

**Luke 18.1-8 (NIV)**  
**Keep On Praying!**

**West Baptist Church**  
**12<sup>th</sup> February 2017**

<sup>1</sup> Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. <sup>2</sup> He said: “In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared what people thought. <sup>3</sup> And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, ‘Grant me justice against my adversary.’

<sup>4</sup> “For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, ‘Even though I don’t fear God or care what people think, <sup>5</sup> yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won’t eventually come and attack me!’”

<sup>6</sup> And the Lord said, “Listen to what the unjust judge says. <sup>7</sup> And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off?

<sup>8</sup> I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?”

**Introduction:**

In the story of two Kachin women, these two women had been serving for Kachin Baptist Convention’s Literature Mission Project from 2014-15. While these two women were killed by the Burmese soldiers, but there was no evidence, and so people haven’t found the exact murders of these two women.

Since, these two women died, many faithful Kachin Christians have been praying for the truth to come out about what happened to them. This faithful Christian group just couldn’t understand why? Because they have been praying for this for days, weeks, months, even for two years it was taking so long.

But until today, they haven’t got any result yet. They won’t give up and won’t stop praying. Why? Well, in our Scripture this morning here’s a woman whose prayer isn’t answered, so she just keeps on pestering the judge until she gets what she wants.

**Firstly**, so what’s this story saying?

See, nagging works. Keep on long enough and in the end you get what you want. Let’s have a look in Jesus’ parable. In it, there are two main characters, and the entire parable focuses on the interaction between these two characters:

- The first character is the judge who is the one with all the power in this story. But, in this parable, Jesus tells us about the judge who doesn’t fear God and doesn’t respect what people think either.
- The second character we can see in this parable is a widow, the place of the widows in the ancient world is a situation that maybe like no other situation. They were

vulnerable, poor and powerless. Because of that they needed justice, protection and help.

As the words of Psalm says, God is the “*protector of widows....*” So, the widows need God’s justice, protection and help. The widow in this parable has an adversary and can’t solve her own problem. She needs protection and help, so she keeps telling her problems to this unjust judge, who doesn’t fear God or respect man.

But the widow doesn’t give up and keeps coming and keeps bothering him to the end until she gets what she wants. And so it’s like that with prayer. If you keep on badgering God long enough he’ll give you what you want in the end.

**Secondly**, no, it isn’t, says Jesus. No way!

God is not at all like the judge.

Look at what they say about him!

**a) The Judge doesn’t care about justice.**

He doesn’t fear God or care what people think.

Back in the Old Testament when a king was appointing judges he told them: “*Consider carefully what you do because you are not judging for mere morals, but for the Lord. Judge carefully for with the Lord our God there is no injustice, or partiality, or bribery*” (2 Chronicles 19:6-8).

This is a judge who cares nothing for all that. He doesn’t even worry about what people think. He is a judge – without justice.

But God isn’t like this. “*And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones.*” Sure, he will, because he is a God of justice.

**b) The judge has no sympathy.**

What concerns him is not the widow’s problem but his own comfort and safety. The widow annoys him. She is a nuisance, she’s like a mosquito that keeps coming back. The judge finally grants her request not because it’s the right thing to do, but so that he can get some peace. This judge is without sympathy for others.

But God isn’t like this. “*who cry out to him day and night?*” No, he has sympathy, he cares for people. Look at what Jesus said in the gospel,

“*Would any of you who are fathers*

*When your son asks for a fish, give him a snake?*

*Or when he asks for an egg, give him a scorpion?*” (Luke 11:11-12)

God is caring, and concerning for his people like your father.

**c) The judge is slow to act.**

He does what he should, but only after a long time, only after the widow has come again and again.

But God isn't like this. He is not slow to act. *"Will he keep putting them off?*  
No, he is quick and on time - his timing is just and perfect.  
As Paul reminds us in 2 Peter 3:8,

*"But do not overlook this one fact, beloved,  
that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years,  
and a thousand years as one day."*

We can see here, God's time is not our time,

His clock is not set our clocks. His "quickly" is not our quickly.

So, he will act for us, and quickly on the right time of his timing.

**Thirdly**, we hear this Scripture and what we're left with is a puzzle.

*God is not like the judge. He's on our side. He doesn't need to be nagged. But at the same time this story is all about encouraging us to keep on praying and not to give up.*

Let's look at verse 1, *"Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up."* So what's the answer? The answer's at the end of verse 8 *"But will the Son of Man find faith on the earth when he comes?"*

The Son of Man is Jesus's cover name for himself and when he comes, he will find people of faith only if we are still in praying.

So let's do some hard thinking. Prayer, we say, is talking to God, telling him our needs and what we would like to happen. And so it is (Phil 4.6) *"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."*

Here Paul insists, what things are happening in our life, keep on in prayer, and give thanks to God for what he has done in our life. Because one day, our situations will pass and our circumstances will change.

But at a deeper level, prayer is not about us and what we want. It's about God and what he wants. What we are doing in prayer is bringing ourselves into line with what God is doing.

Said an old Christian saint: *"...Prayer is merely the word we use to describe the practical way we go about allowing God's love to enter our lives to change us..."*

When we pray, we enter the heart of God and the door is Jesus Christ. When we come before God, he will willingly open his heart through Jesus Christ.

If we draw close to him, he will draw close to us. Jesus himself reminds us that prayer is a little like children coming to their parents. We are the children of God. So, we can pray anytime and anywhere.

