

## PRINCIPLES OF PRAYER

### Luke 11:5-9

**Luke 11:8-9** These are the two most revealing scriptures in this Parable regarding prayer. The meaning of the word '*importunity*' is an action word that describes someone pleading and begging and will not stop demanding what they want to the point of being annoying and aggravating.

**James 4:3; I John 5:14** There are times that our prayers do not get heard or answered because of selfishness or what we ask for is not in the best interest of God's program for our lives or for His glory.

### THE PERSISTENT WIDOW (Luke 18:1-8)

**Vs. 1** The primary reason for the Parable is for Jesus to teach a very important lesson to believers. What He is saying to highlight this lesson is that believers should pray often and should never give up.

**Vs. 2-3** This widow was poor so she had no lawyer, no money to bribe this ungodly judge. The judge was prideful and powerful with no regard for God or for anyone else. She was seeking help and justice because an enemy of hers had done her wrong and probably cost her a lot of money and anguish.

**Vs. 4-5** The ungodly judge would not hear her case and did not care about the truth of the matter. He had no time for the poor widow as he would not get anything by helping her. However, the lesson is taught herein, because of her persistence in continued attempts to be heard, he decided to get this woman out of his court because of her nagging and pleading was causing him to be bothered.

**Vs. 6-8** Unlike many other Parables, we are not left on our own to unravel the meaning of this one. Jesus Himself makes it clear to us as He makes the appropriate application.

1. She was a stranger to this ungodly judge while we are God's chosen children **I Pt. 2:9-10**
2. She had limited access to the judge's bench while we have unlimited access to God **Heb. 4:16**
3. She was alone pleading her case to an ungodly judge, we have a Righteous Judge and a lawyer, an advocate that presents our case always in accord with what is right **Rm. 8:31-34; I Jn. 2:1**
4. She had no promise of a hearing while provoking the judge but we are promised an answer from God and we are assured that He delights hearing us ask **Luke 18:8; I Pt. 3:12**

### THE PHARISEE AND TAX COLLECTOR (Luke 18:9-14)

**Vs. 9** Jesus leaves no doubt as to whom He is addressing in this following Parable. He is talking directly to a group of people who are self-righteous in their beliefs regarding their spiritual good works and their disdain for those baser people that were not as 'favorable' as they were.

**Vs. 10** The story is of two entirely different men who went to the Temple to pray. One was the Pharisee, a religious leader who lived the law and the traditions of the elders of Israel. The other man was a tax collector who was considered an extortioner and a traitor because he was a Jew who was working for Rome to collect tax money for the state and for himself.

**Vs. 11-12** The Pharisee prayed thanking God that he was not a terrible sinner like others and he bragged about all his great spiritual works that he was trusting in for his spiritual high position.

**Vs. 13** The tax collector prayed and expressed his repentance and humility calling himself a sinner, showing shame and anguish in his countenance while pleading for mercy.

**Vs. 14** The tax collector goes home 'justified', (not guilty) while the Pharisee goes home with nothing.

1. In the Parable Jesus warns against self-righteousness – **Isa. 64:6; Eph.2:8-10; Pr. 8:13; 16:18**
2. In the Parable Jesus teaches the value of humility – **Lk. 14:7-11; Isa. 57:15**

All three of these Parables give us the most important principles of prayer and how we can be heard. Without the proper spirit of humility and without perseverance in prayer don't expect God to hear you.