

PERSISTANT IN PRAYER

Greetings precious people, this week we will look at the need for persistence in prayer. For sure there are many important aspects to prayer such as consistency; praying God's will rather than my selfish will; praying with the right heart/motive; etc. but today we will limit ourselves to persistence.

To begin with, let's make sure we understand what prayer is and is not from a Biblical standpoint. Prayer is not praying/asking God for my will to be done. God is not a puppet or cosmic genie waiting for me to give the command and then grant me my every wish. Nor is He some cruel sadistic powerful being that likes to see me suffer and squirm before he thinks about answering my prayers.

Prayer is seeking and finding what the will of God is and then praying in accordance with His will, in faith and seeing God work for His glory and my good. Prayer is also pouring out my heart to Him trusting Him that He hears and cares and will act upon my request at just the right time and way.

Why then is there the need for persistence in prayer? One reason is to keep me focused on God rather than that which I am praying about. Jesus gave a number of teachings to illustrate the importance of persistent prayer. In Luke 18:1-8 we read, "Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart, saying: "There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man. Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, 'Get justice for me from my adversary.' And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, 'Though I do not fear God nor regard man, yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.'" Then the Lord said, "Hear what the unjust judge said. And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?"

A parable is a true to life story that has a spiritual truth. Jesus often used parables in His teachings so that those that wanted to understand could and those that had no desire to understand would ignore it.

The first thing that stands out in these verses is that Jesus begins by giving the reason for which He gave the parable: "that men always ought to pray and not lose heart". God knows us better than we know ourselves, He knows that we often become discouraged and give up too easily, so this is to encourage His followers to persevere.

As you read through this parable, do not make the same mistake that many make and that is to equate God with the unjust judge or to think that if you "bug" God enough, He will give you what you want. Neither of these false assumptions is what Jesus is getting at. He is simply illustrating by human example the importance of persistent prayer.

I like the true story I heard years ago of a man that sold everything he owned to buy a piece of land in Colorado. He had made many surveys and studies of this land and was convinced from his research that this land was the site of one of the richest gold mines in the world. Upon receiving ownership of the land he spent years digging and mining hoping to find a rich vein of gold. He finally became weary and discouraged and gave up. Another man bought the property from him and after digging just a few yards further struck the richest vein of gold in the USA. Just a few feet more!

Without doubt, years of praying without seeing any results can be discouraging, I have suffered from discouragement many times. But God in His rich grace has encouraged me to continue on to seek Him and trust Him to work and He has never failed. God is faithful dear ones.

I want to encourage you to continue to bring before the Lord that which is troubling you, trusting Him to work in the situation. Make sure that you are seeking His will and not your own and trust Him with the outcome.

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