



**Great Prayers of the Bible: Don't Give Up  
Luke 18:1-8**

**Why Do We Stop Praying?**

There may be many reasons we don't pray. (1) – We don't know how or think we aren't doing it right (2) – It's not important to us. Other things take our time and attention and our relationship with God takes a back seat. (3) – We aren't desperate enough. We think we can do it ourselves and don't need God. (4) – It doesn't work – God doesn't answer our prayers.

**Why Does God Say No?**

**We are hindering our own prayers** – The effective prayer is one of a righteous person (James 5:16). Do we pray with faith, while obey God and remaining in a right relationship with Him? Other things that hinder our prayers are unconfessed sin (Isa 59:2), uncaring attitudes (Prov 21:13), and broken relationships (Matt 5:23, 24; 1 Peter 3:7).

**The request is wrong** - Jesus' response to James and John's request was, "You don't know what you are asking" (Mark 10:35-40). We ask without knowing the scope of our request. James rebukes us for asking with selfish motives (James 4:3).

**The timing is wrong** – Old Testament saints prayed for the Messiah to come. We pray for Jesus' return. The prayers are good ones, but God is waiting for His time to answer it. In our own lives, God may delay answering because the timing isn't right. When the perfect time comes, the answer will be - yes.

**God has something better** - The unanswered prayers people struggle with most are unanswered prayers for healing and relief from suffering. We know God **could** answer all those prayers because He **has** answered some - so why not all? The simple, but uneasy answer is that suffering may be better for us. When we pray, God **always** changes our circumstances, or He changes us. When God doesn't answer "yes" He may be using circumstances in our lives to change us into the likeness of Jesus. He is maturing us. He is teaching us. Job endured great hardship and unanswered prayer because God was teaching him a lesson. James tells us that our trials are producing Godly character (James 1:4). Paul says that our suffering has a purpose so that we can comfort others (2 Cor 1:3-7). Paul needed to learn humility and about the grace of God (2 Cor 12:5-10). Our knowledge is so limited. We ask God without being able to see our entire life, and how our life intersects with other lives. But God sees and answers best!

**Don't Give Up! (Luke 18:1-8)**

Jesus told a parable on "the need for them to pray always and not give up" (Luke 18:1). A widow wanted justice and came to an unjust judge. As one would expect, he didn't want to give her the time of day – he ignored her. But she didn't give up. She kept asking until the unjust judge gave in so he wouldn't have to keep listening to her. Jesus' point - if an unjust judge will answer with persistent asking. How much more, will God (a just judge) answer with persistent asking! Don't give up!!