

Are You Ready to Give Up on God?



Luke 18:1-8

Saturday, 10/19 at 4:00 + Sunday, 10/20 at 9:00

19th Sunday after Pentecost / 18th Sunday after Trinity – 2019

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: Since we have all sinned – *making ourselves deserving of God’s wrath*, we are so blessed to have been ✦chosen, ✦redeemed, and ✦forgiven *by God through our Lord Jesus Christ!* However, we are not yet in heaven; the Christian life is *a marathon*, not a sprint. Along the course of our lives we are sure to encounter countless times of difficulty, which will ✦challenge us, ✦overwhelm us, and ✦cause us to consider giving up on God.

So, today, we focus on a parable told by Jesus, which is meant to ✦encourage us, ✦carry us through the difficult times, and ✦inspire us to NEVER give up on God – *no matter what!!*

1. **The Setting:** ¹ **And [Jesus] told them a parable to the effect that they ought** *[(literally) that they must]* **always to pray and not lose heart.**

- a. Pray: Prayer is *talking to God with words and thoughts*. These are some prayer realities:

- i. Jesus is the only one between us and God.
 - ii. We must know Jesus as our Savior for our prayers to be heard by God the Father.
 - iii. Believers have the great privilege of calling upon God through prayer.
 - iv. The Holy Spirit helps us when we pray.
 - v. God is almighty in power, so He is always able to help us in every circumstance.
 - vi. God answers according to *His timing* and *His knowledge of what is truly best*.
- b. Do not lose heart: For those who DO lose heart, they ✦become discouraged, ✦fail to hold out successfully, and ✦give up. Since all such things are *very bad* and *very sad*, Jesus is going to encourage us to ✦*keep seeking justice in this life* and ✦*keep praying to God for every need!*
2. **Keep Seeking Justice**: ² [Jesus] said, “In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor respected [turned toward] man. ³ And there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying, ‘Give me justice against my adversary [in a lawsuit: opponent, accuser].’ ⁴ For a while he refused, but afterward he said to himself, ‘Though I neither fear God nor respect man, ⁵ yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will give her justice, so that she will not beat me down [annoy me greatly, pester me, wear me out] by her continual coming.’”
- a. The woman: She had been wrongly accused; she was also a widow, so most likely she was poor and had no ability to buy the judge’s favor – *just as we cannot buy our way into heaven*.

- b. The judge: He did not fear God – *not on a personal level, nor on the level of his important office as judge over the people*. Also, he had no respect for people, *so he would not turn toward them to acknowledge them*; instead, his life was all about himself and his own interests.
 - c. The woman's action: She had no money or power, *but she was persistent in coming to the judge over and over and over again*, asking him to give her justice, to rule according to what everyone knew was right.
 - d. The judge's action: Initially he ignored the woman, *so he was inactive toward her*; however, after a while, *he took action for these reasons*: “Not the widow's unquestioned right and her opponent's flagrant wrong... but his own personal ease and peace...” (Lenski, 894).
3. **Keep Praying to God**: ⁶ And the Lord said, “Hear what the unrighteous judge says. ⁷ And will not God [οὐ μὴ: most certainly] give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? ⁸ I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on [the] earth?” // Some key comparisons:
- a. Interest: The judge had absolutely no interest in the widow, *but God has absolutely all interest in His elect* – the ones He has chosen for Himself in Christ before the creation of the world!
 - b. Persistence: The widow kept coming to the judge – possibly each day; *the elect ones* – you and me – *are to cry out to God day and night!*

c. Time:

- i. Over a short time the widow kept coming to the judge, *so he finally gave in*; however, our persistence toward God must be even greater – *since we are running a marathon rather than a sprint!*
 - ii. Now we have eternal life, but we will not experience the *fullness of that life* until Jesus returns.
 - iii. From God’s perspective, *He is acting speedily*; however, from our perspective, *He seems slow*. But why? He is waiting for more and more to repent (2 Peter 3:9).
- d. Value: The unrighteous judge placed no value on the woman; *he couldn’t care less about her*. But our righteous God values us so much that He gave His only Son to †put on flesh, †bear our punishment, and †open the way to heaven!
- e. Faith: Jesus said, “*many will fall away (Matt. 24:10 ESV)*”; even though it seems that many others have fallen away, *let us NEVER give up on God!*

This Week’s Challenge: Remembering that God ✓ loves us, ✓ saved us through Jesus, ✓ hears our prayers, and ✓ is able to help us, let us ✨ keep trusting in Him, ✨ keep praying to Him, and ✨ never give up!

Let Us Pray: Father in heaven, *even though this life can be hard sometimes*, keep us ✓ trusting in Jesus, ✓ growing in Your Word, ✓ full of the Holy Spirit, and ✓ crying out to You!