

Luke 18:1-8: *And he [Jesus] spake a parable unto them to this end [for the following reason], that men ought always to pray, and not to faint [not stop praying until their prayer is answered]; Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary¹. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said [to His disciples], Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect [believers], which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?*

1. Introduction

- a. We can lose heart when we pray if we don't see an answer soon.
- b. Jesus speaks about the Day of the Son of Man & the coming Kingdom of God – Luke 17:20-37
- c. Jesus' parable is the picture of a helpless person (first the widow, then ourselves) talking with someone with power (first an uncaring judge, then God, who loves and cares for us) in prayer until the answer comes

2. The Priority of Prayer

- a. **Prayer should be constant**, in good times and bad times (verse 1)

1 Thessalonians 5:17 *Pray without ceasing.*

Hebrews 10:19, 22 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest [the special place where God receives our requests] by the blood of Jesus, ... Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience [sins confessed], and our bodies washed with pure water [see Eph. 5:26].

- b. **Prayer should be confident**, not giving up because the answer doesn't come right away (verse 7)

James 5:16: Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent [humble and heart-felt] prayer of a righteous man availeth [accomplishes] much.

3. The Persistence of Prayer

- a. **God knows of our troubles** in these last days.
- b. **Parable of widow & uncaring judge**
 - i. Judge didn't care about God or man (verse 2)

¹ Meaning that someone had harmed this widow financially, and she wanted the judge to order that person to pay her a fair amount for the loss.

- ii. She faced uncaring judge who was authority in her life (verse 3)
- iii. Widow continued pleading to judge(verses 4 & 5)

c. Another Bible example: The parable of unwilling friend

Luke 11:8-10: I [Jesus] say unto you, Though he [the man's neighbor] will not rise [get out of bed] and give him [bread for his guest], because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity [persistence] he will rise and give him as many [loaves of bread] as he needeth. And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

d. God's delays are not God's denials. God's waits are not things wasted. He is working in your life while you wait for your answer.

4. The Practice of Prayer

- a. This passage is a promise that **God will hear a Christian's prayer** even if the answer doesn't come for a long time (verse 7)
- b. "Will the Son of Man find faith on the earth when He comes?" (verse 8; compare Luke 12:28, Luke 8:48, Luke 7:9) **Avoid the temptation of little faith.**
- c. **Examples of the persistent practice of prayer in the Bible:**

- i. Jesus prayed in Garden of Gethsemane just before His arrest. *Luke 22:45-46, 53-54: And when he [Jesus] rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow [exhausted from their grief], And said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. ... When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me [didn't arrest Me]: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness. Then took they him, and led him, and brought him into the high priest's house.*
- ii. Abraham prayed that God would spare a wicked city because his nephew lived there – Genesis 18: 20-32
- iii. Moses prayed that God would spare Israel after their wicked idol worship – Exodus 32: 11-14
- iv. Daniel was arrested violating a law against praying – Daniel 6: 7-16

5. Conclusion

a. All Christians to pray everywhere & often

1 Timothy 2:8: I will [it is my (Apostle Paul) desire] therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.

b. Pray because Christ is returning soon

1 Thessalonian 4:13-14, 18: But I [Paul] would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep [Christians who have died], that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. ... Wherefore comfort one another with these words..