**Call to Prayer**

**Part 9**

**“Don’t Quit!”**

**Luke 18:1-8 “Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. 2 He said: “In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared what people thought. 3 And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, ‘Grant me justice against my adversary.’ 4 “For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, ‘Even though I don’t fear God or care what people think, 5 yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won’t eventually come and attack me!’”6 And the Lord said, “Listen to what the unjust judge says. 7 And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? 8 I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?” (NIV)**

**Now, let’s unpack this parable.**

**First, it is a word from Jesus encouraging us to:**

**I. Not quit praying**

**Jesus no doubt gave it because we’re inclined to give up when God does not immediately answer our prayers.**

**So the parable teaches us that, though our prayers might remain unanswered for a season, we should persevere and not grow weary and inwardly faint...**

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**To illustrate this principle, He presents us with:**

**II. A widow with an enemy**

**Now a widow in Jesus’s day was typically defenseless, poor, and very vulnerable...**

**And this widow was no different—she had an enemy!**

**Jesus doesn’t tell us much about him, except to let us know that he was an “adversary.”**

**This word means “accuser,” and it often referred to a legal opponent in court.**

**Her adversary may have been trying to take what little she had left by legal means...he was attacking her in court, taking advantage of her vulnerable position as a widow.**

**This poor woman found herself terribly alone—her husband had died, and we’re told of no children or extended family that could help.**

**So in her desperation, she decides to go to a judge and ask for help...**

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**And as if things couldn’t get worse, she finds herself before...**

**III. An unjust judge**

**She says to the judge appointed to her, “Give me justice in this dispute with my enemy” (vs. 3).**

**But Jesus paints this judge as cold and heartless, a very bad man:**

**“He said: ‘In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared what people thought’” (vs. 2 NIV)**

**This judge was essentially an atheist, and could have cared less about her or her plight!**

**So this poor widow has the deck stacked against her!**

**She has an enemy trying to take everything she has, and a judge who could care less.**

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**Her first meeting with him did not go well...Jesus says he ignored her:**

**Verse 4 says, “The judge ignored her for a while,”**

**You know, nothing is more frustrating than to have a great need for the right thing to be done on your behalf, only to be ignored by someone who is supposed to help you!**

**It’s hard being ignored—it sends a painful message:**

***You don’t matter as a human being, you have no value, you’re not worth my time.***

**It’s insulting. Demeaning. Hurtful. Demoralizing.**

**So to add insult to injury, this widow, whose going through all the right channels for help, is ignored.**

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**Now, she had a choice, like all of us do when life isn’t fair:**

**She could walk away hurt and angry, becoming bitter and cynical.**

**Or she could become a lifelong victim with the attitude, ‘life’s against me, why try.’**

**Or—she could FIGHT back.**

**But how could she fight?**

**She has no power, no money, no influence, no support.**

**Well, Jesus said she did have one weapon at her disposal—*perseverance!***

**She could keep going back to him until he acted on her behalf.**

**Jesus says she chose the latter—she kept going back, getting in his face, bringing her case before him, demanding action.**

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**Now, the King James Version calls this type of persistence “importunity.”**

**Importunity means, “shameless persistence,” "unembarrassed boldness.”**

**The idea is that (with no shame) you keep on coming, keep on asking, keep on knocking until an answer comes.**

**This widow decided she would not be ignored, and it worked!**

**The unjust judge who didn’t care about God or her, finally said to himself:**

**“I don’t fear God or care about people, 5 but this woman is driving me crazy. I’m going to see that she gets justice, because she is wearing me out with her constant requests!” (Vs. 4-5)**

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**Then Jesus makes the application we all need to hear:**

**“Then the Lord said, “If even an evil judge can be worn down like that, 7 don’t you think that God will surely give justice to his people who plead with him day and night? 8 Yes! He will answer them quickly!” (Vs 6-7 LB)**

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**If an evil judge can be successfully persuaded through persistence, won’t the God who loves you perfectly hear and answer your persistent prayers?**

**Yes!**

**This is why Jesus taught:**

**“Ask *and* keep on asking and it will be given to you; seek *and* keep on seeking and you will find; knock *and* keep on knocking and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who keeps on asking receives, and he who keeps on seeking finds, and to him who keeps on knocking, it will be opened” (Matt. 7:7-8 AMP).**

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**Now, you may say, “But Jeff, why does God require me to keep coming back? Why not just answer me the first time?”**

**I’ll give you 3 quick reasons from the Bible:**

1. **It could be spiritual warfare—the devil is fighting your prayers in the unseen spiritual realm where he operates. This is why the Bible mentions “spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places” (Eph. 6:12 NKJV).**
2. **God is preparing the answer for YOU—Some of the things we pray for take time for God to set the stage...Putting the right people and circumstances in place.**
3. **God is preparing YOU for the answer—Some of the things we pray for are very good. But if God were to answer them immediately we couldn’t handle it the way we are.**

**We need to mature some, grow up spiritually, gain some humility, get some experience under our belt.**

**So Jesus says, *Delay is not always denial.* Keep praying!**

**LET’S PRAY**

**That of a widow whose only weapon is incessant prayer. It is only by means of this intense concentration that faith will be preserved.**

**A widow - This is a circumstance that gives increasing interest to the parable. Judges were bound to show special attention to widows, [Isaiah 1:17](https://biblehub.com/isaiah/1-17.htm); [Jeremiah 22:3](https://biblehub.com/jeremiah/22-3.htm). The reason of this was that**

**The argument which lies on the surface of the parable, teaching is obvious: if such a judge will in the end listen to the prayer of a suppliant for whom he cares nothing, will not God surely listen to the repeated prayer of a suppliant whom he loves with a deep, enduring love? Such is the argument of the story. Importunity, it seems to say, must inevitably triumph. But underlying this there is much deep teaching, of which, perhaps, the most important item is that it insists upon the urgent necessity for us all to continue in prayer, never fainting in this exercise though no answer seems to come.**

**lest coming continually, she weary me to death, or lest coming and coming, she at last give me black eyes; of course meant in a humorous sense. The latter rendering does more justice to the humor of the situation, but the other seems more in harmony with the scope of the parable, which is to enforce persistence in prayer—continual coming.**

**hear what the unjust judge saith; and take encouragement from hence to be frequent and importunate in prayer with God; for if such a cruel, merciless, and unjust judge is to be wrought upon by importunity to do justice, who has no principle to influence him, how much more will not God, who is a just judge, the judge of widows, and of the oppressed, a God of great mercy and compassion, who delights in the prayers of his people, knows their cases, and is able to help them, and who has an interest in them, and they in him?**