

the first time. Instead, we should pray repeatedly because God loves our dependence on Him.

- 2) We must *not faint*. In other words, we must not become weary of praying. *We must not lose heart in praying.*
 - a) We may lose heart if we do not understand God's character and knowledge. Remember that God is loving and fair, He knows all things, and His timing is always perfect.
 - b) When God delays in answering a prayer, it is never to give us more time to change God's mind, but for Him to have time to change us.
 - c) Sadly, we often knock at God's door and then walk away before He opens the door. (Psalms 27:14) "*Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.*"

c. What are the core truths in the context?

- 1) There are many injustices in this world. H.L. Mencken wisely said, "*Injustice is relatively easy to bear; what stings is justice.*" *Prejudices*
- 2) Justice is coming! In God's good timing, He will rapture all true Christians and bring the Tribulation judgment on this earth. Then, after the Millennium will be the final Judgment Day.
- 3) As believers, we can pray for God's justice, but we must be patient. Our duty is to keep praying and not get weary as we pray.

Conclusion: *We must not lose heart when we pray.* God is not unjust like the judges of our corrupt world. His character, knowledge, justice, and timing are perfect.

If you have been praying about a hurtful situation, an injustice, an unfair situation, the COVID pandemic, or just about the increase of wickedness in our world, *do not lose heart*. Keep on praying. God is listening. He cares. When the time is right, He will deal with every situation justly and fairly. Judgment Day is coming.

If you have not yet trusted the Lord to save you from damnation on Judgment Day, you need to do so right away. Time is running out!

Song: Tell It to Jesus, **347**

Pray without Losing Heart

25 July 2021 AM – Luke 17:20-18:8 – Parables21 – Scott Childs

Introduction: During World War II, when the bombing was so intense on the City of London, a sign appeared in front of one of the churches in London that read, "*If your knees knock together, kneel on them!*" That is practically a restatement of what our Lord has said, "*Men ought always to pray, and not to faint.*" J.V. McGee on Luke 18

We live in troubled times. COVID is troubling. World and national politics are troubling. Families are troubled. Marriages are troubled. We have personal burdens. Instead of worrying, God wants us to be praying without losing heart. How can we keep praying and not lose heart?

Transition: As we study this parable, there are *three things that we must carefully note* in order to learn to pray without losing heart.

First, we must note ...

1. The Context

a. Jesus had been talking about future events

- 1) In Luke 17, the Pharisees questioned Jesus about the kingdom of God (17:20). He said that the kingdom of God is *within you* or in their midst. **He** was the King of the kingdom; however, they did not believe Him to be the Messiah (17:21). Because of their unbelief, the Kingdom would not come *literally, physically* and *visibly at that time*. *The Words and Works of Jesus Christ, Pentecost, p. 349*
- 2) Jesus then turned and addressed his disciples (17:22). When Christ does come to set up His Kingdom, He will come like lightning, suddenly and visible (17:24). However, before that day, He would suffer and be rejected of that generation (17:25). Also before that day, there would be a time of judgment (i.e., the Tribulation).
- 3) Christ will rescue believers before that Judgment. We call that the *Rapture*. Jesus compared the Rapture and Tribulation to the days of **Noah** and **Lot**. Both were righteous men among wicked unbelievers, and God rescued them before judgment came (17:26-30). As a sombre reminder, Jesus said that they must "*Remember*

Lot's wife" who lingered and looked back at Sodom and died (17:32).

- 4) At the **Rapture**, some will be taken to be with the Lord and others will be left behind for tribulation judgment (17:34-35).

b. His parable was in this prophetic context

- 1) It was in this future event context that Jesus gave the parable before us this morning.
- 2) At the end of Luke 18:8, Jesus connected His parable to his previous future event message.
 - a) God wants us to have faith in Him. Faith is the distinguishing mark of a true Christian.
 - b) "Thus Christ taught that people should keep on praying for the establishment of the kingdom despite its postponement." Pentecost 352

Second, we must note ...

2. The Contrast

In Jesus' parable about the widow who kept asking for justice, she depicts the need for God's people to keep praying for His justice in this wicked world. In the parable, Jesus **contrasts** two judges, an earthly judge and God, the heavenly Judge. It is essential that we understand that He was **contrasting**, **not comparing**. Jesus was not saying that God is like the harsh earthly judge. He was saying that God is **opposite** to the harsh earthly judge.

a. Jesus described the harsh earthly judge

- 1) He had no fear of God. He ignored God's standard of justice. He did what was right in his own eyes. He was unjust.
- 2) He had no regard for man. He showed no respect for anyone but himself.
 - a) He had no love for others. He was hard-hearted.
 - b) He was selfish and very self-centred.
- 3) A widow **kept on coming** to him asking him to avenge her adversary. She was asking for justice. For a time he selfishly refused to help the widow.
- 4) He finally gave her justice because the widow **caused him trouble** (he felt beaten up).

- 5) He wanted her coming to end lest it should make him feel **weary** or literally beaten black and blue (v.5).

b. Jesus contrasted our tender heavenly Judge

- 1) God always does what is **just** and **right**. (Psalms 119:137) "*Righteous art thou, O LORD, and upright are thy judgments.*"
- 2) God **loves all** those who come to Him for help. In fact, He encourages us to come to Him for help. (Psalms 55:22) "*Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.*" (Matthew 11:28) "*Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*"
- 3) When God delays answering a prayer for help, it is never because He does not care. It is rather because He knows **what is best** and **when it is best** (Isaiah 55:8-9).
- 4) God does not answer our prayers just because we are troubling him by coming to him repeatedly. Instead, He is **more generous** than a loving father is to his son who asks for help. (Luke 11:11) "*If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?*"
- 5) The earthly judge felt beaten up by the widow who would not stop coming to him for help. On the contrary, God **encourages** us to cast all our cares on Him. (1 Peter 5:7) "*Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.*" (James 4:2) "*... yet ye have not, because ye ask not.*"

Third, we must note ...

3. The Core Truths of the Passage

a. What are the core truths about God?

- 1) God's **righteous character** makes Him always loving and fair.
- 2) God's **unlimited knowledge** enables His timing to be perfect every time.

b. What are the core truths about our duty?

- 1) We must always pray. Pray repeatedly. (1 Thessalonians 5:17) "*Pray without ceasing.*" We must never pray repeatedly because we think God must not have heard us