

## Persistence in Prayer

**Colossians 4:2 Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.**

The Question becomes: Why do I have to ask more than one time?

**Luke 11:5-13** <sup>5</sup> And He said to them, "Which of you shall have a friend, and go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves; <sup>6</sup> for a friend of mine has come to me on his journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; <sup>7</sup> and he will answer from within and say, 'Do not trouble me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give to you'? <sup>8</sup> I say to you, though he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will rise and give him as many as he needs. <sup>9</sup> "So I (Jesus) say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. <sup>10</sup> For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. <sup>11</sup> If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if *he asks* for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? <sup>12</sup> Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? <sup>13</sup> If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"

- Jesus saw persistence as such an important thing that he gives us not 1 but 2 parables.

**Luke 18:1-8** Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart. <sup>2</sup> saying: "There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man. <sup>3</sup> Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, 'Get justice for me from my adversary.'<sup>4</sup> And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, 'Though I do not fear God nor regard man, <sup>5</sup> yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.'"<sup>6</sup> Then the Lord said, "Hear what the unjust judge said. <sup>7</sup> And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? <sup>8</sup> I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?"

- What is the variable in both of these stories that we have read this morning?
- Persistence!

Persistent prayers keep us focused on God!

- When you are praying something over and over, where is your attention?

- Think of it like this:
  - Your attention is your time.
  - The greatest gift you can give a person is your attention.
  - Your Wife, Your Children
  - Because your attention is your time and your time is your life
  - Giving someone your attention is the highest gift you can give.
- **Psalm 25:15 says: I continually look to the Lord for help, for he will free my feet from the enemy's net. (NET)**

Why do people give up asking?

- Don't believe their cause is righteous?
- Don't believe them selves to be righteous?
- Maybe what I am asking is just my selfish desire and not the will of God.
- Don't believe it is God's will.

**Don't allow the silence to speak louder than God.**

- We stop praying because we can't see any tangible difference with our natural eyes.
- We allow our circumstances to get between us and God instead of putting God between us and our circumstances.
- Just because you have not received your answer doesn't mean stop praying.

**Again, Why persistence?**

**1. Praying persistently tests my desires.**

- Answers the question: What do I really want
- As you are praying, over time, your prayer may shift more from what you want to what God wants.
- Maybe you see what is needed more clearly.

**2. Persistent prayers show the difference between a whim and a deep desire.**

- I can think, I really need something but over time, realize it was more of a want than a need.
- If it is a whim, the prayer will dissipate over time.
  - **Psalm 37:4 Take delight in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart.**

**3. Praying persistently tests my priorities.**

- What is most important to me?
- If you are not praying about something, it must not be important to you.
- We tend to worry about the things that are most important to us.
- Take those worries and turn them into prayers!

- Worry changes nothing, Prayer can change anything!

**Hebrews 4:16 - "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."**

**Bold prayers honor God, and God honors bold prayers.**

- God is offended by anything less.
- If your prayers are not impossible to you, they are insulting to God.
- Who you become is determined by how you pray.