ott, *Gebet und Heil: Die Bedeutung der Gebetsparanese in der lukanischen Theologie* (München: Kösel, 1965), pp. 23-31; J. D. M. Derrett, "The Friend at Midnight: Asian Ideas in the Gospel of St. Luke," in *Donum Gentilicium: FS D. Daube*, eds. E. Bammel et al. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1978), pp. 78-87 (79).

³ The parable of the friend at midnight is found only in Luke, whereas the other two episodes in Luke 11:1-13 (Luke 11:1-4//Matt 6:9-13; Luke 11:9-13//Matt 7:7-11) are derived from Q. Thus it is debatable whether the parable is derived from Lukan special sources or from Q. Cf. David R. Catchpole, "Q and 'The Friend at Midnight' (Luke 11,5-8/9)," *Journal of Theological Studies* 34 (1983), pp. 407-24; idem, "Q Prayer, and the Kingdom: A Rejoinder," *Journal of Theological Studies* 40 (1989), pp. 377-88; C. M. Tuckett, "Q, Prayer, and the

and v. 8; 4) the meaning of the word ἀναίδεια (v. 8); and 5) oriental hospitality in antiquity.⁴

The scholarly debates regarding the parable are represented by two different titles attributed to this parable: “the parable of the importunate friend”⁵ and “the parable of the friend who was aroused at night by a request for help.”⁶ In the former, the focus is on the petitioner, so the parable is on prayer with persistence. In the latter, the focus is upon the petitioned person who gives generously to the needy, and accordingly the parable speaks of God’s abundance. Is this a parable regarding the manner of prayer, or a parable concerning the character of God? Traditionally it has been understood as the parable of the importunate friend. Recently, however, this interpretation was challenged by Alan F. Johnson and other scholars. For Johnson, “the traditional understanding is both exegetically and theologically indefensible.”⁷

This study attempts to make counter-arguments to the recent trend, and to suggest that the parable teaches us about persistent prayer, based not only on the philological study of the word ἀναίδεια but also on the fresh interpretation of the oriental culture of hospitality.

1. Counter-Arguments

Let me begin with the critiques against some problematic assumptions. First, it is questionable whether the parable contains a double focus. Johnson claims that “there are two theological foci in the parable. The first deals with the character of God, the second with assurance for man.”⁸ A. Jülicher’s thesis that Jesus’ parables have one

Kingdom,” *Journal of Theological Studies* 40 (1989), pp. 367-76; S. Schulz, *Q: Die Spruchquelle der Evangelisten* (Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 1972), p. 88.

⁴ Cf. E. W. Huffard, “The Parable of the Friend at Midnight: God’s Honour or Man’s Persistence?,” *Restoration Quarterly* 21(1978), pp. 154-60 (157).

⁵ T. W. Manson, *The Sayings of Jesus* (London: SCM, 1949), p. 267.

⁶ J. Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus* (London: SCM, 1958), p. 157.

⁷ A. F. Johnson, “Assurance for Man: The Fallacy of Translation *Anaideia* by ‘Persistence’ in Luke 11,5-8,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 22 (1979), pp. 123-31 (125); see also Huffard, “The Parable of the Friend at Midnight,” pp. 154-60; Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus*, pp. 157-60.

⁸ Johnson, “Assurance for Man,” p. 131.

main focus is valid here in that the parable concerns one focus, whether it is on the petitioner or the person petitioned.⁹

Secondly, it is wrong to make a case from denominational dogmas. For an instance, N. Levison challenges the traditional interpretation of this parable on the basis of his dogma. He claims that

I am constrained to say “this doctrine [prayer with persistence] is of man.” It is unthinkable that the Master should...postulate such a doctrine, which in the ultimate analysis amounts to a doctrine of forcing God to give us what He would rather not give, and it teaches that persistence will prevail with God.¹⁰

Johnson follows Levison when he states that “sensitive Christians have recognized the severe theological difficulties of turning *anaideia* into ‘persistence’.”¹¹ However, this kind of interpretation has a weakness, for it is a kind of an eisegesis by an interpreter’s own dogma.

Thirdly, it is also not convincing to make a case, based on the conviction that it was not a bother to knock on the door of one’s friend at midnight, according to ancient Asian culture. With regard to culture, what is in view in the parable is not Asian (or Oriental) hospitality but friendship. In the parable of the friend at midnight, a friend—not a stranger—asks his friend to give him bread. In the scripture, hospitality is required to be given to a stranger with all costs included. Bruce J. Malina is correct when he observes, “In the world of the Bible, hospitality is never about entertaining family and friends. Hospitality is always about dealing with strangers.”¹² What kind of reaction is expected from the friend who was aroused at midnight by knocking on the door of his house? True, it is more allowable in Asia than in modern western countries to “bother” friends. However, in the extant text, the friend outside the door not only bothers his friend, but also the family of his friend who are already in bed.

⁹ A. Jülicher, *Die Gleichnisreden Jesu*, 2 vols. (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1963). Cf. Catchpole, “Q and ‘The Friend at Midnight’,” p. 408.

¹⁰ N. Levison, “Importunity?: A Study of Luke xi. 8 (Διὰ γε τὴν ἀναίδειαν αὐτοῦ),” *Expository Times* 9, ser. 3 (1925), pp. 456-60 (459).

¹¹ Johnson, “Assurance for Man,” p. 128.

¹² Bruce J. Malina, “Hospitality,” in *Biblical Social Values and Their Meaning*, eds. John J. Pilch and Bruce J. Malina (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1993), pp. 104-07 (104).

2. The Literary Unity

As a preliminary step to interpret this parable, it is required to investigate the literary unity of this parable, for some scholars question whether v. 8 forms an original unity with vv. 5-7.¹³ B. Heininger argues that v. 8 is a secondary addition by Luke. For him, vv. 5-7 form a small unity in terms of style, and that as the manner shown in Luke 18:1, Luke's special interest in the theme of the prayer makes him add v. 8, which can be influenced from Luke 18:1-8.¹⁴ R. Catchpole also considers v. 8 as Luke's redactional phrase. He recognizes a unity in Luke 11:5-7 with regard to Semitic syntax; and he finds a discrepancy between vv. 5-7 and v. 8. This leads him to state:

Luke 11:8 made 11:7 reflect adversely on the character of the petitioned person, but it could only do so because of the implication of 11:7, and especially its role in 11:5-7, was misunderstood. It was taken as an actual and a negative response, whereas it was non-actual.¹⁵

Hence Catchpole concludes that v. 8 has imposed on v. 7 a scheme contributed by 18:1-8. Heininger and Catchpole observe correctly that Luke vv. 5-7 form a unity in terms of style,¹⁶ if not in terms of structure.¹⁷ Yet, I wonder whether we can apply the manner of redaction in Luke 18:1 to that in 11:8. Luke 18:1 is an introductory addition to the given material without transforming the story; this is not the case in 11:8.

¹³ For example, Ott is probably one of the forerunners to regard v. 8 as an addition by Luke. He makes hypothesis that Luke 11:5-7 and 18:2-7 belonged to different traditions originally but held together by Luke at the first stage, and they were separated at the second stage (Ott, *Gebet und Heil*, pp. 25-29).

¹⁴ B. Heininger, *Metaphorik, Erzählstruktur und Szenisch-dramatische Gestaltung in den Sondergutgleichnissen bei Lukas* (Münster: Aschendorf, 1991), p. 101.

¹⁵ Catchpole, "Q and 'the Friend at Midnight'," p. 412.

¹⁶ J. Nolland agrees with Heininger that the awkward Semitic syntax holds together vv. 5-7. Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34* (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1993), p. 623.

¹⁷ I will show in the latter part of this article that vv. 5-7 and v. 8 are constructed originally in two stages.

Further, their claim brings another problem. If vv. 5-7 existed originally without v. 8, the message of the parable could be: “Can you imagine that your friend would neglect your petition, when you ask for loaves? Certainly Not! If this message stood alone, not related to the theme of prayer, it is so trivial that it has ‘no theological relevance.’”¹⁸ Therefore I. Howard Marshall is probably correct when he observes, “This construction of the tradition-history is speculative.”¹⁹ As I will show in the following, the parable of the friend at midnight is constructed into two stages (vv. 5-7; v. 8). Without having the second stage (v. 8), the story would be too awkward. Thus, there is good reason to believe that 11:5-8 formed a literary unit originally.

3. Rhetorical or Declarative

There is another problem to solve before interpreting the parable: Is the sentence in vv. 5-6 (or/and v. 7) a rhetorical question or declarative? J. Jeremias and many other commentators argue that the parable begins with a rhetorical question, based on the judgment that the phrase τίς ἐξ ὑμῶν (v. 5) “introduces a question which expects the emphatic answer ‘No one or Impossible!’ or ‘Everyone.’”²⁰ My own analysis on the phrase shows me that, in all the occurrences of the phrase in the New Testament, the rhetorical form is always expressed explicitly in the Gospels, except in Luke 11:5. Therefore, it cannot be easily stated that Luke 11:5 belongs to the characteristic phrase which leads a rhetorical question and connotes the negative answer. Moreover, “it is grammatically more complex than the other τίς ἐξ ὑμῶν questions which are often adduced as parallels.”²¹

Furthermore, whether the rhetorical phrase continues to v. 7 is questionable.²² Jeremias, agreeing with A. Fridrichsen, states,

¹⁸ Catchpole, “Q and ‘The Friend at Midnight’,” p. 413.

¹⁹ I. H. Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1978), p. 463.

²⁰ Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus*, p. 158.

²¹ Tuckett, “Q, Prayer, and the Kingdom,” pp. 368-69.

²² For Nolland, “it is very important to realize that the question is not finished until the end of v. 7.” Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, p. 623.

In that case [τίς ἐξ ὑμῶν itself always connotes a negative answer] the question cannot be ended with v. 6, since v. 6 only describes the situation, and does not insistently demand a reply. Hence vv. 5-7 should rather be regarded as one continuous rhetorical question.²³

Jeremias is right when he states that the phrase usually introduces the negative answer. But it is not the case in Luke 11:5, because it does not form an explicit question. A. R. C. Leaney is probably right in saying that “the interrogative is lost in the prolongation of the sentence.”²⁴ In other words, the rhetorical form of the parable does not have quite the force that Jeremias suggested.

The phrase in Luke 11:5-7 is not a rhetorical question but a declarative sentence. Thus, the phrase can be translated like this: And he said to them. “Suppose one of you has a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; for a friend of mine has arrived, and I have nothing to set before him.’ And he answers from within, ‘Do not bother me; the door has already been locked, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything.’” (Luke 11:5-7, NRSV).

4. Interpretation

Luke incorporates three episodes on prayer at the beginning part of the so-called “travel narrative” (Luke 9:51-19:27). As the second episode of Lukan prayer collections in Luke 11:1-13, the parable of the friend at midnight (11:5-8) is preceded by “Our Father” (11:2-4) and followed by the exhortation on prayer (11:9-13). They are held together not only by the common theme of prayer, but also by some catch-words: (heavenly) “Father” (vv. 2, 11, 13); “to give” (vv. 3, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13); and “bread” (vv. 3, 5). Luke connects one source to another smoothly by using his peculiar connecting formulae: Καὶ εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτούς (v. 5);²⁵ Καὶ γὰρ ὑμῖν λέγω (v. 9). Structurally it forms an explanation of how to pray (v.

²³ Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus*, p. 158.

²⁴ A. R. C. Leaney, *The Gospel According to Luke* (London: A. & C. Black, 1958), p. 188.

²⁵ This phrase is “rare in the other Synoptics, the usage cuts through all the levels of Lukan writings.” J. A. Fitzmeyer, *The Gospel According to Luke X-XXIV* (Garden City, NY: Double Day, 1985), p. 624.

1); the following verses (vv. 9-10) have a role to play as an application of this parable in this Lukan context.

This parable is constructed in two stages: 1) a story of the one who neglects his friend's request for food at night; 2) Jesus' saying, "though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his ἀνάδεια he will rise and give him whatever he wants."

At the first stage the following two motifs are in tension: 1) "the friendship motif" which usually brings hospitality; and 2) "the midnight motif" which may cause trouble. As is widely recognized, the friendship motif overshadows this parable (vv. 5, 6, 8). Against the background of this parable, there is Hebrew and Oriental hospitality between friends (cf. Gen 18:1-8; Heb 13:2). It is strange enough to see that many modern commentators overlook "the midnight motif."²⁶ It should be noted, however, that Luke 11:5 reads not just νυκτός but μεσονυκτίου.²⁷ It was unusual in Palestine to travel at midnight, whereas Egyptians and bedouins, who lived in the desert, often traveled at night to escape from the heat of the desert.²⁸ Although Oriental hospitality permits some inconveniences between friends, it is not without "bothering" to knock on a friend's house at "midnight," asking something when the door has already been locked, and especially when all family members are in bed (v. 7).²⁹ What is of significance is the time, that is, midnight. As F. Bovon observes, it is not the time of the guests but of the thieves.³⁰ It actually causes trouble (v. 7).

We can see that the story is well weaved with the two motifs. According to the friendship motif, the friend inside the house must

²⁶ For example, K. E. Bailey, *Poet and Peasant: A Literary-Cultural Approach to the Parables in Luke* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1976), p. 124 states, "A great deal has made of the fact the children are asleep and the door bolted. But, there are weak considerations. The door bolt is not heavy. Even if the children do stir, they will fall asleep again."

²⁷ The word μεσονυκτίου is mainly used by Luke in the New Testament. Luke-Acts has three of the four occurrences in the New Testament (Mark 13:35; Luke 11:5; Acts 16:25; 20:7). But this was probably not a Lukan addition, but a part of original story, because this motif is related to entire story of this parable.

²⁸ So Bailey, *Poet and Peasant*, p. 121; F. Bovon, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas (Lk 9,51-14,35)* (Zürich: Benziger, 1996), p. 149.

²⁹ Fitzmyer rightly observes that "One has to envisage a single-room house with members of the family asleep on mat; to get up and draw the bolt would be disturb everyone." Fitzmeyer, *The Gospel of Luke X-XXIV*, p. 912.

³⁰ Bovon, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas (Lk 9,51-14,35)*, p. 149.

receive his friend's request; but according to the midnight motif, the request could be neglected. At the first stage the two motifs are well balanced in tension. This raises a question of how the story will be concluded at the second stage.

Thus the second stage is expected to give a solution to the problem raised at the first stage.³¹ It is striking that the second stage is begun by the formula λέγω ὑμῖν (cf. Luke 15:7, 10; 16:9; 18:8,14), by which the two stages are divided visually. At this point, "the reader is left wondering what is going to happen next."³² Therefore, in terms of structure, the central lesson falls into v. 8.

In v. 8 the most recent debate was focused on the meaning of the word ἀναίδεια.³³ In the words of Bailey, "the significance of the passage hangs on the meaning of the key word ἀναίδεια in verse 8."³⁴ As the word ἀναίδεια is a *hapax legomenon* in the New Testament (and in the Septuagint), it is not explicit to perceive in what sense the word is used in Luke 11:8. Traditionally it has been translated into "persistence" or "importunity"; etymologically the meaning of the word refers to "shamelessness."

Bailey analyzes the word into two groups: a positive quality, e.g., persistence, and a negative quality, e.g., shamelessness. After investigating the word group related to ἀναίδεια both in LXX and in Josephus, he summarizes:

In the LXX ἀναίδεια is overwhelmingly negative and, with one possible exception, means "shameless" or "defiant, angry, harsh." Moving to Josephus, the word exclusively means "shameless" or "impudent" as far as we have been able to trace.³⁵

³¹ For the question whether the second stage is an answer see Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, p. 465; Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, p. 625.

³² R. R. Rickards, "The Translation of Luke 11,5-13," *The Bible Translator* 27 (1976), p. 294-43 (241).

³³ Cf. Klyne Sondgrass, "Anaideia and the Friend at Midnight (Luke 11:8)," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 116 (1997), pp. 505-13.

³⁴ Bailey, *Poet and Peasant*, p. 125.

³⁵ Bailey, *Poet and Peasant*, p. 126. A recent study by Sondgrass reaches a similar conclusion. Sondgrass, "Anaideia and the Friend at Midnight," pp. 505-13.

Johnson and Klyne Sondgrass follow Bailey in their assertions that the word ἀναίδεια has only a negative quality. They claim that all the positive qualities are influenced by the usage in Luke 11:8. However, Bailey and others are not correct in their arguing that both in LXX and Josephus the word ἀναίδεια does not have the meaning of persistence. According to Catchpole's analysis of the word group regarding ἀναίδεια the meaning is very wide. In the LXX the ἀναίδεια conveys "the sense of harshness/hardness" (Deut 28:50; Baruch 4:15), and "greedy or tendency to grasp" (1 Kings 2:29; Isa 56:11; Prov 12:13; Sir 23:6; 26:11). In the remaining passages the emphasis varies, but the general idea is "brazenness or mindless inflexibility" (Prov 21:29; 25:23; Eccl 8:1; Sir 25:22; 40:30; Jer 8:5).³⁶ In Josephus, ἀναίδεια varies in sense from passage to passage. It may stand for "a gross of absence of honor" (B.J. 1.276, 490), "putting a bold face on a matter" (B.J. 1.616; Ant. 20). Some passages (B.J. 1.84, 6.199 Ant. 17.119) bring to the fore some element of "stubbornness and persistence."³⁷ F. Bovon also supports Catchpole's argument: "In the Septuagint the verb, noun, and the adjective form of the word refers to harshness, recklessness, unscrupulousness, and greed; in Josephus they mean absence of self-respect, lack of responsibility, insolence, and extreme adherence."³⁸ Thus the word ἀναίδεια has a positive meaning that is a feeling without fear and a legitimate persistence.³⁹

Further, more profitable will be the comparison of the structure of Luke 11:8 and contemporary writings. Catchpole rightly investigates not only the meaning of the word ἀναίδεια, but also the structure or the context in which the word is used. In structure and meaning of LXX passages related to ἀναίδεια, the closest to Luke 11:8 may be Sirach 40:30: "In the mouth of the shameless (ἐν στόματι ἀναίδους) begging is sweet, but in his mouth a fire is kindled." The theme of petitioning matches Luke 11:8 well. So the meaning of the word must be decided in the context, especially in the structure in which it is used.

What is important is that the word ἀναίδεια is referred to by whom, the petitioner, or the petitioned? Grammatically, either of the two is possible, for either of the two is called friend, and the genitive case of masculine pronoun αὐτοῦ can refer to either of the two. Of course, the

³⁶ Catchpole, "Q and 'The Friend at Midnight'," p. 409.

³⁷ Catchpole, "Q and 'The Friend at Midnight'," p. 409.

³⁸ Bovon, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas (Lk 9,51-14,35)*, p. 151.

³⁹ Bovon, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas (Lk 9,51-14,35)*, p. 151.

reflective pronoun rather than personal pronoun αὐτοῦ would be better in grammar.⁴⁰ Further, it is not to be neglected that all the occurrences of the masculine third person pronoun in Luke 11:5-8 refer to the petitioner.

It should be noted that v. 8 is constructed by the two motifs, which have already been introduced at the first stage. The two motifs in tension are effective at the second stage.

A.

λέγω ὑμῖν, εἰ καὶ
οὐ δώσει αὐτῷ
ἀναστὰς
διὰ τὸ εἶναι φίλον αὐτοῦ,

B.

διὰ γε τὴν ἀναίδειαν αὐτοῦ
ἐγερθεὶς
δώσει αὐτῷ
ὅσων χρήζει.

Part A represents the friendship motif; Part B reflects the midnight motif. Two motifs are compared poetically in this phrase. This kind of structure is not unusual, when the word ἀναίδεια refers to “stubbornness or persistence” in LXX or Josephus. For example, Sirach 40:30 runs: “In the mouth of the shameless (ἐν στόματι ἀναίδους) begging is sweet, but in his mouth a fire is kindled.” In the words of Catchpole,

Most important of all is that the passages...above give an adverse connotation to ἀναίδειαν. It is a quality which always calls for disapproval. This is also the case in Luke 11: 8, where two possible bases for action are constructed, a good one (διὰ τὸ εἶναι φίλον) and an opposite one (διὰ γε τὴν ἀναίδειαν αὐτοῦ).⁴¹

In this construction the petitioned should be in a position to judge the conduct of the petitioner. In other words, the word ἀναίδεια must be how the petitioned person characterizes and evaluates the petitioner. Thus, the word ἀναίδεια is referred to by the petitioner, and accordingly the message of this verse could be: although the friend inside the house will not give to the friend outside the house, on the basis of friendship, he will

⁴⁰ Cf. Bovon, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas (Lk 9,51-14,35)*, p. 150.

⁴¹ Catchpole, “Q and ‘The Friend at Midnight’,” p. 411.

give to him on account of his persistent petition. This message is well matched by the first part of the following episode, the exhortation on prayer (11:9-10). In short, the main focus of the parable of the friend at midnight is, not on God's generous character, but on human attitude in prayer, i.e., persistence.

5. Lukan Theology of Prayer

My thesis can be strengthened if the theme of persistent prayer comprises a major theological theme in Luke. In his recent study on the theology of prayer in Luke, Han convincingly shows that the Lukan theology of prayer is characterized by persistence. He divides Lukan prayer texts into two categories. One is prayer texts that are related to Jesus' life and ministry (3:21; 5:16; 6:12; 9:18; 9:29; 22:32; 22:39-46; 23:46). The other category is prayer texts for the instruction of the disciples (6:27-28; 10:2; 11:1-4; 5-8; 18:1-8; 21:36). His analysis of these two groups leads him to reach the following conclusions.

There is a shift of focus between Jesus' prayer life and his teaching on prayer. In the former, the focus is on the cross, the initial establishment of the kingdom. By contrast, in the latter, Jesus teaches persistent prayer through which the disciples are instructed on how to live in the kingdom and to prepare for the kingdom.⁴²

For Luke "persistent prayer is the way in which they do so, as they live between the two dimensions of the kingdom of God."⁴³ Luke stresses persistence in human prayer, as is also shown in the parable of the importunate widow (Luke 18:1-8).⁴⁴

Further, my thesis can also be supported when the parable is understood in the literary context. The parable of the friend at midnight is

⁴² Kyu Sam Han, "Theology of Prayer in the Gospel of Luke," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 43 (2000), pp. 675-93 (691).

⁴³ Han, "Theology of Prayer in the Gospel of Luke," p. 693.

⁴⁴ It is widely recognized that Luke is more interested in prayer than any other canonical Evangelist. Luke is even called "the Evangelist of prayer" by Ott. Luke not only introduces more prayer terms than do the other Evangelists, but he also connects prayer to major episodes of Jesus ministry. For the frequency of the terms of prayer see O. S. Harris, "Prayer in Luke Acts: A Study in the Theology of Luke" (Ph. D. diss., Vanderbilt University, 1961), pp. 169-70.

set in the following lesson of “Our Father” (Luke 11:2-4). Luke’s context of “Our Father” is different from that of Matthew. Matthew’s “Our Father” is situated among three acts of piety (6:1-8); and, its audiences are “Jewish opponents of the Matthean community,”⁴⁵ who are accustomed to the practice of prayer. Thus “Our Father” in Matthew is correcting their improper practices of prayer (Matt 6:5-14). Luke’s “Our Father,” in contrast, is followed by Jesus’ act of exemplary prayer, and after one of the disciples’ request to teach them how to pray (11:1). Luke’s situation is to be found within a Gentile community, the members of which are not accustomed to prayer. So, Luke needs primarily to instruct the Gentiles about how to pray, so he emphasizes the positive (persistent) attitude in prayer.⁴⁶

6. Conclusion

So far, I have discussed the main focus of “the parable of the friend at midnight” (Luke 11:5-8). I have made counter-arguments to the claims that this parable speaks of God’s generosity. I have argued that the main focus of this parable is laid upon persistence in prayer. The theme of persistence in prayer has not created any problem for sensitive Christians, when they have been engaged in a prayer life throughout Christian history, particularly in medieval times. It has begun to bother some of the more modern Christians. Do I go too far when I think that this trend reflects the present Christians, who are not accustomed to this kind of prayer?

Only a few scholarly efforts have been made to establish biblical foundations for Pentecostal theology during the last thirty years. Since the publication of Roger Stronstad’s ground-breaking work, it is Lukan literature that has been highlighted by scholars in order to find

⁴⁵ D. J. Harrington, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1991), p. 97.

⁴⁶ For the Lukan theology of prayer, see S.F. Plymale, *The Prayer Texts of Luke* (New York: Peter Lang, 1991); F. Bovon, *Luke the Theologian, Thirty-three Years of Research (1950-1983)* (Allison Park: Pickwick, 1987), pp. 400-403; P. T. O’Brien, “Prayer in Luke-Acts,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 24 (1973), pp. 111-27; A. Trite, “The Prayer Motif in Luke-Acts,” in *Perspectives on Luke-Acts*, ed. Charles Talbert (Danville, VA: Association of Baptist Professors of Religion, 1978), pp. 168-86.

Pentecostal or charismatic theology.⁴⁷ The present work is also a part of the attempt to establish a biblical foundation of Pentecostal, and in particular Korean Pentecostal, practices of prayer. This work has attempted to suggest that there is another aspect of Lukan theology, which is neglected, but useful for establishing biblical foundations of Pentecostal theology, namely the Lukan theology of prayer.

⁴⁷ Cf. Roger Stronstad, *The Charismatic Theology of St. Luke* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1984); idem, *The Prophethood of All Believers: A Study in Luke's Charismatic Theology* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999); Robert P. Menzies, *Empowered for Witness: The Spirit in Luke-Acts* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001).