

# That We Might Always Pray and Not Lose Heart

Luke: All Things New



## Series Goal

That Mercy Hill Church would be made new as we follow the One who is making all things new!



## Sermon Text

Luke 18:1-8



## Big Idea

We live in the space between the two advents of Christ, the two phases of the kingdom's arrival, the already and the not-yet. The Son of Man has come once and the Son of Man is coming again. And, in this space between, we pray, and we pray, and we pray, and we pray.

### (1) The Setup (v. 1)

When Jesus tells this parable to the end that we not lose heart in our praying, He is acknowledging the fact that we will be tempted to lose heart in it. He is admitting that there will be times you will pray and pray and pray and feel like it is nothing but a waste of your time and breath. As you pray in the space between the two advents, you will feel like giving up on prayer and, in that, giving up on God.

### (2) The Story (vv. 2-5)

We meet here both a helpless widow and an unrighteous judge. With regard to this helpless widow we understand that some injustice and oppression has befallen her and she is torn up about it and in need of the judge to rule in her favor lest she get swept away in it. So she “kept coming” (v. 3) and pleading with this judge to grant her the justice she so desires. But then, with regard to this unrighteous judge we are told that he “neither feared God nor respected man” (v. 2). He has no love for God or neighbor, but only for himself. And so he has no interest in helping this poor woman. What’s in it for him?

### (3) The Significance (vv. 6-8)

“If a wicked man will sometimes do good, even if from bad motives, *how much more* will God do right!” (TNTC).

This widow had no relationship whatsoever with the judge and yet because she kept coming and coming and coming with her request it was finally granted. *How much more* then will God grant to us—His own children whom He has chosen of His own sovereign will and grace—the help which we so humbly and yet persistently petition Him for?

He is Father and He is faithful. You are child and you are chosen. You put the two of these truths together and therein you have the unbreakable backbone of the Christian disciple. There is our encouragement to keep coming and persisting in prayer.

### Two Closing Questions

**Question #1: Are You Unrelenting in Your Lamenting?**—When a person is failing to lament, to cry out to God day and night for relief, for justice, for His kingdom to come—you know at least one of four things are in play: (1) Denial; (2) Distraction; (3) Deviation; or (4) Despair.

**Question #2: Does Prayer Really “Work”?**—Three things regarding prayer are helpful to remember when we are faced with such crises of faith: (1) God Meets with Us in Our Prayers; (2) God Moves in Response to Our Prayers; and (3) God Makes Everything Right in the End.

### Reflection Questions



- How has your prayer life been lately? Has it been fresh and active and vibrant? Or has it been a bit stale and apathetic and dead? Why do you think?
- Have you ever lost heart in your praying? Explain. Why might this parable encourage you to start back up again?
- Would you say you’ve ever “lamented” to God? What was it like? Why is it important that we be unrelenting in our lamenting? Which of the four things listed above often keeps you from this?