

The Parables of Jesus

in the Gospel of Luke (8)

Luke 18:1-8

DISCUSS

What is something you do persistently? And why do you do it? What are some lessons you have learned from persistence?

DISCOVER

Focus: We need persistent faith for our persistent prayer. God often seems to be “unrighteous” at the moment because of His mercy in the present age; in actuality God is righteous and His righteous judgment against our adversary (the devil) is coming in the future, but we must persistently pray for this to be carried out.

I. Read Luke 18:1-8 twice. See if you can retell the story in your own words without looking at the verses.

Luke 18:1 And He told them a parable to the end that they ought always to pray and not lose heart,

Luke 18:2 Saying, There was a certain judge in a certain city who did not fear God and did not regard man.

Luke 18:3 And there was a widow in that city, and she kept coming to him, saying, Avenge me of my opponent.

Luke 18:4 And for a time he would not; but afterward he said within himself, Even though I do not fear God nor regard man,

Luke 18:5 Yet because this widow causes me trouble, I will avenge her, lest by continually coming she wear me out.

Luke 18:6 And the Lord said, Hear what the unrighteous judge says.

Luke 18:7 And will not God by all means carry out the avenging of His chosen ones, who cry to Him day and night, though He is long-suffering over them?

Luke 18:8 I tell you that He will carry out their avenging quickly. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?

A. Who do the three persons in this parable represent? How is this parable applicable to us today?

1. Judge – hint: see v. Luke 18:7, Isaiah 33:22

For Jehovah is our Judge, / Jehovah is our Lawmaker, / Jehovah is our King; He will save us.

2. Widow – hint: see 2 Cor. 11:2

For I am jealous over you with a jealousy of God; for I betrothed you to one husband to present you as a pure virgin to Christ.

3. Opponent – hint: see Rev. 12:10

And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ, for the accuser of our brothers has been cast down, who accuses them before our God day and night.

DEEPER

DIVE

II. In this parable, God is likened to an “unrighteous” judge. Sometimes it seems that our God is not righteous, for He allows His children to be unrighteously persecuted. In situations like this, we need to vindicate God:

A. What does it mean to “vindicate” someone? How can we vindicate God?

B. Read the following excerpt:

The Greek word rendered “avenge” may also be translated “procure justice for.”

In this parable the Lord indicates that the believers in Christ have an opponent. This opponent is Satan, the Devil, concerning whom we need God’s avenging. We ought to pray persistently for this avenging (see Rev. 6:9-10) and not lose heart.

While our opposer is persecuting us, it seems that our God is not righteous, for He allows His children to be unrighteously persecuted. For example, John the Baptist was beheaded, Peter was martyred, Paul was imprisoned, and John was exiled.

Throughout the centuries, thousands upon thousands of honest and faithful followers of the Man-Savior have suffered unrighteous persecution. Even today we are still undergoing unrighteous mistreatment. Our God seems to be unjust, since He does not come in to judge and vindicate.

Often we have prayed for God to vindicate us. Yet, many of [...] faithful ones, have been imprisoned and even put to death. Where is the living, righteous God? Why does He tolerate this situation? Why would He not judge those who persecute us? Because of this situation, the Man-Savior in 18:1-8 uses an unjust judge to signify God who does not seem to do anything on behalf of His persecuted people.

What shall we do in a situation when we are persecuted and it seems that our God is not living, present, or just? From this parable we learn to be a bothering widow, one who prays to God persistently.

Apparently, the Lord is not present or does not care. It seems that He is not righteous.

Nevertheless, I have learned that we need to bother God in prayer, that we should pray to Him persistently without losing heart.

However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?” (vv. 6-8). The Lord’s word in verse 8 indicates that God’s avenging of our enemy will be at the Savior’s coming back.

Question: Does this parable remind you of a parable we covered previously? (Luke 11:5-8) In what way?

III. Memorize Luke 18:7 and recite it to one another:

And will not God by all means carry out the avenging of His chosen ones, who cry to Him day and night, though He is long-suffering over them?

DISCIPLE

A. How can we practically, persistently pray? What does this look like?

– See the following verses:

Acts 1:14 (in one accord),

These all continued steadfastly with one accord in prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.

Ephesians 6:18 (in spirit)

By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,

Col. 4:2 (watching [alert, not negligent]),

Persevere in prayer, watching in it with thanksgiving,

1 Thessalonians 5:17 (v. 16-20)

Unceasingly pray,

B. Share with one another a person in your heart that you would like to pray for. Pray for one another.