



KINGDOMCOME

parables of the kingdom

Pastor Josh will be preaching on the Parable of the Persistent Widow (Luke 18:1-8) this Sunday as part of our series on Jesus' parables of the Kingdom of God. The hope of this week's lesson will be to encourage people to persist in praying for things that God has placed on their hearts.

FAMILY TIME

Take some time to share prayer requests and praise reports with each other and encourage folks to keep praying for each other's prayer requests throughout the week and to believe that these will become future praise reports.

DISCUSSION BASED BIBLE STUDY

See attached for a printout you can provide to your lifegroup members and for a simple guide on facilitating Bible studies.

Introduction question: Share a story of how God has answered one of your prayers.

Luke 18:1-8 – The Parable of the Persistent Widow

¹ Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. ² He said: "In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared what people thought. ³ And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, 'Grant me justice against my adversary.' ⁴ "For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or care what people think, ⁵ yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won't eventually come and attack me!" ⁶ And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. 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? ⁸ I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?"

Possible Discussion Questions:

- What is the purpose of this parable? That is, what is Jesus trying to illustrate through this story?
- What is the contrast Jesus draws between the judge and God?
- What do we learn about God?
- What can we learn from the way the widow responds?
- What do we learn about prayer?
- What is the importance of justice?
- What kind of faith is Jesus looking for? What might such faith look like?

APPLICATION

What is important enough to you to persist in prayer over? Take some time to pray for this now and think about how you can continue to persist in prayer over this during this next week.

SMALL GROUP

Break up into groups of 3-4 to share what those prayers are and then pray together for those things. Encourage these small groups to keep praying for each other throughout the week.

The Parable of the Persistent Widow (Luke 18:1-8) ¹Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. ²He said: “In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared what people thought. ³And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, ‘Grant me justice against my adversary.’ ⁴“For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, ‘Even though I don’t fear God or care what people think, ⁵yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won’t eventually come and attack me!”” ⁶And the Lord said, “Listen to what the unjust judge says. ⁷And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? ⁸I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?”

The Parable of the Persistent Widow (Luke 18:1-8) ¹Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. ²He said: “In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared what people thought. ³And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, ‘Grant me justice against my adversary.’ ⁴“For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, ‘Even though I don’t fear God or care what people think, ⁵yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won’t eventually come and attack me!”” ⁶And the Lord said, “Listen to what the unjust judge says. ⁷And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? ⁸I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?”

FACILITATING INDUCTIVE/DISCUSSION BASED BIBLE STUDIES

STEP 1: OBSERVATION (about 10-15 minutes)

- Before you begin, pray to ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the truths of the passage and to speak to each person, including yourself!
- Start by giving everyone a printout of the passage and giving them a few minutes to read through the passage on their own. It would be helpful to provide pens and markers for people to make notes or write down questions.
- Then gather the group together and give people an opportunity to share their observations. The purpose here is to identify what's going on in the text and to make sure we're all on the same page since people might notice or miss things others didn't.
- You could ask people to answer the basic investigative questions who (is speaking, are the main characters, is being spoken to), what (is happening, is the cultural context of the passage, is the scene), where (is the passage taking place), when (did the events take place), and how (did Jesus, people respond)?
- You could also pay attention to key words and phrases.

STEP 2: QUESTIONS AND INTERPRETATION (about 30-45 minutes)

- After giving people an opportunity to fill out the details of the passage during observation time, move into a time of questions. Since we want people to engage with the text for themselves and to see who Jesus is for themselves, we want to allow their questions to guide the study.
- You could have people ask all their questions up front and then go through them together afterwards. This way you can start with the questions from the beginning of the passage and move towards the end. This is in case you come across a later question that can't be answered until an earlier one is.
- You will want to write down people's questions as they ask them so you can refer back to them later.
- As you go through the questions, your goal is to get the group to try and answer the question together. Don't worry about having all the answers! Your primary task is to facilitate discussion and to help foster a space where people can think through questions for themselves and be open to how God might want to speak to them.
- If you're short on time, feel free to cut short discussion on some of the less important questions or even to skip them altogether. We want to make sure we focus the bulk of our energy on the more important parts of the passage.
- It would be helpful to read through the passage ahead of time in order to gain an idea of what the key questions or the crucial parts might be.
- Try to limit this section to under 45 minutes so people have time and energy to go into application and small groups.

STEP 3: APPLICATION AND SMALL GROUPS (about 15-30 minutes)

- This is the most crucial part of the whole study! Whereas the first two steps can feel more intellectual, here is where we actively look to see what the passage means for us personally.
- You could give people a few minutes to reflect on the passage and on the discussion and to ask God what he is saying to them personally.
- Beyond general revelations, we also want people to identify how they can practically respond to the passage and put things into action. Putting things into practice is what allows God to change our lives.
- Then break up into small groups of 3-4 so that people can share with each other how God spoke to them through the passage and how they want to respond and also to pray for each other to be able to believe and obey what they heard from God.