Prayer 101

PERSISTENCE GETS GOD'S ATTENTION!

Read Luke 18:1-8

> *1 He then told them a parable on the need for them to pray always and not become discouraged: 2 "There was a judge in one town who didn't fear God or respect man. 3 And a widow in that town kept coming to him, saying, 'Give me justice against my adversary.' 4 "For a while he was unwilling, but later he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or respect man, 5 yet because this widow keeps pestering me, I will give her justice, so she doesn't wear me out [b] by her persistent coming.' "6 Then the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. 7 Will not God grant justice to His elect who cry out to Him day and night? Will He delay to help them? 8 I tell you that He will swiftly grant them justice. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He find that faith on earth?"*

Explain: In Biblical times, a widow usually had neither status nor income. They were often a victim of injustice within the culture Jesus was born.

- Have you always believed that God is in your corner?
- What are some other views you've had about how God sees you?
- What is Jesus telling us about God's perspective on injustice?

Persistent prayer is daily prayer.

- What are your obstacles to praying daily?

Share the following quote of 18th century theologian S.D.

Gordon

"The great people of the earth today are the people who pray! I do not mean those who talk about prayer; nor those who say they believe in prayer; nor those who explain prayer; but I mean those who actually take the time to pray. They have not time. It must be taken from something else. That something else is important, very important and pressing, but still, less important and pressing than prayer. There are people who put prayer first, and group the other items in life's schedule around and after prayer. These are the people today who are doing the most for God in winning souls, in solving problems, in awakening churches, in supplying both men and money for mission posts, in keeping fresh and strong their lives far off in sacrificial service on the foreign field, where the thickest fighting is going on, and in keeping the old earth sweet a little while longer."

S.D. Gordon

AVOID FLOWERINESS
Luke 18:9-12

> *9 He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and looked down on everyone else: 10 "Two men went up to the temple complex to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11 The Pharisee took his stand and was praying like this: 'God, I thank You that I'm not like other people —greedy, unrighteous, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. 12 I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of everything I get.'*

- **P**ersonal *(It's a conversation with God. So when we pray to God we shouldn't just pray in generalities)*
- **R**eflective *(Find a quiet place. Reflect on your life and*

take an inventory of where you are spiritually.)

- **A**ll-inclusive *(Don't just pray about big things. God is interested in our details!)*
- **Y**ielding *(You must take your foot off the gas and allow God to guide you and speak to you.)*
- **E**vangelistic *(Our greatest prayer targets are those who don't know Jesus.)*
- **R**evolutionary *(When we pray, God changes us.)*

POSTURE IS IMPORTANT

Read Luke 18:13-14

> *13 "But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even raise his eyes to heaven but kept striking his chest and saying, 'God, turn Your wrath from me —a sinner!' 14 I tell you, this one went down to his house justified rather than the other; because everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted."*

Explain the taboo of Tax Collectors in this culture. They were considered less than dogs. Jewish tax collectors were labeled as traitors representing the interests of themselves and the oppressive Roman Empire.

Conclude

What does the word repent mean to you?

Do people ever repent in worship?

Explain the meaning of repent in the Bible. It literally means to turn. Someone would repent from going a certain way. It's not so much like feeling sorry for one's actions, but rather make reparations and covenants to turn from the offence to live differently. This is the crux of repenting.