

**AGAPE HOUSE OF WORSHIP
MIDWEEK BIBLE STUDY**

Study Series: Speaking in Parables

Wednesday, February 15, 2023

Lesson 2: The Parable of the Persistent Widow/Unjust Judge Facilitator: Pastor Tunde Odeyemi

***Luke 18:1-8.** 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?”*

How to Understand the Parables

The standard principles of exegesis (interpretation of scripture) should also be used for interpreting the parables. It is essential to ask what the parable meant to the original listeners of Jesus and the original readers of the Gospels. These principles are particularly appropriate to the parables, which contain a complete story with characters and a plot.

1. Look at the parable in its proper context: what led to the parable? Was it a question, a problem to solve, or an issue to resolve?
2. Know that parables usually have one central point: Parables are not allegories. An allegory is a more detailed story in which all, or nearly all, of the details, have significance in the message of the story. On the other hand, parables contain a central message; there is no need to read into every element of the parable.
3. Parables are not secret codes; they focus on telling people about the nature of the kingdom of God.
4. Remember the cultural gap: Some images and metaphors have rich meanings to people in Jesus’ time that are not as easy to recognize for those living in the 21st century.
5. Some of the parables were already interpreted by Jesus; no need to add to the interpretation.

Question 1: Different translations have different titles for this parable, what would you title it and why?

The main reason for Jesus telling this parable was to show His disciples that they should always pray and not lose heart, give up, faint or turn coward! They should be persistent in prayer.

He starts off describing a Judge who is either agnostic or an atheist and is not a politician. The implication being he is not moved by morality, social justice or popular opinion. Then a widow is described who in the context of Jesus’ time belonged to one of the most vulnerable groups in society. According to the story, what she lacked in status, privilege and power, she more than accounted for in persistence and audacity! She ultimately got what she wanted and was rightfully hers to begin with because of her audacious persistence or persistent audacity.

Question 2: Who do the unjust Judge and the Widow in the parable represent or not represent?

Luke 11:1-13. Another of Jesus’ teachings on prayer.

Our Posture in Prayer

- We are to cry out to Him day and night!
- We pray fervently/earnestly/intensely. James 5:16-18. Hebrews 5:7
- We pray with confidence, boldness, and audacity. Heb. 4:14-16, John 14:13-14. 1 John 5:14-15

To persist in prayer and not give up does not mean endless repetition or painfully long prayer sessions. Always praying means keeping our requests constantly before God as we live for Him day by day, believing He will answer. When we live by faith, we are not to give up. God may delay answering, but His delays always have good reasons. As we persist in prayer we grow in character, faith and hope.

The Nature of God in Prayer

- He is a Just God. He brings about justice for His chosen ones. He defends and avenges them!
- He does not keep putting them off. He sees to it that they get justice, and quickly.
- He is way better to us His chosen ones than the unjust Judge was to the widow, the midnight friend to his friend and human parents to their children.

Luke 18:8b. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?"

Question 3: Why did Jesus ask this question? What does He mean?