

Luke - The Story of Jesus - Pt. 7
Living in the Meanwhile
Luke 18:1-8 (17:20-37)
Feb. 13, 2022

I. A PARABLE about persistent PRAYER. (18:1-8)

- A. Persistent but NEEDY versus evil and POWERFUL. (v.2-5)**
- B. HOPE is grounded in the NATURE of God. (v.6-7)**
- C. An UNUSUAL ending to a PRAYER parable. (v.8)**

Jesus tells a story to give hope to those of us who feel like justice will never prevail. Keep praying He reminds us, cause God cares for His people. We can rest assured that while the timing may be slow, justice will come.

1. Kid's Question: What is something that you have prayed for? What happened?
2. What has your understanding of this parable about prayer been previously? Has it changed now? If so in what ways?

II. A WIDE-ANGLE view of the CONTEXT. (17:20-37; 18:8)

- A. CONCERN for the COMING of the Kingdom. (17:20,37)**
- B. The PRESENCE and the PARADOX of the Kingdom. (17:20-35)**
- C. A parable about LIVING in the "MEANWHILE". (18:1-8)**

That weird phrase at the end of the parable points us back to the larger context of the passage. We see that Jesus has led up to the telling of this parable with a discussion that would have been unsettling at the very least. All the Jews were wondering when and how and where the Kingdom would come...Jesus had a new take on that question.

3. In what ways can you identify with the "concern for the coming Kingdom"? What makes you long for the return of Jesus?
4. What is your response to this longing? How do you live in a world that is so broken without getting overwhelmed?
5. How would you describe what Jeff called the "presence and paradox" of the Kingdom from your own experience?

III. BROADENING our UNDERSTANDING of prayer. (18:1-8; Lk. 11:1)

- A. Being WITH God is the most IMPORTANT calling. (18:1; Lk. 10:38-42)**
- B. Prayer is "ATTENDING" more than "NAGGING". (18:6-7; Mt. 6:7-8)**
- C. PETITIONS are grounded in RELATIONSHIP. (18:7-8; Phil. 4:6)**

- D. Being PRESENT in the paradox cultivates HOPE. (Lk. 18:1,7; Acts 4:13)**
E. Let action FLOW from presence, not FEAR or CONTROL. (18:8; Lk. 4:42-43)

When you see the parable on prayer following the uncertainty of the future and the coming of the Kingdom, it begins to make more sense. The goal of prayer is to develop faith. This means we have to make sure that our understanding of prayer isn't too narrow.

6. Rate your own prayer according to the balance of "being with God" and "asking God for things." What are the challenges you encounter in prayer?
7. What are the top three things you are longing for God to do something about at this moment?
8. Does your "action" flow out of responding to time in God's presence or does it flow more from fear and a desire to control situations? How can you know the difference?