

# 40 Days of Prayer

## Persistence In Prayer

### Luke 18:1-8

One of the greatest struggles in prayer is unmet expectations

## Understanding This Parable

Purpose of the parable (vs. 1)

### A Parable of Contrasts:

- The powerless widow with the unjust judge
- Persevering prayer with giving up
- An unjust judge with our just and loving God
- The powerless widow with God's chosen ones

## Applying This Parable

Just because God hasn't said "yes" yet doesn't mean that God has not answered our prayers.

### 1. If the request is wrong, God says

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Biblical Examples: Moses, Paul, Jesus

God is too \_\_\_\_\_ and too \_\_\_\_\_ to say "yes" to an inappropriate request.

*"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isaiah 55:8-9)*

## 2. If the timing is wrong, God says

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Biblical Example: Mary, Martha and Lazarus (John 11)

God's \_\_\_\_\_ are not necessarily  
God's \_\_\_\_\_

### In the midst of a delay, God may:

- \_\_\_\_\_ us closer to Himself
- \_\_\_\_\_ us to modify our request
- \_\_\_\_\_ character qualities within us

## 3. If I am wrong, God says \_\_\_\_\_

### A checklist for growth:

- How \_\_\_\_\_ is my praying?

*"You do not have, because you do not ask."*  
(James 4:2)

- What is my \_\_\_\_\_?

*"You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions."*  
(James 4:3)

- Am I trying to make prayer a \_\_\_\_\_  
for thinking or working?

*"And we prayed to our God and set a guard as a protection against them day and night."*  
(Nehemiah 4:9)

We must \_\_\_\_\_ prayer and work without \_\_\_\_\_ them

- Is there any \_\_\_\_\_ in my life that needs to be dealt with?

*“but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear.”*  
(Isaiah 59:2)

- How are my \_\_\_\_\_ with others?

*“Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.”* (1 Peter 3:7)

- Am I praying in \_\_\_\_\_?

*“But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.”* (James 1:6-8)

**Caution:** Every seemingly unanswered prayer is not a sign of sin or unbelief!

#### **4. If the request is right; If the timing is right; and if I am right, God says**

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Biblical Example: Elijah

*“Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. Elijah was a man with a nature like ours,*

*and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. Then he prayed again, and heaven gave rain, and the earth bore its fruit.” (James 5:16-18)*

God delights in answering the prayers of His children

**In the face of unanswered prayers, we have two options:**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Making It Personal**

- Am I truly a child of God through faith in the perfect provision of Jesus Christ for my sin and separation from God?
- What misconceptions have I been believing about God? How has this impacted my practice of and persistence in prayer?
- Where is God calling me to not lose heart and to demonstrate my trust in Him through persistent prayer?
- Where is God showing me I need to grow through the Scripture and prayer?
- Who can I share these truths with?