

IN YOUR CLOSET

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances,
for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

I Thessalonians 5: 16-18, ESV

August, 2021

Persevering In Prayer



There is something about perseverance in prayer that reflects faith and trust, which in turn identify true children of God. At the center of our relationship to God as our loving Father, there is an understanding that our prayers are heard and are answered for His glory and our best good. So, when we do not immediately see Him acting in answer to our prayer, we do not lose hope, but we keep on praying, recognizing He can be trusted to always act redemptively. In the parable below Jesus illustrates His teaching on the importance of persevering in prayer.



Luke 18:1-8



And he told them a parable to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart. He said, "In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor respected man. And there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying, 'Give me justice against my adversary.' For a while he refused, but afterward he said to himself, 'Though I neither fear God nor respect man, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will give her justice, so that she will not beat me down by her continual coming.'" And the Lord said, "Hear what the unrighteous judge says. And will not God give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will

he delay long over them? I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"



So, what does Jesus have to teach us as we consider the important role perseverance has to play in our prayer?

1. Always pray and do not lose heart. We know the God of love. We know the God who walks with us. We know the God who never leaves us. We know that our God hears our prayers and answers us. Jesus knows God's faithfulness, His goodness, and His attentiveness. So, He shares with us this parable.
2. Here was a judge who did not fear God nor respect man. Jesus speaks of a type of worldly leader we know all too well. He had no respect for God. He certainly had no respect for other people. He expected to do just as he pleased whenever he pleased. He had absolutely no interest in serving others.
3. Still, a widow kept coming to Him. Jesus says the unjust judge was visited by a needy and persistent widow. He had absolutely no pity on her. He gave her no hope. Still, she kept coming.
4. He naturally refused. This selfish leader and this persistent widow played out their game over and over again. Nothing changed. The widow pled her just cause. The leader refused to help her. She left, already preparing to return another day.
5. The widow kept coming. Nothing would stop her. The judge might ignore her. He might abuse her. He might wave his arms and shout at her. Still, she showed up again and again.



6. Hear the judge. “ . . . Though I neither fear God nor respect man, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will give her justice, so that she will not beat me down by her continual coming.”



Persistence pays. Even an unjust judge will give in to faithful, undiscouraged faith.

7. God does hear and bring justice. Now, we all know God is nothing like this judge. His whole Being declares His loving concern for His children. When we continue to pray, He will hear, He will listen and He will act.

8. He will give them justice

SPEEDILY. And notice, Jesus, says He will act speedily. He will not delay. And yet, He calls for our faithful, believing persistence,



trusting in the goodness of our Father to do His best at the best time.

9. Will the Son of Man find faith on Earth when He comes? Jesus closes with this challenge. Will we demonstrate perseverance like this poor widow, who had no reason to continue appealing to this inhuman judge, and yet she kept coming to press her request until she received from him what she needed. Surely we who have a loving, devoted Father can do no less.

I believe you are probably like me—you have heard powerful testimonies of people who only came to Jesus after years and maybe decades of faithful praying on their behalf by family members and friends. Only in Heaven will we fully understand how graciously God takes our persevering prayers and uses them in the process of bringing people to Himself and eternal salvation.

When I think of powerful Christian movements throughout the world, and when I see God moving in such places as China, South Korea, all across Africa, and indeed, throughout the history of Spiritual Awakening and Revival throughout American history; I am confident that

persevering prayers of God's people played a role as a tool He has used in calling peoples to Himself.

And so, let us persevere like the widow in this parable. Let us join our loving Savior as we pray and pray and pray again and again for the people, the nations and the needs the Holy Spirit lays on our hearts.

