

08.24.22 – A Weekly Word for Covenant Church

Title: “Persistent Pleading”

Scripture Reading: [Luke 18:1-8](#)

Reflection: Rev. George Vink

s I’m writing this, wondering repeatedly why Jesus told this story, I’m also praying to hear my phone ring. And, yet I don’t. The call may mean that my sister Dina, 87, has gone to be with “Mom & Dad” as she recently, repeatedly demanded in her demented mind. She’d fallen a few days earlier and broken her hip. Surgery was expected but delayed. After several days of weaning her off blood thinners and raising her oxygen level, X-Rays showed advanced lung and lymph cancer. Knowing that and her persisting pain, what do we pray for? How do we pray?

Do we pound heaven’s door with, “Lord, please take her home! End her suffering now.” But, what about her husband of 60-plus years? Will Len make a similar request? Our parable’s persistent widow sought justice, whatever that might mean for her. The miserable judge who finally responded did not do so out of love or a sliver of compassion. He just didn’t want to be bothered anymore. This uncaring, ungodly judge didn’t want the persistent widow to “wear him out” with her badgering. Is that how we’re to pray? Does God wait similarly?

I’m so glad Rabbi Jesus himself applied the parable’s application. Comparing or contrasting this selfish judge with God seems rather risky. His father, our Father God, will bring justice for his chosen ones who cry out, however the requested justice applies. Justice is always what is right. That said, what is right for God’s chosen may not always be clear. Is it always right to ask for our suffering to end when it took Christ’s suffering and death to bring about our being “chosen ones?” Is it right to...? Oh, the questions! Sometimes, if not, too often, satisfying answers elude us. Such silence!

Jesus does not present his stories as nicely wrapped-up packages with a bow. The persistent, pleading widow parable in Luke 18 ends with Jesus’ asking a question. He wonders when the time of his return comes, will he find faithful followers, persistently praying people? The answer is ours to realize. Praying persistently reflects a relationship without getting all the answers, isn’t it? Judge for yourselves....

Prayer:

Lord, often enough I just don’t know how or what to pray. Sometimes I just close my eyes and ask You to give me simply a sense of being there with me, no answers, just your presence! As an old hymn put it, “Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask you today....” That’s all. Amen.

Action Item for the Day/Week:

Reflect on what your expectations are regarding prayer. How often is it just an asking instead of being in God’s presence, talking, and enjoying a relationship? How judge like is your God? What is your favorite image of your heavenly father? Need any adjustment?

Songs for today:

[Sweet Hour of Prayer](#)

[Sweet Hour of Prayer](#)

[Sweet Hour of Prayer](#)

[Our Father](#)

[Precious Lord, Take My Hand](#)