



October 26-27 Sermon

**“The Parable of the Persistent Widow”**

Luke 18:1-8

Home Group discussion questions are written by Pastor Art Hunt;

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**Connect:** One or two of you in the group talk about a prayer request that you persisted in praying for some time, whether God met the request or not. Tell the story. What motivated you to keep praying? How did the experience change you? What do you think God intended to do in you during the time?

- 1. Read Luke 18:1:** *<sup>1</sup>One day Jesus told his disciples a story to illustrate their need for constant prayer and to show them that they must never give up. (New Living Translation)*
  - Obviously, this verse one emphasizes the main truth of the story. What **common understandings** about prayer would the people listening to Jesus have held in common that would have made the phrase “never give up” make sense?
    - Tell how this principle has impacted your own prayer life.
    - What has been difficult for people around this discussion circle about following this principle of persistence in prayer?
  - What potentially is God looking to develop in believers’ lives through such prayer?
  - What would you say to someone who had continued in prayer—had NEVER GIVEN UP!—and yet had not yet received what they had prayed for?
  - What other factors might be involved in answered prayer other than persistence?
    - Are there times when we need to go back and examine the motive and substance of our prayers?
    - What part does God’s will have in answered prayer? What part then does discerning God’s will have as you pray?
- 2. Read Luke 18:2-5:** *<sup>2</sup>“There was a judge in a certain city,” he said, “who was a godless man with great contempt for everyone. <sup>3</sup>A widow of that city came to him repeatedly, appealing for justice against someone who had harmed her. <sup>4</sup>The judge ignored her for a while, but eventually she wore him out. ‘I fear neither God nor man,’ he said to himself, <sup>5</sup>but this woman is driving me crazy. I’m going to see that she gets justice, because she is wearing me out with her constant request!” (New Living Translation)*

- Is this verse saying that God is like this judge, only granting requests when He gets impatient with our continued requests? But wait!!! That can't be right, can it, because that would contradict much of Scripture. God is good! God is kind! God is our Father.
- If God is not impatiently goaded into action then, how would you paraphrase the lesson of verses 2-5? (Hint: Think comparison here. Perhaps start your sentence with "If even an unjust judge will answer a persistent request. . .)")
- Do the first five verses this parable change any aspect of the concept of prayer for you? If so, what?

**3. Read Luke 18:6-8a** <sup>6</sup>*Then the Lord said, "Learn a lesson from this evil judge. <sup>7</sup>Even he rendered a just decision in the end, so don't you think God will surely give justice to his chosen people who plead with him day and night? Will he keep putting them off?*

- "Learn a lesson," Jesus says. Might it be something like: "Even in the natural world we live in, persistence is a part of getting needs met." If so, be honest, have you personally learned that lesson in prayer? How? When?
- When Jesus says that God will give justice to his chosen people, he takes the example from the "evil judge," saying it will happen "in the end." Considering the eternity that follows this life then, God's justice will be exercised quickly!
- Be honest, when earthly justice isn't achieved, does eternal justice feel like enough? If so, what's behind that feeling for you? What comfort does Scripture hold for you?

**4. Luke 18:8b:** *As we wait for Jesus' return, will our faith be diminished by the wait?!*

- This is a quick turn at the end of the passage—a invitation to self-awareness: will our "faith be diminished" as we wait for Jesus' return?
- In what specific ways can a believer's faith be diminished as he or she "wait's for Christ's return"?
  - What specific events tend to assail and diminish faith?
  - What then is the effect of a "diminished faith'?
- How do Christians protect their faith!