

Palm Sunday ~ Sunday, March 25, 2018

“A House of Prayer ~ Persistent Prayer”

Luke 18:1-8

Persist = “to stand or be _____; to continue steadfastly and _____ in an opinion or course of action, in spite of difficulty, _____, or failure; to last or endure tenaciously; to not _____ or abandon.”

Persistence is the key to _____ prayer—it builds our _____; softens our _____; gives us an expectant _____; and positions us to _____.

“So I say to you ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.” (Luke 11:9-10)

PERSISTENCE IN PRAYER

“I call out to God, and the Lord saves me. Evening, morning, and noon I cry out in distress, and he hears me.” (Psalm 55:16-17)

“Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with thanksgiving.” (Colossians 4:2)

“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)

Never give up = *ekkakeo* =

The opposite of persistent prayer =

We’re either _____—we’re either _____ God and are moving _____ Him—or we’re _____ and moving _____ from Him.

“In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for people. In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying, ‘Grant me justice against my opponent.’” (Luke 18:1-2)

Judges were notorious for their _____ and greed. And unless a plaintiff had enough influence or money to _____ their way to a verdict, they had no hope of ever getting their case settled.

The widow, who was a symbol of all who were _____ and _____ in Jesus’ day. As hopeless as her situation was, she did have one weapon: _____.

Kept coming = *erchomai* indicates _____ action, suggesting that she begged him for help _____. In fact, the language leaves open the possibility of confrontation _____.

“For a while he refused; but later he said to himself, “Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone, yet because this woman keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming.”” (Luke 18:4)

The judge is finally moved to help the woman, not out of sense of _____ or compassion, but purely out of _____.

““Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry out to him day and night? Will he delay in helping?”” (Luke 18:6)

In a _____ parable, two things are said to be the _____—either explicitly or implicitly. In a _____ parable, two things are said to be _____.

Jesus _____ saying that God is like the judge. He isn’t saying that we have to continually pester God—that we have to beg, bribe, and bother Him—until He eventually gives in and answers our prayer. In fact, Jesus is saying the exact _____. If this corrupt, uncaring judge, who had no compassion at all, eventually gave into the woman's request, how much _____ will God who loves us so deeply, give us what is right, if we keep on crying out to Him?

2 BENEFITS OF PERSISTENT PRAYER

Benefit #1. It keeps our _____ focussed on God.

Our most valuable possession is our _____. When we pray about something over and over, we give God our attention—we show Him that He is _____.

“My eyes are continually looking to the Lord for help, for He alone can rescue me from all the traps.” (Psalm 25:15)

“Look to the Lord for his strength; seek his face constantly.” (Psalm 105:4)

Benefit #2. It _____ us about ourselves.

While we’re working on _____—God is working on _____.

“I will test and purify them as silver is purified by fire, then they will pray to me and I will answer.” (Zechariah 13:9)

God uses the fiery _____ of life to _____ and _____ us. The more God’s _____ can be seen in us, the more _____

have been burned out of our life. It's only then that our prayers can only be fully answered. If we give up praying, we'll never learn these _____ about ourselves.

3 LESSONS WE CAN LEARN WHEN WE PRAY PERSISTENTLY

Praying persistently tests my _____: What do I really _____?

When we pray persistently, all these desires start to _____ out and we can begin to get more _____ about which ones are good and which ones are bad. Persistent prayer also shows us the difference between a _____ and deep desire. If you ask God for something only _____, chances are, it's not a deep desire, but a whim or fancy.

“Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.” (Psalm 37:4)

God wants to give us our deepest desires; however, He wants us to _____ in Him first—to make sure He has _____ place in our lives, and everything else is second.

What are your deepest desires? Is God first in your life?

Praying persistently tests my _____: What is most _____ to me?

If I don't pray about it, chances are, it's not _____; and if I do pray about it, chances are it is. To put it another way, if it's not worth praying about _____, then it isn't a priority.

Worrying is really practical _____. What I mean by that is, when we worry, we're acting like we don't have a heavenly _____ who loves us and wants what's _____ for us.

If it's worth worrying about, it's worth _____ about. Worry all you want and it won't change _____; however, pray about all you want, and it will change _____. The next time you find yourself worrying, stop and _____ instead.

“Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:6-7)

“Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God

and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.” (Matthew 6:31-33)

is our first _____—and when our priorities are right, God will _____ our prayers.

“No good thing will the Lord withhold from those who do what is right.” (Psalm 84:11)

**What are your priorities? Are any of them out of order?
Do you spend more time worrying or praying?**

Persistent praying tests my _____: Where do I need to _____?

God wants to reveal our _____. He wants to show us the areas where we need to _____. And persistent prayer—coming to God over and over again—shows our level of spiritual _____.

A toddler is _____; a toddler doesn't know how to _____; and doesn't want to wait.

We live in a society that has to have it and has to have it _____—whether we need it or not; whether it's good for us or not; whether we can afford it or not.

Our heavenly Father knows what we _____ more than we do—that He knows _____ we need it; _____ we need it; and the _____ way to give it us—and is constantly working _____ the scenes. Maturity means that we know the difference between _____ and _____. He's far more interested in our _____ than our _____.

This life is only _____ for what's to come; and so, we shouldn't expect things to be _____. God wants to meet our needs, but He's more interested in growing us to become more like _____. One of Jesus' characteristics is patience. We learn patience by _____ and praying _____ even when we don't see _____ results.

When you're praying for a _____, are you willing to let God change _____ instead of just changing your _____? This is what's called the point of _____; and if we don't get to this point, we'll be less likely to experience breakthrough.

“Give yourself completely to God, to be used in the hands of God for his good purposes.” (Romans 6:13)

**Do you know the difference between delay and denial?
Are you willing to let God change you and make you more like Jesus?**