

Luke 18:1-8 (English Standard Version)

And he told them a parable to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart. He said, "In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor respected man. And there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying, 'Give me justice against my adversary.' For a while he refused, but afterward he said to himself, 'Though I neither fear God nor respect man, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will give her justice, so that she will not beat me down by her continual coming.'" And the Lord said, "Hear what the unrighteous judge says. And will not God give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"

Discuss the following questions. If you are in a larger group, you may want to divide into groups of three for this discussion. You may then decide to report back to the larger group or to move directly to prayer time.

1. The widow was rewarded for her persistence, even though she had no real expectation of results. How often do you get discouraged in your prayer life when you don't see immediate results?
2. James 5:16 says, "The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much." Do you really believe prayer changes things? When have you experienced the power of answered prayer?
3. Some might say that the judge responded because of the widow's nagging. How is persistent prayer different than nagging God?
4. Jesus asks a pointed question: When he comes, will he find faith on earth? Will he find us faithful? How does persistence in prayer prepare us for his coming? How does prayer keep us from losing heart?

Prayer Suggestion:

Pray always and don't lose heart.

1. Ask God to help you discern God's will at all times and in all situations for you, for your church, and for the greater community.
2. Ask God for strength to continue to pray and for patience to wait for God's answer.