# **ALWAYS PRAY AND NOT GIVE UP**

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# Luke 18:1-8

Key verse 1

“Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up.”

**Introduction**



At today’s passage, Jesus taught us to pray always and not give up. Prayer is not pressing God to do what we want or what we desire. It is a process of acknowledging His power and plan for our lives. In prayer, we commit our lives and circumstances to God, trust Him to do His will in His way and in His time. May the Lord bless our Bible study based on this passage so that we may learn how to offer daily prayer and pray sincerely throughout this year for your glory. Amen.

1. Read verse 1. To whom does Jesus tell this parable? What does Jesus want them to do?

1-1, Read verse 1.

Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up.

1-2, To whom does Jesus tell this parable?

***Then Jesus told his disciples a parable***

* During the later time of Jesus’ ministry, he concentrated on his disciples teaching them many things. Especially, Jesus wanted to teach his disciples how to pray.
* He knew that he was going to leave them, and they really needed to learn how to build their relationship with God through prayer.

1-3, What does Jesus want them to do?

***to show them that they should always pray and not give up.***

* The word, “should” indicates that praying always is not easy nor natural. It is challenging to do so, for there are almost always some obstacles in the way.
* Jesus knew that they would have obstacles. They would pray with sincerity but give up easily.
* What made us to give up instead of praying persistently. There might be two reasons. We might give up when we depend on people or circumstances.
* Also we might give up praying when we lack trust in God’s love and His promise. Let’s listen to Jesus’ parable of the persistent widow.

2. Read verses 2-5. Describe the judge in this parale? (2) What was the widow’s plea to the judge? (3) What made him decide to give her justice? (4-5)?

2-1, Read verses 2-5.

**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!’”

2-2, Describe the judge in this parale? (2)

***2 He said: “In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared what people thought.***

* This judge does not fear God, which means he would do whatever he wants. He must have thought that he is above laws, for he knew how to interpret laws for his interest. He might even do evil and still feel fine.
* He also would not care about men; whatever others would think of him and have no sympathy but was totally self-centered.
* This unjust judge would sentence any case for his own benefit without concerning justice for another human being. He must have looked for money making cases.
* Unlike today, at that time a judge was appointed by king or governor. So you have no choice but to live under this horrible judge.
* How terrible it would be living under this kind of unjust judge? You would try to avoid him as much as you can.
* Why might Jesus have used this kind of terrible judge in His parable? It is because we have all been in a similar situation where we are under the authority of someone like this in this unfair world in many ways.
* Being under this kind of judge makes us lose our desire to do something noble and good for God. We don’t want to pray thinking it is worthless and a waste of our time.

2-3, What was the widow’s plea to the judge? (3)

***3 And there was a widow in that town***

* There was an unfortunate widow who was sentenced by this judge. Even if she was right, there was no chance for her to seek justice.
* Obviously, the widow had limited resources and the judge granted the adversary victory. Therefore, she lost the case even though she was right.
* There was no way for the widow to appeal or get justice under this judge. Most people would like to take revenge in their own way.
* Why might Jesus have used the widow in this parable? It is because she was in the worst circumstances.
* At the time of Jesus, a widow is treated like an orphan, who needs help from the community, for both were under privileged with very limited resources.
* So when the widow lost the case, she had nothing to depend on; no social security, no welfare, or even Medicare.
* Often, we depend on the things of the world more than God. When we do so, we cannot pray persistently.

***who kept coming to him with the plea, ‘Grant me justice against my adversary.’***

* Now she has only one choice left. It was to keep coming to him with the plea day and night.
* Where he went, she followed him and said, “Grant me justice against my adversary.”
* He must have had a professional meeting with other judges or his other clients, she was shouting, “Grant me justice against my adversary.”
* When he had to have a rest, the widow came and said, “Grant me justice against my adversary.”
* She was desperate and there was no other way but this persistent way. She was at least confident that what she was doing was right and convinced that the judge would know the fact that she was right. That’s why she kept doing it.
* This shows us that we need confidence in our prayers. When our prayer topic aligns with the promised word of God, we will receive the confidence from God.
* When we pray for one to one and world mission, it is obviously the will of God that everyone should be saved. If so, we should pray persistently like the widow.

* We also need such a desperate heart. Without it, we will give up our prayer topics sooner or later.
* Maybe we only feel urgent for prayers of our own interest like the widow in this passage. Granted, but concerning another person’s salvation, maybe we would not feel that urgent or desperate.
* Only when we have the same heart of God, who wants everyone to be saved, we will pray with urgency and a desperate heart.
* May God give us the heart of God so that we can pray for another person’s soul with a desperate heart. Amen.
* If we do not absolutely believe that only God will be able to answer our prayer, we are going to pray half heartedly.
* We may expect someone to resolve my problem. Then, we are not really praying to God. We would not recognize God although our prayer is answered.
* May God help us to know that God is the only person, not someone else, who will answer our prayer so that we do not give up and pray persistently.

2-4, What made him decide to give her justice? (4-5)?

***“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!’”***

* The judge refused for awhile, thinking that she would give up soon just like all others. But this widow was different. She kept coming again and again. He could not take it any longer. He basically surrendered at last.
* Finally, he decided, saying, “I will see that she gets justice, so that she won’t eventually wear me out with her coming!”
* He mentioned that she would attack me. It means that he was haunted by her and her persistent attitude and bothered greatly.

3. Read verses 6-8. How is God different from this judge (6-8a)? What does Jesus want us to have when Jesus comes again (8b)? How does never giving up in prayer reveal faith?

3-1, Read verses 6-8.

**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?”

3-2, How is God different from this judge (6-8a)?

***6 And the Lord said, “Listen to what the unjust judge says.***

* Let’s listen to the judge. Not because he feared God or people, but he was sick of seeing her, he decided to grant her request.
* Jesus wanted his disciples to get the point. That was her persistent request that was paid off in the end. In other words, if we pray always and not give up, God will answer our prayer.

***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.***

* Even this unjust judge would grant the widow’s request for his selfish reason, how much more our God will answer prayers for his chosen people who cry out to him day and night like this widow.
* Jesus focused on who our Father in Heaven is like. Matthew 7:11 reads, “If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!”
* God is our Father in heaven who will listen to our prayers and give the good gifts for His glory and for our ultimate good.
* Get justice and quickly - It means that God has no reason to delay and is ready to answer our prayer in no time. Justice, mercy and faithfulness is God’s trademark!

3-3, What does Jesus want us to have when Jesus comes again (8b)?

***However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?”***

* When we do not have faith, we become impatient. We set our time and when God does not answer on our time, we give up.
* Sometimes, God’s time might be quicker than our time, but most of the time God’s time is not quicker than ours.
* When people do not have faith in God, they do not have faith in God’s promise, they depend on something else; such as people and circumstances.
* When people disappear and disappoint, so does their faith. And faith rides a roller coaster according to circumstances.
* Most people give up when it seems humanly impossible. That’s why Jesus said, “However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?”

3-4, How does never giving up in prayer reveal faith?

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 reads,

“Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”

* We can be thankful when joyful things are at present. But the Bible says, “Be thankful in all circumstances.” To be honest, we cannot naturally do them, especially at the time of sorrow. But we can prayerfully find thanksgiving topics.
* When we pray to find what God has done, God will open our hearts and eyes to see God’s bigger picture drawn not by anyone but by his hands and most importantly by the word of promise.
* Then we may be able to find thanksgiving topics and pray to know God’s guidance more. We may be able to pray always, seeking God in hard circumstances. Thus we build our relationship with God as a child and the Father.
* May the Lord increase our personal faith in terms of putting into practice persistent prayer so as to please our Lord Jesus who is coming soon!

**Conclusion**

When we look back on our life of prayer, God answered all our prayers when we found them through the word of God. All other prayer topics we even do not remember them. May God bless us to find prayer topics that come from the word of God and pray persistently, not giving up. May the Lord help each of us to be joyful with many thanks and come to him like His children in this new year 2019. Amen.

**One word: Pray always, not giving up**