

Into – Simple Stories...Timeless Truths | 5 Parables from Luke...**Explain Parables**

Parables are simple narrative devices to enhance a spiritual Truth – **Spy Kit...add the heat**
Jesus...over 30 times...story to illustrate Spiritual Truths | **Today's = Persistence** | Widow

Persistence = Continuing forward despite difficulty, hardship, or opposition | **Persistent Faith**
This is gonna punch us right in the jib-jab because we all need a lesson in Persistent faith

- All considered walking / drifting away... 'losing heart' | Baptist News.net | Top 5
- (3) Cultural Opinions Challenged - Leader failed / Expectations not / Preferences Ignored – Prayer Not Faith isn't in: Leaders – Preferences – Expectations – Culture – Prayers my way... Faith in God
- Faith...God = always good – Timing always perfect – Ways always right – Justice always His
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?" **Miss the point of a story – Greenday 'Time of your life' = Graduation...oops**
This parable often taught as a comparison...we should be 'like' the Widow...nag the judge
Kent Hughes - "This parable's lesson...greatly misunderstood. Untold numbers have wrongly used this text to teach that we must frantically beg God to answer our prayers. This is not the idea at all."

Not comparison...contrast | We're not like the Widow & God is not the unrighteous judge
We trust and have faith in our Judge and prayer is the demonstration of a persistent faith
Changes the 'why' – From praying to get my way...to praying because I have faith in my God

Big Idea – Prayer Reveals the Saints' Confidence in the Savior

Jesus just finished talking about the kingdom of God will be revealed at his second coming

- What's the one question on everyone's mind when the second coming comes up?
 - I think every generation in history thought God would return...still hasn't happened
- Regardless of how long it is before I return to make everything right...don't lost heart!

Persistence in prayer is the evidence of our confidence in the one we're praying to

Constant prayer demonstrates committed belief:

And he told them a parable to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart.

The Kingdom of God is at hand...'Where and when' – And he told them this parable...

- 'yes and not yet' – kingdom in our hearts...not full effect | Salvation...full...not finished
 - We have the presence of God...veiled to be unveiled at the second coming | **70ad?**
- If we're honest...waiting for everything to be made right...waiting & not knowing is difficult
- Tempted to lose heart – things are bad, the perfection of Kingdom seems further away
- Struggle w/ the brokenness of this sinful world – hearts heavy with worry and suffering

The antidote to a struggling faith that is losing heart is found in this first verse:

- **Order: Pray and not lose heart** | Good chance that if you're not praying...losing heart
- Prayer...constant prayer | **Constant prayer demonstrates our faith in two ways:**

1. Constant prayer demonstrates committed believe Preserving Hearts (v1-5)

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.'

Meet our two players – Judge and the widow – Incredible contrast

- Judge = First century – Mobile...set up and hear cases...hear cases they wanted
 - This fictitious man... 'did not fear God or respect man' – Wicked to the core
- We think judges should fight for justice...but this man has no such intention...God or man
- Widow – First Century represents complete vulnerability
 - No man to plead her case – No money lawyer – Only option is to go again and again

Act this out – Finally he gives in...why? Change of heart? Conscious? - 'Beat me down'

How does this side of the Jesus illustration give us preserving hearts?

- She...unjust judge...wear him down...didn't want here there...burden...presence
- We have a righteous judge who wants us with him...hear our burden...in His presence

We do not go to God in prayer to wear Him down...we go to God in prayer to be built up!

- How much more does the Judge of Heaven and Earth long to hear from you?
 - When you go the Judge of Heaven and Earth...hearing and weighing all for what is best!
 - When you think 'In this trial' or 'Circumstance' of 'For this person' God's not listening!
- When you're not getting the earthly answers you're looking for, I want you to remember...
- A few short days...Jesus said these words...he stood before an unjust judge | **PILATE**

Jesus trusted His Father knew best...may your prayers always conclude similarly...I trust you
Never in all of God's eternal existence has He acted unjustly.....He isn't going to start with you

Persistence isn't an opportunity...compel God to give us what we want...opportunity to live out faith.

2. Constant prayer demonstrates committed belief: Enduring Faith (v6-8)

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.

The point is – Prayer is the fuel that drives and enduring faith – Enduring faith is the point

- **So much of the Bible could be summarized in 'How Much More'**
 - How much more should we go to God with our Needs – Hardships – Crying out
 - How much more should we go to God with our Praises – Celebrations – Trust
- You want an enduring faith? 'Cry to Him day and night' – Trust Him for justice...oh elect
But we also know that sometimes these answers don't come, not the way we had hoped
- A lot of you in this room are crying out to God...day and night over all kinds of things:
 - Broken relationships – Sicknesses - Financial struggles - Grief over someone lost
- Let it minister to your soul...'And will not God give justice to His elect, who cry day & night?'
- Here's the hard part – Will he delay long? He will give justice to them speedily?
I've been praying this for years! How do I reconcile this with my lived experience? Speedy?

We need to remember...God works on his timetables and they're much grander than ours

- **Biblical history (Noah, Joseph, Israelites in Egypt, David, intertestamental period)**
God's timeline is different than ours...Not evidence of his disinterest but of his grace
God delays with purpose | Accomplish His Plan – Increase our Dependence...purpose
Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?" | **Personal Eschatology**

Kind of persistence Jesus talking about – Salvation is found in those who persevere to end
Salvation belongs to those who don't lose heart, and who persevere to the end...pray!

Contrasting Parable – 'How much more':

- We're not widows - Bride of Christ | Not penniless – Rich with Inheritance
- We're not unknown - but known | Not alone but with an advocate
- Don't pay a bribe to our judge | Our God paid our debt
- He's not unrighteous – Perfect | Not selfish – kind | Not get rid of - Draw us in

With all these contrasts between the widow's story and ours, here's what's the same:

We need help...Savior...**Prayer reveals the saints' confidence in the Savior**