

# Keep Going

## By Dr. Carla J. Debnam

Luke 18:1-8 (AMP)

*<sup>1</sup>Now Jesus was telling the disciples a parable to make the point that at all times they out to pray and not give up and lose heart, <sup>2</sup>saying, “In a certain city there was a judge who did not fear God and had no respect for man. <sup>3</sup>There was a (desperate) widow in that city and she kept coming to him and saying, ‘Give me justice and legal protection from my adversary.’ <sup>4</sup>For a time he would not; but later he said to himself, ‘Even though I do not fear God nor respect man, <sup>5</sup>yet because this widow continues to bother me, I will give her justice and legal protection; otherwise by continually coming she (will be an intolerable annoyance and she) will wear me out.’” <sup>6</sup>Then the Lord said, “Listen to what the unjust judge says! <sup>7</sup>And will not (our just) God defend and avenge His elect (His chosen ones) who cry out to Him day and night? Will He delay (in providing justice) on their behalf? <sup>8</sup>I tell you the He will defend and avenge them quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find (this kind of persistent) faith on the earth?””*

We can learn a lot from this passage but more importantly about the significance of consistency in prayer. The woman in this passage was desperate. Sometimes desperation is the precursor to our prayers. We are not always proactive in prayer but often problems present themselves in our lives and then we seek a resolution through prayer. This is where we can identify with the widow. We, like her, have requests for justice, for healing, for change, for a fresh start or for whatever reason, we need answers. In this illustration, Jesus is encouraging the disciples and us to keep going. We must keep praying, keep fasting, keep believing, keep doing the difficult work. We must not give up and lose heart. Like the woman, our prayers should not be aimless. When we pray, our prayers must have a purpose. Our prayers must be persistent. Our prayers provide a resolution.

Purpose-Prayer has a purpose. The purpose of prayer is always communing with God. It can be to share praise, make a request or to grow closer through the relationship. Prayer is not something we do to hear ourselves talk. We do it to get God's attention. The issues, concerns and cares of our lives push us to pray. Our purpose must be in alignment with God's will for us or those we are praying for. We can tell if our prayers are purposeful by the response we receive. It may not be immediate, but we have a peace that surpasses all understanding. We have joy knowing there is a God who hears us. Prayer strengthens our relationship with Him and helps us to build our faith and spiritual confidence. Prayer is not just about getting our need or wants but it is about getting to the heart of God and then wanting what God wants for us.

Persistence-Prayer requires work. 1 Thess. 5:17 reminds us to “never stop praying.” The woman in this passage, kept going to the judge requesting legal protection. Her continuous requests eventually gave her the breakthrough she wanted. She believed in what she was asking for and knew that eventually with God on her side she would be granted her request. Persistence, purpose, and patience keeps you focused when praying. Rom. 12:12 tells us to “rejoice in hope, be patient in trouble and to keep on praying.” We must never stop praying

because eventually we will hear from God. God will give us a sign that our prayers have not only reached His ears but that He will provide what we desire. We will gain help in a time of need.

Provision-Prayer gives us a break when our case seems unresolvable. Think about yourself and the woman in this story. She believed she deserved justice and then continued pursuing her rights for legal protection. John 15:7 tells us that, “if you remain in Me and My words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted.” We must keep going until we hear a word from the Lord. The Holy Spirit will guide us into all truth and give us the confirmation we seek. God promises to supply our needs when we ask, seek, and knock for what God wants. We have not because we ask not and then when we ask, we do not do it from a pure heart. When we keep going, we see people healed, we see lives restored and we see results. We must keep going and pursue justice. We must ask with the end in mind and with the goal that our answered prayers must not be for our benefit only, but to ultimately give God the glory!