

WEEK 3 | LUKE 18:1-8 | THE PERSISTENT WIDOW

As we continue our study in the teachings of Jesus we turn our attention this week to the parable of The Persistent Widow. As we read through the parables of Jesus we see certain patterns develop. It was common for Jesus to either save the “moral” of the story for the end or, at times, to not give an interpretation at all. But in the parable of The Persistent Widow, for whatever reason, Luke gives us the meaning before the story is even shared.

Please read Luke 18:1-8.

What response did Jesus want from the disciples who heard this parable? (v 1)

In many of Jesus’ parables he taught the about the kingdom of God by comparing it to things that were known to his hearers. He would begin with the phrase “the kingdom of heaven is like...” Notice, for example, in **Matthew 13**, Jesus uses this phrase seven times. In the space below, write down the things that Jesus compared the kingdom of heaven to.

13:24

13:31

13:33

13:44

13:45

13:47

13:52

Now, back in **Luke 18**, this parable is more about contrasts than comparisons. What are some of the words or phrases that Jesus used to describe the judge to whom the poor widow went for help?

What point was Jesus making about the nature of God and the power of prayer?

Luke says the purpose of this parable was so that disciples of Jesus would always pray and not give up. What do you think is the connection between praying and not giving up?

There is a phrase at the end of the parable that may seem out of place. Why do you think Jesus concludes this particular parable with this question: “However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?”

Please read and summarize the following scriptures that all speak to the power of prayer.
2 Chronicles 7:14

Matthew 7:7-11

James 5:13-18

Weekly Challenge

One could make the case that this parable teaches that there is a direct connection between having faith and spending time in prayer. Jesus' purpose in telling this story was to convince us that we should always pray and not give up. How would you describe the current state of your prayer life? Make a plan for how you can spend some extra quiet time this week talking to your loving, Heavenly Father. Come to the group time this week ready to share how you spent this time and what that experience was like.

Group Discussion

If you spent some extra time this week in prayer, please share how you did so and what that experience was like.

Has there ever been something that you prayed for or about for a long period of time? Please share what it was you were praying about and why. Has that situation been resolved? Have you seen the prayer answered?

To what extent does your current prayer life reflect the nature of your faith?

What are some things that you have found that help your prayer life? For example, do you follow any plan when you pray? Do you ever pray passages or scripture? Do you ever keep a journal in which you write down the things you pray about? Please share with the group anything that you've tried that you found helpful.

Was there anything else in this week's teaching or reading that you wanted to discuss?

For your group prayer time this week, be sure to invite everyone to respond to this question: "What is one thing going on in your life right now that we can join in praying about?"