

To Whom Are You Praying?

Luke 18:1-14

Rich O'Toole

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I. A desperate woman and an uncaring judge. *Luke 18:1-3*

In this parable, we have a widow who has been cheated and has no one to _____ her with her problem.

- The Lord alone is the One who can fix our situation; He often solves the issue in a way that we would not _____.

II. The faith needed in prayer. *Luke 18:4-8*

The judge is stating that this widow continuing to come to him is like someone who keeps _____ him in the eye until they get what they want. (NASB *Luke 18:5*)

1. The actions of the widow.

To "*lose heart*" means to _____ or to anticipate a bad outcome for your situation.

2. The widow's persistency pays off.

As Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane pouring His heart out; _____ times He cried out to the Father until He finally felt the strength to be able to endure the cross.

3. The widow's _____ is displayed through perseverance.

In this parable, the widow _____ asks the judge to help her, rather than spending her time worrying about the issue.

III. Be authentic in prayer.

1. The Pharisee = the self proclaimed, _____ good guy.

Luke 18:9-12

The word Pharisee comes from the Hebrew word "*prushim*", which means to be separated unto a life of _____.

- The Greek verbiage used here in *Luke 18:11* for the word "*with*" means that the Pharisee was praying _____ himself.

2. The tax collector = the unreligious _____ guy. *Luke 18:13-14*

The proof that this man was actually praying to the Lord is shown by the way he is overwhelmed by God's _____.

3. Humility is needed in prayer.

When we come before the Lord in prayer, we are to be authentic, honest, _____ and have a contrite heart; and then the Lord will not refuse us.

Isaiah 6:1-5

Small Group Discussion

Looking back at your notes from this week's sermon, was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

1. Read *Luke 18:1-8*. Authenticity, faith, and persistency are all taught within this first parable. Discuss how these qualities help us trust the Lord more over time.
Philippians 4:6-7, 2 Timothy 2:13, Hebrews 11:6, Proverbs 3:5-6, Hebrews 4:12-13
2. Describe the differences and similarities between this uncaring judge and our loving Lord.
Romans 8:28, Genesis 50:20, 1 Peter 5:6-7, James 1:4-7
3. Read *Luke 18:9-14*. Discuss some of the main differences by which these men approached God. (for example: how they prayed, where they stood, posture, what was said)
4. *What are some areas in life where people tend to compare themselves to others? Why is it dangerous to compare yourself to those around you?*
5. In the Pharisee's prayer he focuses on his own accomplishments. *How do you stay focused on God's work in you instead of your achievements?* Discuss some healthy practices or habits you can do to keep the focus on God.
6. Read *Psalms 51:16-17*. This is King David's prayer of repentance. Take a few moments and discuss what you personally would write as a prayer of repentance.
7. Jesus gives a surprise ending to this story. Everyone thought the Pharisee was the righteous man. *In what ways does this parable impact your perspective on what it means to be righteous? How do people like to exalt themselves? What does this look like in the church and in prayer?*