

THE PARABLE OF THE PERSISTENT WIDOW

Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. He said,:

"In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared about men." V2

"And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, 'Grant me justice against my adversary.'

"For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or care about men, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won't eventually wear me out with her coming!'"

"And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. 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? 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." Luke 18:1-8

Parabolic language requires interpretation before application. Let's consider the symbolism of this important teaching on prayer by the Lord:

"IN A CERTAIN TOWN"

A specific location; a territory = dominion

- Stronghold of the enemy – a place where the enemy has taken up residence and is affecting and/or controlling people
- Stronghold of the Lord – a place where the presence of the Lord is operating and bringing freedom

"THERE WAS A JUDGE" – POSITION AND PRIVILEGE

The judge represents one in authority with judicial power; a person of influence; of power; authority; wealth; legitimacy to govern; keys of authority

"WHO NEITHER FEARED GOD NOR CARED ABOUT MEN"

No fear of God/No love - A specific person – a gatekeeper for the kingdom of darkness. An ungodly, unrighteous atmosphere into which the widow woman was thrust!

"THERE WAS A WIDOW"

The widow represents a person at the opposite end of a spectrum from the judge, whether one views this parable as temporal or spiritual.

The widow (particularly to the Jewish audience to whom the Lord would be speaking) represents someone with:

- Little or no influence, authority or power
- A person with limited, means of support;
- Alone - perhaps no family or friends;
- No future hope, afraid, sick, lonely?
- Urgent and great need

The widow is a picture of the frailty of humanity and the brokenness of our situations. Yet ... she is also a picture of one ...

"WHO KEPT COMING"

- The power of persevering prayer!
- Dogged determination who relentlessly pursued justice and life in her situation

- One with the power to affect change, to confront injustice, with admirable strength to sustain and prevail, one able to overcome adversity, to be victorious against all odds!

The widow was determined to “keep coming” until her specific circumstance manifested the justice of God.

‘GRANT ME JUSTICE AGAINST MY ADVERSARY’

Justice, Restoration, Restitution

There are three important keys in this prayer teaching –

1. We must ask God for justice against our adversary the devil
2. We must persevere till righteousness breaks through on our behalf in the specific situations into which we pray
3. We must exercise faith during the process

We each need a revelation of the justice of God, contained therein – his mercy, love, authority, power and dominion!

His kingdom and throne are established in righteousness and justice!

“FOR SOME TIME HE REFUSED” – EMBITTERED OR EMBOLDENED- what will we choose?

There was a pause in the apparent effects of the widow’s prayers. What happens to most of us when we experience delay in answer to prayer?

Some folks go AWOL (absent without leave; absent without love); people can breakdown and given up in the battle for breakthrough.

The enemy (our adversary) will always resist the righteous. We simply have to learn to “keep coming” till righteousness manifests on our behalf.

Jesus had just finished teaching his disciples about the coming of His kingdom at the ends of the age. This parable is a continuance of kingdom teaching.

Jesus understands that when we are engaged in a process of lengthy intercession, we can become

- Isolated
- Intimidated
- Enemy may infiltrate our thinking and/or, our position of faith
- May ultimately destroy our petitions because we may become weary and/or wounded.

Longevity of warfare of contending can cause us to become stuck in a “No Man’s Land”:

- We may lose hope
- Become prayer-less
- Become passive
- Fall into unbelief

The Lord understands that delay and distraction can lead us into a mindset of defeat unless we have a vision of the Righteous Judge of all Creation.

We must pray with the understanding we are His “chosen ones” – legitimate sons, heirs, apostolic ambassadors; kings and priests (legitimacy; governance, reign and rule)

To pray like a widow against an unjust judge is to pray with a revelation of the righteousness of God;

PPRINCIPLES IN THE BATTLE FOR BREAKTHROUGH = PRAY LIKE A BRIDE!

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? I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly.

- The **certainty** of God’s response on behalf of His own

- The **speed** of God's response; the "suddenly" of God ("suddenlies" are usually always preceded by a wait/walk of faith)

Persistence – the widow kept on coming and she changed the atmosphere and manifested the Kingdom in her situation!

- Determination,
- Desperation
- Longing
- Inner strength
- Fearlessness
- Faith
- Hope
- Trust
- Perseverance
- Urgency
- Focus
- Heartfelt/passionate
- Righteous indignation

Bit by bit, the widow's prayers dismantled the dominion of darkness in her location and her situation. The authority of the King of kings brought her justice. When she began to pray her faith was like a tiny flame in a potentially engulfing darkness, but as she continued, the fire of God grew and consumed the darkness around her, to reveal the light of His truth and grace.

If the widow symbolism can bring such a breakthrough, how much more the symbolism of the bride who prays! We must pray with faith "When the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?"

- Battalion – strength in numbers in warfare; pray in agreement
- Know your enemy (our adversary prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to destroy)
- More importantly – know your God; His faithfulness, His love; His dependability (Captain of the Host; supremacy of God):
- The certainty of God's justice in our situations
- Understand the terrain (difficult, but not impossible because of faith!)
- Trust your Commanding Officer (reliability and dependability of God)
- Obey your orders without question (trust, faith)

Catherine Brown, September 2010

Founder/director Gatekeepers Global Ministries

Co-Founder, Scottish Apostolic Networking Enterprise

www.gatekeepers.org.uk

admin@gatekeepers.org.uk