

pray

Luke 18:1 ~ 8

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OCTOBER 20, 2019

Today's Gospel invites us to reflect on how we communicate with God. Jesus invites us to freely and persistently tell God about our needs. This type of prayer is often our only form of prayer. But if this is what Jesus wants us to do, why does it seem that our prayers go unanswered? And why are there so many things we don't really understand.

- Why is there so much pain in our world?
- Why do good people suffer?
- Why do we hurt one another?
- Why can't people get along?
- And why do some of the best prayers seem to go unanswered?

This story in today's Gospel points us toward an answer. At first glance this parable is confusing to a lot of people. It does sound pretty strange when we first hear it. The parable involves two people: an unjust arrogant judge and a humble but persistent woman. But the judge is heartless, corrupt. It says he didn't care about God or man. No morality and no compassion. The judge is a good example of our fallen world. Our world doesn't respect God or show much compassion for the weak and needy. And this corrupt judge has all the power over this needy woman's life.

The poor widow is a picture of all those believers who are holding on to their faith in a corrupt and unjust world, who are praying to know God's will, to hear God's voice, who are praying for mercy and enough grace to get through another day. And Jesus is saying, *"Don't stop praying. Don't stop believing that God can and will give you justice. Don't give up on the kingdom of God, because it's coming. No matter how bad things look right now . . . God will bring this world back to Himself. His kingdom will come."*

The judge ignores her at first, but finally grants her justice because she is so persistent. She won't give up and she won't go away... so eventually he gives in and comes through for her.

Jesus is saying: *If a selfish arrogant, unfeeling, unjust judge can help you if you ask, then how much more can God who loves you intensely help you when you ask.*

This parable means be patient, don't lose heart, don't give up, keep on trusting, because you can count on God... and God will come through for you.

When we pray we are not talking to a brick wall. We are not praying in a vacuum. No, we are visiting with God... and He is leaning forward to listen. Prayer is conversation with God. Prayer is dialogue with God. Prayer is friendship with God.

Jesus says that God knows what we need before we ask Him. So what is the purpose of prayer? Prayer puts us in the presence of God. Prayer may or may not change our circumstances, but it changes us. Prayer helps us to see this world, to think about this world, to respond to this world the way that God would. Prayer gives us a strength and wisdom that give us an eternal perspective on our current circumstances. And persistent prayer reminds us that God is always and forever working in this world whether we see the results or not.