Empowering Prayer: Persistence

Luke 18:1-8

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Luke 18:1-8: Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. [2] He said: "In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared what people thought. [3] And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, 'Grant me justice against my adversary.' [4] "For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or care what people think, [5] yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won't eventually come and attack me!'" [6] And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. [7] 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? [8] 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?" (NIV)

Our Vision: Connect with Christ, Church, and Community

1. _____ the power of persistent prayer

_____ empowerment: Despite distractions and the clamor of the crowd, Jesus got up before dawn and found a quiet place to pray. Jesus understood the power of prayer. But Peter and the disciples were tracking him down… Mark 1:35-36a (JOT)

_____ clarity: Persistent prayer is the path to enduring faith! It enables us not to give up….Everyone who exalts themselves in the presence of God will be humbled, and all those who humble themselves will be exalted! Luke 18:8, 14b (JOT)

2. _____ the disciplines of unrelenting prayer

_____ power: And there was a widow who was being threatened by overwhelming forces. The situation was unjust and unfair but she relentlessly asked for things to be set right and refused to give up! Luke 18:3 (JOT)

_____ change: But because this widow won't quit badgering me, I'd better do something and see that she gets justice—otherwise, I'm going to end up beaten black and blue by her pounding…So what makes you think God won't step in…. Luke 18:5, 7 (MSG)

_____ hope: Learn this lesson about praying and not giving up: God will bring justice and change because of your continuous prayers! God will always respond quickly to your prayer and he will give a patient hope. Remember the fruit of the Holy Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience…. Luke 18:7 (JOT)

3. _____ to the power of persistence

_____ renewal: We do not lose heart, even though on the outside it looks as if all is lost and we want to give up, but in our hearts is another reality that renews us, restores us, and gives us a peaceful rest from our troubles day by day. 2 Corinthians 4:16 (JOT)

Spiritual Action Step:

Where is God calling you to persistently pray? Where in your life are you giving up or giving in? Where are you living in despair? Isaiah the prophet said, *Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near.* (Isaiah 55:6, NIV). God wants to come closer to your heart and spirit. All you have to do is ask. Seek and you will find. Knock and the door will be opened to you. Humble yourself by seeking God's help and strength. The only other alternative may be giving up or losing heart! This week continue to say the Lord's Prayer daily and read Luke 18, and Isaiah 55 to be encouraged and strengthened by the power of the Holy Spirit!

Translations: NIV: New International Version; JOT: Jon's Own Translation; MSG: The Message.