

Luke 18:1-8

Introduction: Jesus reminds us that life must be oriented to His second coming in the right way. (Rosscup) This parable grows out of the previous teaching about the postponement of His kingdom.

- 1) Jesus has two purposes for the parable—18:1 ¹ *Then He told a parable to them (the disciples of 17:22) with regard to it being necessary for them*
 - a) Persistence in prayer—to *always pray*
 - i) In the context this refers to prayers concerning the return of Christ.
 - ii) Cf. Revelation 6:10
 - b) Sobermindedness in prayer—and *not to become discouraged*, (i.e. give up)
 - i) Real courage requires that we leave the problem with God. (Rogers & Rogers)
 - c) Theophilus needs to be reminded of this important aspect of the Christian life.

- 2) Jesus relates the parable itself—18:2-5
 - a) The setting—18:2-2
 - i) A godless, disrespectful judge—“*There was a **judge** (emphatic) in a certain city who did not have awe toward God and did not respect people.*
 - (1) This is apparently a civil judge who often handled financial cases. (NET Bible)
 - (2) This man disregarded the Law that demands love for God and his fellow man.
 - (3) This man’s judgments were not influenced by God’s justice or the person before him, but solely by his own reasoning. (Magill)
 - ii) A desperate, vulnerable widow—³ *And there was a **widow** (emphatic) in that city, and she kept coming to him, saying, ‘Get justice for me from my adversary.’*
 - (1) Not necessarily an older woman, but a needy widow nonetheless. She couldn’t afford a lawyer to represent her. She apparently has no male relatives to help her.
 - (2) Her case is trapped in a corrupt judicial system before the bench of a crooked and apathetic judge. (MacArthur)
 - b) The inward struggle of the judge—18:4-5
 - i) Initial unwillingness—⁴ *And for a while he was not willing,*
 - ii) Eventual capitulation—*but afterward he said within himself,*
 - (1) He admits his true condition—‘*Even though I do not have awe toward God or respect people, (cf. 11:8)*
 - (2) His selfward motivation to help the widow—⁵ *yet because this widow causes me trouble, I will get justice for her, so that she may not wear me out completely by her persistent coming.’*”

- (a) He was not truly interested in justice for her but comfort for himself. He found her annoying and wanted to be rid of the annoyance.
 - iii) The judge was overcome by her persistence and responds out of frustration.
- 3) Jesus applies the parable—18:6-8 ⁶ *Then the Lord said,*
- a) A command—“*Listen to what the unrighteous judge is saying!*”
 - i) Learn a lesson from this wretched, self-centered creature
 - b) A rhetorical question assuming a Yes answer—18:7
 - i) ⁷ *Now will not God bring about justice for His own elect, who cry out (loudly) to Him day and night,*
 - (1) It is assumed that God’s elect will pray for justice during times of persecution.
 - ii) *and yet He is patient with them?*
 - (1) It is assumed the God is patient with His elect.
 - iii) Unlike the unrighteous judge, who refused to help the widow and only answered because of his impatience with her, God will answer the ones crying out to Him, and He is patient with them, never tiring of hearing from them. Both His actions and attitude are the opposite of this judge. (Magill)
 - c) A clear statement—⁸ *I tell you^{pl} that He will bring about justice for them speedily.*
 - i) God will set things right in His time
 - d) A penetrating question—*Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He find this faith on the earth?”*
 - i) Will people be characterized by praying in faith when Jesus returns?
 - ii) The Son of Man is looking for those who continue to believe in Him, despite the wait. (NET Bible)
 - iii) Jesus will come and answer, but will He find those faithfully asking, like the widow? (Magill)
 - iv) Will He find a spirit of prayer that lays hold of His character, His care for His elect, and His concern not to require them to wait without hope? (Rosscup)
 - v) Prayer and its answers ought always to flow out into godliness that does not grovel in problems but glories in His Person. (Rosscup)
- 4) Things for us to remember
- a) God is gracious to teach us how to pray and not grow discouraged.
 - b) God is gracious to view believers as His elect, not as a persistent annoyance.
 - c) God is gracious to send His Son and bring about justice at just the right time.