

# "THE PERSISTENCE OF PRAYER"

## Luke 18:1-8

I want to let you in on a dirty little secret. We know we should be praying more than we do, and we often feel guilty about it. It's not that we don't want to pray. It's just that life happens and the time we would devote to prayer is crowded out. On top of that, Satan and his demonic allies mount a relentless attack against our prayer life. Prayer is an invitation, not an obligation. It is a vital part of the believer's life!

This is the fifth sermon in the series we've entitled, "PRAY."

- **The Priority of Prayer**
- **The Power of Prayer**
- **The Potential of Prayer**
- **The Practice of Prayer**
- **The Persistence of Prayer**

May 24, 2026  
CFBC... "Pray"

Take your Bible and turn to Luke 18. We're going to concentrate on verses 1-8 [READ THE TEXT]. This is one of our Lord's parables, and this one can only be found in Luke's gospel. It comes on the heels of our Lord's teaching about the second coming and the days leading up to it.

**A parable is a story drawn from everyday life to illustrate kingdom values, principles, and opportunities. It usually makes one point.**

In our case today, the point is given to us by Luke in the first verse of our text.

**Luke 18:1... Now He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart, saying . . .**

Luke applied the parable to the delay of the Lord's coming. Do you know what happens when we don't pray? According to Jesus, we lose heart. We get discouraged. Our soul needs prayer; without it, our spiritual life shrivels up. So, in the first line of this

parable, Luke inserts the truth that we can take away with us today . . .

## KEEP ON PRAYING!

Don't give up on God; don't give up on prayer. No matter . . .

- **how discouraging life gets**
- **how vicious and vile the culture becomes**
- **how long it takes for God to answer your prayer**

We must never give up on God, and we must never give up on prayer! Now here's the parable Jesus told to make his point crystal clear . . .

**Luke 18:2-3... "In a certain city there was a judge who did not fear God and did not respect man. 3 "There was a widow in that city, and she kept coming to him, saying, 'Give me legal protection from my opponent.'**

In this parable, Jesus highlights two people—a helpless widow and an unscrupulous judge. Jesus sheds some light on the judge’s character. . .

- **He had no reverence for God.**
- **He didn’t respect people.**
- **He was an unrighteous judge (6).**

This man had no use for the moral authority of God. Therefore, he basically developed his own script for justice. This guy was a piece of work!

Then, our Lord pointed to a poor widow (verse 3). In this culture a widow was basically defenseless. She was in no position to bribe the judge, and she had no advocate to put pressure on him.<sup>1</sup> Someone was trying to swindle her out of her possessions, maybe even her humble house.

---

<sup>1</sup> Leon Morris, [\*Luke: An Introduction and Commentary\*](#), vol. 3, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 280.

Unfortunately, even the religious elite were known to take advantage of widows. . .

**Mark 12:38–40...** In His teaching He was saying: "Beware of the scribes who like to walk around in long robes, and *like* respectful greetings in the market places, **39** and chief seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets, **40** who devour widows' houses, and for appearance's sake offer long prayers; these will receive greater condemnation."

This dear lady turned to the Jewish justice system for help, but she was ignored and her pleas went unheeded.

**Luke 18:4-5...** "For a while he was unwilling; but afterward he said to himself, 'Even though I do not fear God nor respect man, **5** yet because this widow bothers me, I will give her legal protection, otherwise by continually coming she will wear me out.' "

The more he dismissed her the more persistent she became. The widow's relentless pursuit of justice eventually paid off!

**\*This is parable of contrast, not comparison.**

The only reason the judge helped the widow was because she was "wearing him out." This literally means "give one a black eye"—to ruin his reputation.<sup>2</sup>

**Luke 18:6-7... And the Lord said, "Hear what the unrighteous judge said; 7 now, will not God bring about justice for His elect who cry to Him day and night, and will He delay long over them?"**

Hear the Lord's point. . .

**If the unjust judge finally granted the persistent widow's request, how much more will a just, loving, and gracious God grant the petitions of his children (John 1:12-13) who pray to him day and night. In heaven's time the delay will be short!**

Jesus promised that He will come again to right every wrong and to rule and reign over His glorious

---

<sup>2</sup> Warren W. Wiersbe, [The Bible Exposition Commentary](#), vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 248.

kingdom. Therefore, His disciples must not lose heart. Here's the best antidote . . .

## KEEP ON PRAYING!

Never give up on God. Never give up on prayer!

**Romans 8:32**... He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?

Our Father in heaven delights to give good gifts to His children! However, persistence in prayer does not mean that God will always give you what you want and when you want it. Why should you persist in your prayers when it seems that your prayers are not being answered? There are three factors you must consider. Could it be that . . .

**IT'S NOT GOD'S WILL**— We must learn to align our will with God's will. Keep praying until you know God's will about a matter. Consider the examples of Jesus and Paul . . .

**Matthew 26:39–45**... And He went a little beyond *them*, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will."  
**40** And He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "So, you *men* could not keep watch with Me for one hour? **41** "Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." **42** He went away again a second time and prayed, saying, "My Father, if this cannot pass away unless I drink it, Your will be done."  
**43** Again He came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. **44** And He left them again, and went away and prayed a third time, saying the same thing once more. **45** Then He came to the disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Behold, the hour is at hand and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners.

**2 Corinthians 12:7–9** ... Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me—to keep me from

exalting myself! **8** Concerning this I implored the Lord three times that it might leave me. **9** And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.

Why should we be persistent when it seems that our prayers are not being answered? Could it be that...

**IT'S NOT GOD'S TIMING**— We must discern the "what" of God's will and the "when" of God's will. For the greater part of His ministry, the Lord Jesus repeatedly said, "My hour has not come."

**Psalm 25:4–5**... Make me know Your ways, O LORD; Teach me Your paths. **5** Lead me in Your truth and teach me, For You are the God of my salvation; For You I wait all the day.

**Psalm 27:14**... Wait for the LORD; Be strong and let your heart take courage; Yes, wait for the LORD.

May 24, 2026  
CFBC... "Pray"

Why should we be persistent when it seems that our prayers are not being answered? Could it be that...

**IT'S NOT GOD'S BEST**— Lazarus and his sisters, Martha and Mary, were some of our Lord's closest friends. Lazarus got deathly sick. His sisters sent word for Jesus to come quickly and heal their brother. The Lord didn't cancel his ministry plans and run to Bethany to heal his friend. In fact, he delayed *on purpose*. You know the rest of the story. He raised Lazarus from the dead!

Okay, what was better? Making a sick man well or raising a dead man to life? God got more glory and the impact of the gospel was significantly increased. Let this serve as a lesson to us!

**KEEP ON PRAYING!**

**Luke 18:8... "I tell you that He will bring about justice for them quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?"**

For Luke and the first century disciples, the second coming of the Lord Jesus was a vibrant hope and expectation. Although it appeared to be delayed, these believers expected that the blessed hope (Titus 2:13) would be realized soon.

**Although chronological time may seem to deny this, in God’s understanding (2 Pet 3:8) and in faith’s reckoning of time the consummation will always be “soon.”<sup>3</sup>**

In the Greek, there is an article before “*faith*.” When Jesus returns, will he find **THE FAITH**—*will He find believers who have not given up on God and are praying persistently without losing heart?*

## **CONCLUSION**

In this parable, the judge is established as a contrast to God the Father. We’ve already discussed the lesser to greater contrast between the two of them.

---

<sup>3</sup> Robert H. Stein, [Luke](#), vol. 24, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 446.

May 24, 2026  
CFBC... "Pray"

In this parable, the widow is set up as a contrast to believers, the children of God. Think about it . . .

**The widow appealed to a heartless judge.**

**The believer appeals to a loving Father.**

**The widow approached a court of law.**

**The believer approaches a throne of grace.**

**The widow was awarded justice.**

**The believer is awarded mercy.**

How blessed we are to be children of a gracious, merciful, patient, and loving heavenly Father who delights in giving good gifts to His children! What a motivation for us to . . .

**KEEP ON PRAYING!**

This will keep us from losing heart so that we can model THE FAITH Jesus referred to in verse 8. Keep on praying for . . .

May 24, 2026  
CFBC... "Pray"

- **lost friends and family members to be saved**
- **the Pastor Search Team we'll present on June 14**
- **a powerful unity to grip CFBC**
- **the Lord to lead us to our next pastor**
- **strong, Christ-honoring marriages**
- **your children to have a biblical worldview**
- **spiritual momentum in the Body of Christ**

Would you like to know for certain that you are a child of God. Hear the Word . . .

**John 1:12–13**... But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, *even* to those who believe in His name, **13** who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

Receive Jesus as your Savior and Lord this morning by placing your faith in Him alone!