

PRAYER INTENSIVE WEEK THREE

PRACTICE PERSISTENT PRAYER

Luke 18:1-8

I can only imagine that many of you who do pray have had the issue of unanswered prayer.

Maybe it was:

an immediate need

a lost friend or family member

a miracle desired

Maybe you have been praying longer than you can remember for something...

JESUS encourages us to keep on praying and not to become discouraged.

1. THE PARABLE OF THE PERSISTENT WIDOW

TEXT – Luke 18:1-8

A parable is basically an illustration drawn from everyday life to communicate a deeper spiritual or moral truth.

Jesus often used parables.

It would help with application and understanding.

Many times it would require deeper thinking.

Sometimes people would have to “read between the lines” to understand.

The point of this parable was = if a cold hearted judge gave a poor widow what she needed, how much more will our warm hearted Father give his children what they need...

Luke gives us the point and the purpose of the parable right at the beginning

V1 -“pray and not give up”

QUESTION: Show of hands – anybody prayed for something for a long time and have just given up?

Again – are you discouraged by the silence or inactivity?

FACT – As we study prayer, many are more concerned with the posture of prayer than the persistence of prayer. How -vs- How long.

The type of persistence Jesus is addressing here is not the length(time) of the prayer –

??Ever had someone praying and you thought it was never going to end??

Jesus is addressing the topic and how often we return to our conversation with God concerning it.

(Explain Text) (Break down parable)

It almost appears that the Judge gave in because the woman was nagging!!

He just wanted to get her gone and not have her return. V6-7

Some of us say... "it that's what it takes, count me in."

Others.... Nope! I'm done. Moving on...

??We have a patient God who loves us. Will He not give us justice when we cry out to him day and night, day and night, day and night...??

2. THE PARABLE OF CONTRAST

Some people struggle with this parable. Many misinterpret it.

Many view it and see us as the widow and God as the unjust judge.

If that's the case – Then our goal is to wear down God. If we nag enough...

ILLUS: Kids in the store.... I want it (10x) NO! 11X – ugh...OK!! Hush!

I believe this is a misinterpretation of this parable. This is a -arable of CONTRAST.

Contrast = state of being strikingly different from something, juxtaposition, or close association.

Back to the text:

We have a widow. As a widow she was of one of the most disadvantaged classes in this culture. Jesus probably chose this example to show her desperation.

So what is the contrast??

The unjust, uncaring judge... who would do this for this lowly, unimportant widow what he did...

HOW MUCH MORE WOULD A CARING LOVING HEAVENLY FATHER DO FOR YOU AND ME!!

That's the point – which is why we need to be persistent in prayer because our father in heaven delights in doing good for his children!!

There is another powerful point in this parable that also helps us with our understanding of WHY WE KEEP PRAYING.

We often say..."well, God know..." or "I have prayed for so long and NOTHING happened."

This parable shows us and even challenges us to be persistent. By its application – that means that we won't always get what we want when we want it.

Reminder – God is not a Geanie in a bottle or a slot machine.

If we got what WE wanted every time we prayed – there would be no reason to develop the relationship with JESUS!

Jesus is the one teaching us: Keep praying and don't give up – even when the answer doesn't come on your time schedule.

3. THE PROBLEM OF THE PARABLE

The problem = we don't always get what we want when we want it from God.

??WHY NOT?? These answers will not satisfy everyone. But often we want easy answers. These are not easy but they are biblical.

A. Its not His will.

God has a perfect will for your life.

Sometimes what we want or desire doesn't match Gods will.

**This is simple parenting – our kids ask for crazy stuff – we say NO.

So the question for us –

??How will I discern his will and join in on what he wants for my life?

WE MUST SURRENDER!!

(explain) Salvation = Accept Jesus (Gospel), Confess Sins, Call upon the name of the Lord, Surrender to Him.

Jesus best example of Surrender is the reason for our salvation - - THE CROSS

Matthew 26:39 – “My Father, if it is possible