

MEN OUGHT ALWAYS TO PRAY

LUKE 18:1-8

Text: Luke 18:1

Luke 18:1

¹ And he spake a parable unto them *to this end*, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;

Introduction:

Many Christians have given up on the possibility of entering into an effective prayer ministry. They do not doubt that prayer changes things, but they have seen very little, if anything, happen when they pray. Some have turned to prayer during a tragedy only to suffer disappointment. Others have asked for guidance at critical times but seemed to receive no response from the Lord.

In these verses, the Lord Jesus tells His disciples a parable that is designed to teach them the importance of remaining persistent in prayer.

Notice:

1. THE CRY OF THE WIDOW

A. Her Demand (vs. 3)

Luke 18:3

³ And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.

We do not know the nature of this woman's burden, but she had a grievance against someone that was lying very heavily upon her heart.

B. He Disadvantage (vs. 3)

Luke 18:3

³ And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.

1. She was a woman and women were not allowed to speak in court.
2. She was a widow and she had no husband to speak for her.
3. She was a widow and that was a segment of society that was oppressed and taken advantage of.
4. She was a widow and that was synonymous with being poor.

C. Her Determination (vs. 5b)

Luke 18:5

⁵ Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

The Bible refers to her “continual coming”. This phrase has the idea that she was begging this judge for help every day. When he would show up for court, there she was. When he went into the marketplace, there she was. She pleaded with him in front of his friends. She stalked him at home. Everywhere he went; there she was, constantly asking him to give her satisfaction.

D. Her Desperation

Because of her social standing and because of her financial standing, she had no other hope but to get help from this judge. Therefore, she made a nuisance of herself before him, everyday, until she received the very thing she was after!

Note:

This widow represents us. There are times when we too are burdened down with cares, worries, fears and troubles. During those times, it may seem that every circumstance of life is stacked against us. There may be the temptation to say, “What’s the use?”, especially after we have prayed and prayed and prayed about some matter. Yet, if we can learn anything from this

poor woman, let us learn the lesson that persistence in prayer pays off in God's time! So, keep praying, despite all the obstacles you face and despite all the signs that say you should just give up.

2. THE COLDNESS OF THE JUDGE

A. He Was Corrupt (vs. 2)

Luke 18:2

² Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man:

This man did not care anything about God or man. All he cared about was himself and his own life. To put it simply, he was a wicked man!

B. He Was Calloused (vs. 4a)

Luke 18:4

⁴ And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man;

Even though he had heard this widow's petition and saw she had a case, he would not do as she asked. He simply turned a deaf ear to her pleas for help. He was hard hearted and close minded to the needs of others.

C. He Was Condescending (vs. 4b-5)

Luke 18:4-5

⁴ And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; ⁵ Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

In spite of his spiritual condition and in spite of the fact that he did not care for this widow in the least, in the end, he helped her!

Why?

“Troubleth me” & “Weary me”

Note:

For us, the lesson here is this: We may not get the answer we want immediately, but we must keep asking and keep believing. God will answer in His time!

3. THE CONTRAST WITH OUR FATHER

Now the Lord turns from the character in the parable to the Father up in Heaven. He shows us that God, Who is nothing like the unjust judge, delights in answering the prayers of His children.

A. He Hears His People (vs. 7)

Luke 18:7

⁷ And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?

We need never fear that God doesn't hear us, because His ear is ever open to the cry of His children.

Isaiah 65:24

²⁴ And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.

Jeremiah 33:3

³ Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.

1 John 5:14-15

¹⁴ And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: ¹⁵ And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.

B. He Honors Their Persistence – “though He bear long with them”

Sometimes prayer is answered immediately, at other times, the answer is delayed for some time. The key is not giving up! God isn't just making us wait, He is working out the answers we seek. Our persistence in prayer demonstrates the depth of our burden. If you can pray about an item once or twice and then give up, you weren't really burdened over it. A genuine burden

will put you before God and keep you there until He answers!

C. He Handles Their Petitions

Luke 18:8

⁸ I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

He doesn't turn a deaf ear to our petitions, but He begins the process of working them out speedily. In truth, real prayer is the evidence of God's impending answer. Why? Because real prayer always begins with God.

The Spirit burdens our hearts and we offer the burden back to God, Who is already busily engaged in bringing about the answer.

Romans 8:26-27

²⁶ Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. ²⁷ And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what *is* the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to *the will of God*.

4. THE CHALLENGE TO THE SAINT

A. Be Committed to Prayer (vs. 1) – “ought always to pray”

Luke 18:1

¹And he spake a parable unto them *to this end*, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;

B. Be Consistent in Prayer (vs. 1) – “not to faint”

C. Be Comforted by Prayer (vs. 8) – “he will avenge them speedily”

Luke 18:8

⁸I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?