

Patient, Yet, Swift Judgement (Slide 1)
Luke 18:1-8

Reading: Psalm 82:1-5

Luke 18:1-8 (Slide 2)

¹ Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart, ² saying: "There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man. ³ Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, 'Get justice for me from my adversary.' (Slide 3) ⁴ And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, 'Though I do not fear God nor regard man, ⁵ yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.' "

⁶ Then the Lord said, (Slide 4) "Hear what the unjust judge said. ⁷ And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? ⁸ I tell you that He will avenge them speedily.

(Verses 7 and 8 remind me of what is written in Revelation 6 where those who had been slain because of the word of God cry out **"How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"** He tells them to rest because it will be a little while longer and He will fulfill that promise and has already done so.)

Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?"

"What is the message for us in this parable?"

Is Jesus saying that through prayerful persistence that God will be just like the unjust judge and finally become weary/ worn down and give into our request because we continue to pester Him? Does God wear down over time and just give in or give up?

I think to make the parable mean that God will be like the unjust judge, that after repeated “pestering” God will give in is to show a complete lack of understanding of the character of God.

Proverbs 29:1 (Slide 5)

He who is often rebuked, and hardens his neck, Will suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.

This verse is truly the explanation to the title of our lesson. It also gives us tremendous insight into the parable Jesus spoke regarding the element of the vast differences between the unjust judge and God.

Often rebuked to me means someone who has been given chance after chance to make a “*wrong.....right.*” Opportunity, time after time, to turn one’s life around.

God’s patience is revealed in this phrase: ***though He bears long with them***

The patience of God equates with the timing of God. God’s actions are solely based on His will and His timing.

We cannot lecture God on right and wrong. He knows the wrongs of individuals and will in his timing act when appropriate. It could be immediate, years or even until the day of judgement. Regardless, it will happen.

1 Corinthians 4:5 (Slide 6)

Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one’s praise will come from God.

*Judgement from God will be immediate at the **twinkling of an eye!***

Just as many by their actions (*not always by their words*) show their true self, the unjust judge exposes his own selfish motivation by both his words and his actions.

Here is a man who has authority, resource, connection and power.

'Though I do not fear God nor regard man, ⁵yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.'

It's evident that justice isn't his primary concern!

Perhaps the widow is seeking justice in response to the person who had made her a widow in the first place, indeed, to be held accountable. If that's the case, this judge has no real regard for the widow nor the perpetrator.

His justice is self serving devoid of true right or wrong that is dictated by any true legal system. Nor regard for a higher authority which is above man. His character is exposed by the breaking of the two most important commandments.

Matthew 22:37-40 (Slide 7)

³⁷ Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' ³⁸ This is the first and great commandment. (Slide 8) ³⁹ And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' ⁴⁰ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

Based on these two greatest of commandments is the lifting up or the fall of every man.

His justice is blinded by selfishness. He is much like the ones who hide behind status, wealth and prestige to lecture about social justice, discrimination and victimhood. A slug engulfed in virtue signaling.

Here is the widow. No authority, no where to turn. Without connection or power, and likely no financial means. The only bit of arsenal for potential justice she has is **"persistence."**

Jesus does not explicitly state that she is seeking revenge, rather He implies she speaks concerning a legitimate request for justice.

Now consider persistence as faith.

Jesus begins the parable is this way:

"men always ought to pray and not lose heart" - I am convinced that always praying without losing heart is equivalent to persistent faith.

You would have to be blind not to recognize injustice in the world we live in. You would have to either be immune to empathy or sympathy or simply an **"agnostic or atheistic"** toward the love of God to not feel for those who have been wronged.

There may always be more wrongs than rights as long as the world stands. Those without God as their moral compass dictates that people will likely be more indifferent and increasingly cold toward one another.

But will we lose heart in the face of evil and deliberate error?

People tend to think that when things, particularly those things that are wrong, continually happen over and over again that nothing will ever change.

2 Peter 3:4c (Slide 9)

all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation

Christians should hold to the concept spoken by the wise man Solomon:

Ecclesiastes 3:15 (Slide 10)

That which is has already been, And what is to be has already been; And God requires an account of what is past.

There will be a day of accounting!!!

Perpetrators of immorality feel emboldened because they aren't held accountable. Those truly seeking justice become weary because they feel everything stays the same.

I believe Jesus is saying to the righteous individual, *"Hang in there, it will all be taken care of in due time."*

Faith is behind the persistent prayer of the widow and is the message for us today.

Faith continually knocks at the door of our righteous judge who hears and will act.

Faith constrains the heart from doubt and into keeping the focus on true justice with the obedient search for life.

I don't recall Apostle Paul ever praying for justice necessarily, but for the door to open in which he could preach to the lost concerning the ultimate judge.

Colossians 4:1-4 (Slide 11)

¹ Masters, give your bondservants what is just and fair, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven. ² Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving; ³ meanwhile praying also for us, (Slide 12) that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in chains, ⁴ that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.'

Will he find faith the day of His second coming?

“When the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?”

Revelation 16:15 (Slide 13)

“Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame.”

Matthew 24:43-44 (Slide 14)

⁴³ But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. ⁴⁴ Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

I would think that there are few people that are naive enough to believe that it isn't possible for someone to break into your house and rob you or maybe something worse.

Most people recognize the possibility and make some preparations by at least by locking their doors at night or when they are away. Some go even further.

The thief will not alert you to the day or time in which he plans to rob you. They won't call, text, use messenger, email or send you a letter. It will happen at a time when you least expect it.

There are those who say; *“I can't believe this happened to me. It just doesn't happen around here.”*

And some believe it won't ever happen and they are caught unprepared.

Jesus is telling us to remain prepared through faithful prayer!!

1 Thessalonians 5:1-10 (Slide 15)

¹ But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. ² For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. ³ For when they say, "Peace and safety!" (Slide 16) then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. ⁴ But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. ⁵ You are all sons of light and sons of the day. (Slide 17) We are not of the night nor of darkness. ⁶ Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. ⁷ For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. (Slide 18) ⁸ But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation. ⁹ For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰ who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.

Invitation

Patient Before Judgement, Yet, Swift To Avenge!

Numbers 14:18ab (Slide 19)

The LORD is longsuffering and abundant in mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression; but He by no means clears the guilty

Yes God is patient. He is longsuffering. However:

Acts 17:30-31 (Slide 20)

³⁰ Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, ³¹ because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead."

That day of justice has already been determined by The Lord God Almighty. Are we prepared?

Have you been baptized into the blood of Christ for the remission of your sin? If not, why not?

If you are a child of God but feel your persistence has wavered or you need prayers from your Brethren, please let us know.

Please let us know how we can assist you.....

Reading

Psalm 82:1-5

***¹ God stands in the congregation of the mighty;
He judges among the gods.***

***² How long will you judge unjustly,
And show partiality to the wicked? Selah***

***³ Defend the poor and fatherless;
Do justice to the afflicted and needy.***

***⁴ Deliver the poor and needy;
Free them from the hand of the wicked.***

***⁵ They do not know, nor do they understand;
They walk about in darkness;
All the foundations of the earth are unstable.***

Please visit our website for the full audio of this study:

Shelbyvillechurch.com

Shelbyville Church of Christ