

Grow Group Sermon Summary and Discussion Guide

Speaker: Pastor CJ

Title: To Pray Persistently

Series: Teach Us To Pray

Text: Luke 18:1-7

- The act of prayer itself is to step into fellowship with God
- To pray was modelled to us throughout the Bible, especially in the New Testament, and by Jesus, who constantly stopped what he was doing or physically stepped away from others to commune with the Father
- However, Jesus also teaches us what it means to pray persistently and not lose heart
 - Luke 18:1-7, the parable of the persistent widow, is an example of this
- Her story teaches us that there is power in pushing through hardship
- Her story reveals who the Father is by showing us who He is not in how the unrighteous judge acted and viewed the world
- The widow, someone who was powerless in her context, decided to persist and not let her circumstances dictate the rest of her life
- Time and time again, the Bible tells us how much the Father loves us (humanity) and cares for us. We see this on the cross, with Jesus' death and resurrection. We're even reminded of it at the end of our passage (v7), but the Bible also teaches us that the way that God will respond will not always look like the way we would expect Him to or would want Him to.
- Our prayers, especially when we pray for the same things with persistence, no matter how long it takes, change our hearts and our minds.
- As we continue to enter into fellowship with Him and His Spirit, we are also allowing ourselves to be reformed by His love for us and the world.
- To pray persistently is to believe that God will move. It is to hold on to the belief that He will respond, but maybe not in the way we were asking for.
- And as we pray persistently and draw closer to God, we are also allowing ourselves to participate in the work of God in the world.
- It turns into an invitation for us to respond to Him and His ministry through His people and the rest of creation.

Discussion Guide

1. Have someone pray before you begin and ask God to give you understanding as you study His word.
2. Icebreaker – What's something you tend to give up on quickly and something you usually stick with?
3. Read Luke 18:1-7
 - a. What stood out to you? Why?
 - i. This does not always have to be an answer; it can be a question or concern that can be discussed and answered by other people in your group.
4. Why do you think Jesus chose a widow and an unrighteous judge for this story?
5. One of the things Pastor CJ talked about is the reality of the widow's powerlessness. What do you think that was like for her?
 - a. Keep in mind that it is also very likely that because the widow had to demand justice herself, her 'adversary' might be the same people (male relatives) that was supposed to be there for her.
6. The passage talks about the actions taken by the widow to persist through her circumstances. What are some steps you can take to pray persistently and not lose heart or give up on what you were asking of God?
7. How is faith connected to persistence in prayer?
8. What kind of prayers are hardest for you to keep praying consistently?
9. How does this passage challenge or encourage your view of God?
10. Has God ever answered a persistent prayer in your life – either yes, no, or wait? What did you learn from it?
11. What is one takeaway from this passage that you want to live out this week?
12. How can this group encourage you or one another to remain faithful in prayer?
 - a. Take some time at the end to pray for each other.