

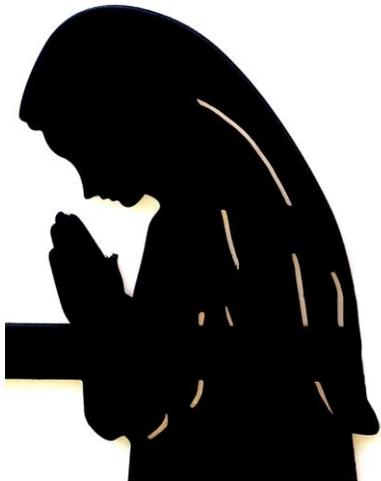
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Mark 7:24-30 Luke 18:1-8

Title: The Persistent Prayer.

Introduction: Prayer is something that is talked about more than anything else and practiced less than anything else.

Context: In the two stories in Mark 7 and Luke 18, both of them talk about a shameless woman who desires to get her petition granted. The two women were begging for favor to be granted to them.



The woman in Mark 7 was a gentile who had a daughter who was possessed by demons. Hearing that Jesus was in her neighborhood, and knowing what he was capable of doing, she came and fell at his feet, begging Jesus to drive the demon out of her daughter. It seems offensive that Jesus told the woman that it wasn't right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs. The "children" was a reference to the people of Israel and the "dogs" were the gentiles.

In Luke 18, we find a judge who is not honest. He doesn't fear God or people, and is probably corrupt. The person appealing to the judge is an irritating widow. She keeps showing up in his courtroom day after day, demanding justice.



What can we learn from the story about prayer?

I. Pray with persistence. "Devote yourselves to prayer," (NASB) or "Continue earnestly in prayer," (NKJV). In the original language it says, "continue steadfastly in prayer." The word that is translated, "continue steadfastly," is one word in the original language.

- "Then Jesus told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart." Luke 18:1 NRSV
- Luke 11:9 (NIV) is where we find the promise that says, "ask and it shall be given to you; seek and you shall find; knock and it shall be opened to you." Each of those verbs are in the present tense, active voice and could be translated, "keep on asking, keep on seeking, keep on knocking."

II. Pray with passion: If you are persistent in something, that means you are to be passionate about it.

"We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly person who does his will." John 9:31 NIV

"And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him." Hebrews 11:6 NIV

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 ESV

Conclusion: How persistent are we when we pray? Are we willing to continue petitioning God for something that we need, even if it takes years to obtain it?