

# Earthly Stories, Divine Truth

## Week 2: The Persistent Widow

**Weekly Summary:** Is your experience with prayer rich and rewarding? Or do you often feel short-changed, because God didn't give you what you wanted? In Jesus' parable today, he invites his disciples to enjoy a deep and meaningful prayer life. First and foremost this means seeing God correctly. Only then can we approach God boldly in prayer and leave with the confidence that his answers are always the right ones!

### Rate My Prayer Life

**How much time do you spend in prayer each week?**

- a. None   b. Less than ½ hour   c. Between ½ hour & 1 hour  
d. 1-2 hours   e. More than 2 hours

**How much of your prayer life is about asking God for things you want?**

- a. 0-25%   b. 25%-50%   c. 50%-75%   d. 75%-100%

**How much of your prayer time is about thanking and praising God?**

- a. 0-25%   b. 25%-50%   c. 50%-75%   d. 75%-100%

**How would you rate your level of focus during your typical prayer time?**

- a. Distracted – Done while multitasking other activities  
b. Semi-focused – Done with lots of noise/distractions around you  
c. Focused – Effort is made to remove yourself from distracting people and situations  
d. Laser-focused – Done in specific place and at specific times to maximize your time with God

**If you got everything you prayed for, which would look most different?**

- a. My own life   b. The world   c. My friends' and family's lives

**Does Bible study inform and influence your daily prayer?**

- a. Never   b. Sometimes   c. Often   d. Almost Always

**Circle the words that most apply to your prayer life.**

Sporadic   Focused   Sincere

Obligated   EveryDay

WhenYouNeedSomething

Faithful   Contemplative

Distracted   Selfish   Honest

Self-Righteous   Entitled

Humble   Angry   Thankful

AcceptingOfGod'sAnswers

Confessional   Other \_\_\_\_\_

❖ **Luke 18:1** – Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up.

➤ Misunderstanding prayer first becomes \_\_\_\_\_ and finally \_\_\_\_\_.

❖ **Luke 18:2-5** – He said: “In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared what people thought. <sup>3</sup> And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, ‘Grant me justice against my adversary.’ <sup>4</sup> For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, ‘Even though I don’t fear God or care what people think, <sup>5</sup> yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won’t eventually come and attack me!’”

❖ **Luke 18:6** – And the Lord said, “Listen to what the unjust judge says.

➤ The reason we find prayer discouraging is because we think God is the \_\_\_\_\_.

- ❖ **Luke 18:7** – And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off?
  - Argument from the Greater to the Lesser ...
  
- ❖ **Luke 18:8a** – I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly.
  - God doesn't always give you what you \_\_\_\_\_. He does always give you what's \_\_\_\_\_.
  
- ❖ **Luke 18:8b** – However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?"
  
- ❖ **1 Chronicles 16:11** – Look to the LORD and his strength; seek his face always.
  
- ❖ **Luke 11:11-13** – “Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? <sup>12</sup>Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? <sup>13</sup>If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”
  - Jesus became the \_\_\_\_\_ Son, so that God could \_\_\_\_\_ us as his children.

## Digging Deeper

1. Look again at your “Rate My Prayer Life” answers. Did you notice anything that surprised you? Is it worth your time to evaluate your prayer-life and other areas of your spiritual self?
2. What are some wrong motives or beliefs we may have about God or prayer which discourage this vital spiritual habit? Why is it important to recognize and deal with these?
3. What are certain elements or “parts” of prayer that Christians will want to include in their daily time speaking to God? How would you logically order these in your own prayers?
4. In what ways is prayer like a conversation? In what ways is it not?
5. How does spending time in God's Word connect with your prayer life? Why will no prayer life be rich and rewarding without this element?
6. Why does God often have to cause pain to do what's right for people? Can you think of any other real world examples in which something similar must happen? How do we often respond to God when he does this, and why?
7. How do the following passages add to our understanding of prayer?
 

<b>a. 1 John 5:14</b>	<b>b. 2 Chronicles 7:14</b>	<b>c. Ephesians 6:18</b>	<b>d. James 5:13</b>	<b>e. Matthew 6:7</b>
<b>f. Romans 8:26</b>	<b>g. Colossians 4:2</b>	<b>h. 1 Thessalonians 5:17</b>	<b>i. James 4:3</b>	

**Challenge:** Find two times each day when you can spend 10 minutes in undistracted, laser-focused prayer. Try to include adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and petitions in those prayers!