

- ii. What kind of faith is Jesus looking for when he returns? The faith that will walk in Isaiah 58:6-7.

- C. Without prayer, we will never finish the mission but will lose heart along the way, but if we will continually pray, our hearts will be strengthened to finish the mission.



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LIVE THE STORY

The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.

- How might our understanding of the parable (18:1-8) be affected by taking or not taking it in its larger context?
- How might this parable not only teach the importance of prayer, but also the content of our prayer?
- Why can it be said that this parable, like The Lord's Prayer, teaches prayer as a cry for the Kingdom?
- What do we need to rebel against in prayer as a church? What does our neighborhood need us to rebel against in prayer? What do you need to rebel against in prayer? And how can we help each other do it?
- What is that thing about Jesus and what He does (as seen in the Gospels) that causes you to say, "I want to do that too"? (Not motivated by a desire for power, but because of the good it does.)
- Why is *entering into our mission essential for seeing the necessity of prayer?*
- If prayer is rebelling against the fallenness of the world, what aspects of fallenness can we pray for as a church or CG?

A Royal Priesthood – A Holy People: *Becoming a Praying Church*

Jerry Cisar — March 3, 2024

Text: Luke 18:1-8

Introduction

Prayer is a cry for the kingdom. Prayer expresses the deepest yearning of our hearts, even the deepest yearning of creation itself: that God's reign would come!

Therefore prayer, in its most basic form, is petition. Petition grows out of need.

I. Prayer and the Mission (1)

A. Luke 4-21: "The Ministry of Jesus"

- i. This is the mission statement of Jesus' ministry (Isa. 61:1-3).

- ii. Jesus teaches us how to live in the year of Jubilee (6:20-49).

Living in Jesus' constant year of Jubilee calls us to lives which are radically different than the self-centered, 'dog-eat-dog' lives of the world around us.

B. Peter's Ah-hah Moment (Luke 9:20)

- i. *At that point, ministry for the disciples becomes difficult.*

- ii. The Need for Obedience and the Kingdom Among You (Luke 17)

- C. In Luke 17, Jesus is telling disciples that the life of following Him will be costly and often discouraging. *Don't give up on the mission.*

Entering our mission is essential for seeing the necessity of prayer.

II. Prayer and the Kingdom (2-5)

- A. Prayer is a cry for the kingdom.
 - i. This parable about prayer is about prayer for justice.
 - ii. The OT and the coming of the kingdom.
 - a) This widow is a picture of the Israel of God, the church, who appears in this world without power and protection, is crying out for the Kingdom to come.
 - b) When the kingdom comes, justice and peace come.
 - c) The Gospel has much to do with justice:
 - The Sermon on the MT and Plain.
 - Jesus feeding the poor, healing the sick, setting free those who are bound.
 - Jesus preaching of good news to the poor and deliverance to captives.

B. Prayer is rebellion against the fallenness of the world.

“What, then, is the nature of petitionary prayer? It is, in essence, rebellion—rebellion against the world in its fallenness, the absolute and undying refusal to accept as normal what is pervasively abnormal. It is, in this its negative aspect, the refusal of every agenda, every scheme, every interpretation that is at odds with the norm as originally established by God.” (David Wells, *Christianity Today*, Nov. 1979)

C. A Modernization of the Parable

- i. The goal of our prayer is not to accept the world in its fallenness but to rebel against it. It is a cry for the kingdom, not a cry to accept the brokenness of the world.
- ii. This parable is for all of us to realize that we are to be crying out in intercession to God with the widows, orphans, and strangers in the world.

“Nothing destroys petitionary prayer (and with it, a Christian view of God) as quickly as resignation.” (David Wells)

III. Prayer and Finishing the Mission (6-8)

- A. The comparison or parallel is between the widow and God’s people seeking justice in an unjust world.
 - i. Will He find faith on the earth? Will he find His people trusting that He will grant justice in answer to their petitions and intercessions, their prayers and thereby gladly get involved? Will He find people crying out to God to meet needs and thereby willing to sacrificially live in hope of the answer?
 - ii. Will He find us willing to bring justice into a fallen world by living in a perpetual year of restoration and return, by continually walking in the calling of the Sermon on the Plain? Will He find us continually bringing the boy to Jesus?

a) Good news to the poor is justice.

b) Proclaiming the year of the Lord’s favor is equity and justice par excellence.

B. What faith is Jesus looking for when he comes again?

- i. Will he find His people turning to God with our utter need of help to walk in His mission, whether he will find us leaving the prayer room empowered to walk by faith in the ways of the kingdom, ways of justice and peace.

a) Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10)

b) The Parable of the 10 Minas \