

Bible Lesson – Luke 18:1-8
Parables of Jesus; The Unjust Judge (The Importunate Widow)

¹ Now He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart, ² saying, "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.' ⁴ 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.'" ⁶ 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? 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?"

1. What is the main point of this parable?
 - A. Do not lose faith – Pray persistently (without ceasing)...especially in times of trouble or distress...even when it seems like your prayers go no higher than the ceiling.
 - I. **1 Thessalonians 5:17-18** ¹⁷pray without ceasing; ¹⁸in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.
2. The Widow
 - A. Has no one to represent her.
 - B. Has no one to defend her in the courts.
 - C. Has no one to find vindication for her against her opponent.
 - D. Literally, her only tool in seeking justice is persistence.
 - E. God has a special heart for widows (some of the most vulnerable, along with orphans & children)
 - I. **James 1:27** ²⁷Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.
 - II. **Isaiah 1:17** ¹⁷Learn to do good; Seek justice, Reprove the ruthless, Defend the orphan, Plead for the widow.
 - III. **1 Timothy 5:5** ⁵Now she who is a widow indeed and who has been left alone, has fixed her hope on God and continues in entreaties and prayers night and day.
 - F. And so Jesus tells the story of a widow who has been unjustly treated. She has been wronged. She's suffering, and her only hope is to find justice at the hands of the courts. So she wants to present her case to the judge.
 - G. Notice that she is not seeking advantage or special treatment, she simply wants to be heard and have justice rendered.
3. The Judge
 - A. He did not fear God and did not respect man.
 - I. This is the exact opposite of the two greatest commandments – love God and love your neighbor. **Matthew 22:37-39** ³⁷ And He said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' ³⁸ This is the great and foremost commandment. ³⁹ The second is like it, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'
 - B. Considering this, do you think he cared at all about justice?
 - I. Based on a person's heart and motivations, sometimes, the fundamental question of justice is lost.
 - II. The judge in this parable cared only for his own prestige. He didn't care about the widow's predicament at all.
 - C. Many parables contrast how fallen creatures (the unjust judge) behave vs how God behaves.
4. Importunate; Definition – overly persistent

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5. What observations can be made?
 - A. Persistent prayer demonstrates true faith in God.
 - I. Although God's timing may not meet our timing ("Please do it now, Lord"), God always acts justly and decisively for His children.
 - B. God is Just.
 - I. We can fully count on Him to answer our prayers when, where, and how He chooses.
 - II. God expects us to continue asking, seeking, knocking, and praying until he answers.
 - C. This parable is not teaching that God can be pestered or argued with to answer your prayers.
 - D. God's character and God's chronology
 - I. Persistent prayer demonstrates faith in the attributes of God's character, and the chronology (timing) of His actions.
 - E. Neglect of prayer, is the sure road to a fall. **Matthew 26:40-41** 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."*
 - F. Satan is always tempting you to stop praying. **1 Peter 5:8** ⁸ *Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.*
 - G. The only legitimate reason to stop praying a righteous prayer (e.g., "Lord, please save my entire family.") is the return of Christ.
6. Summary
 - A. Contrast: The unjust judge vs a just God
 - I. If an unjust judge responds to the persistence of a widow he cares nothing about, how much more will a just God respond to the persistent prayers of those who love Him, and whom He loves.
 - II. If an unjust judge renders justice for an unknown widow, how much more will a just God render justice for His elect that he has known for all eternity.
 - B. Jesus is calling you to be faithful rather than faint-hearted in times of difficulty, and to pray without ceasing until He returns.
 - C. When He returns, will you be one of those found to be a persistent prayer warrior?