

Parable of the Persistent Widow

(Luke 18:1-8)

Background:

A widow had an unresolved legal issue with an adversary. She apparently lacked family support and the finances to hire an attorney – she was desperate. Out of her desperation she persistently appealed for justice from an ungodly judge who neither feared God nor cared about people. But because of the widow’s persistence he finally relented and gave the widow what she sought.

Key characters and elements:

- **Widow.** She is the unlikely hero of the story. She was likely poor, lacked family support, was looked down upon by society, and was desperate – she was the “picture of vulnerability”.
- **Adversary.** Sketchy details (know very little about him).
- **Unrighteous Judge.** This judge didn’t fear God or care about people. He didn’t care about justice and didn’t want to be bothered by the widow.

Contrast of the Unrighteous Judge versus our loving God the Father (Gal 4:4-7; I John 3:1-3):

<u>Judge</u>	<u>God</u>
Unloving/uncaring	Loving & caring
Unjust	Just
No relationship	Intimate relationship (part of His family)
Poor listener	Listens
Acted selfishly	Acts on behalf of his children

Key Learning’s:

- “We should always pray and not give up” (verse 1).
- As God’s dearly loved children, we should persistently pray and not give up until we get a final answer from God. A loving God is far more likely to respond positively to the perseverance of His people than any unloving man.
- God will act on our behalf.
- Persistent prayer for what is important is appropriate for believers.
- By referring to His second coming, Jesus links concept of judgment to the Day of Judgment, where justice will be handed out (Acts 10:42; 2 Cor 5:10). There will be justice some day.
- We need to be ready for Jesus return (refer to “Parable of the Ten Virgins”).

Other Relevant Scriptures:

Luke 11:5-13

I Thes 1:2-3

I Thes 3:10

Rev 6:9-11

Jesus said if we ask anything in His name, He will do it (John 14:13-14, 16:23). What if we don't get everything we ask for? Does the Bible give some conditions to the promise of Jesus? Yes -- our prayers may not be answered because:

- 1) Our request is outside the will of God (I John 5:14).
- 2) We have wrong motives (James 4:3).
- 3) We are not abiding in Christ and His words (John 15:7; Ps 37:4).
- 4) We are not bearing spiritual fruit (John 15:16).
- 5) We do not keep His commands and do what pleases Him (I John 3:21-22).
- 6) We have unconfessed and cherished sin in our life (Ps 32:1-5, 66:18; Is 59:1-2).
- 7) We have an unforgiving spirit (Mark 11:25).
- 8) We lack faith (James 1:6; Matthew 21:21-22; Mark 11:22-24).
- 9) We lack persistence (Luke 11:5-10, 18:1-8).
- 10) A husband's prayers can be hindered due to lack of respect for his wife (I Peter 3:7).