

# Luke 18:1-8

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] Now let's turn to our third passage of scripture which I want to speak from tonight in the Gospel of Luke chapter 18.

The Gospel of Luke chapter 18 and we'll read during Luke at the first eight verses.

The Gospel of Luke chapter 18, the first eight verses. Then he spoke a parable to them that men always ought to pray and not lose heart.

And he was a knight to them, though he bears long with them.

I tell you that he will avenge him speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he really find faith on the earth?

[ 2 : 1 1 ] Then, what do you think is the biblical definition of a prayer of faith?

What would Christ's definition of a prayer that is full of faith be? I suppose we today would say, what's a successful prayer?

Is it a prayer that's answered immediately? Quickly? Is it a prayer that only needs to be prayed once?

Is that a prayer of faith? Is that what we call a successful prayer? Well, it doesn't seem to be according to Christ's teaching here.

Why do you think Christ told this prayer? Why do you think it was necessary for him to give this teaching, this instruction to his disciples?

[ 3 : 2 6 ] Is it not because it's quite common and perfectly normal for disciples of Christ to faint and get weary in prayer and to think it's not here?

Is that not the very reason why Christ thought it important to give this teaching here? It seems it's quite normal to think you're wasting your time praying this prayer.

We read here in Matthew 15. Oh woman, great, great is your faith.

She answered immediately. Did she have to pray only once? Her prayer seemed to be rejected.

And so it seems that great faith doesn't always get instant answers. Great faith very often struggles.

[ 4 : 4 1 ] We looked at Hebrews at the weekend. We're told there in chapter 10, you enjoy a great struggle.

The patriarchs, their prayers weren't answered instantly. Their prayers, they had to repeat and repeat and go continually back to God with the same prayer.

And if we feel embarrassed as many of us men do, we're ashamed of our prayers in power. Isn't it interesting?

Isn't it interesting? The saviour, three times in his distress in the garden of Gethsemane, three times he had to go away and pray.

And what was his prayer? The same words. The son of God. The son of God. The son of God. Pray the same prayer. What in an hour?

[ 5 : 4 5 ] The same words. The son of God. The son of God. The son of God. The son of God. The son of God. The son of God. The son of God. The son of God.

Paul said that he achieved the attainments which he did achieve through very much affliction.

And you would see discouragement or apparent discouragement on the way. In fact, great faith may not even get a positive result.

So, let's see. Again, at the weekend we read Hebrews 11, by faith some escaped the edge of the sword.

By faith some were slain by the sword. Do you think these people that were slain by the sword never prayed, Lord, deliver me from the sword?

[ 6 : 5 4 ] Do you think they never prayed that? Very hard to read that, didn't it? By faith they were able to endure facing death. Not gaining deliverance. The apostle Paul in chapter 12 which he read

three times.

How do I say that? Three times. And God said, no. We do not know what this form in the flesh was. Some think it was eyesight. And when he said, you see how large the letters I've written to you is traveling with his answer. Some think it was a stammer, a stutter.

And 2 Corinthians 10 tells us his speech is predictable. Some think it was a stammer and stutter and surely he was sent to preach the gospel.

God would answer that prayer and give him, make him eloquent. But the Corinthians turn against him and give us the help. He was able to have the gifts.

[ 8 : 03 ] Three times. Three times God said, no. My grace is sufficient for you. So what's great faith?

Great faith is always going back to God. It's the ability to keep on going to God for support, for help. Yes, you might be mistaken. That's just what the real remedy and the real purpose for things are.

But we keep going back to God. The world won't do that.

They won't have a God that would let this happen to me. Look what he did to my child. I couldn't believe a God like that, they would answer.

But God has his practices. The great faith is continually trusting God. Not foolproof solutions, but trusting God.

[ 9 : 05 ] When others would stop it very quickly. Is that not the parable of the sower? The parable of the soils.

Actually, it's not parable of the sower. It's really the parable of the different kinds of soil. the explanation.

But the ones, the seed which fell on the rock are those who when they hear, receive the word with joy.

joy and these have no hope who believe for a while some people will believe in christ as long as he's dancing their prayer quickly but when are the answers stop coming they stop praying great faith is continuing to draw near to god continuing to bring your concerns and issues to him despite opposition despite apparent rejection christ rejects no one but apparently apparently is rejection it can appear seem to be a waste of time you've got it all wrong confusion and disappointment great faith continues drawing near to god now in this gospel of the book itself the savior has laid out to us what's what we can be sure god agrees with what we can be sure god desires if we have a promise if we have a promise in the word oh how wonderful it is to get hold of a promise something that god has promised to give that's the huge benefit we have of having a written bible we christians in this we have a tremendous privilege and blessing two things really sobered us in the i remember have you heard of the basil the church father he apparently he effectively locked himself up in a cave for two years for two years what for to memorize scripture to memorize scripture you see you don't know both of the bibles in these days if there were copies in these days of the bible they were all held in libraries or town halls of synagogues big huge scrolls i need to make a journey to just to read that i found what a challenge passion is in this day when we were to read that idea of the bible that is a curse of the bible bible is also remember in the days both of us here will remember the days of the iron curtain in the u s s r and russia where you were forbidden you were forbidden to bring bibles into it but some of you will remember that great evangelist brother randu how he would smuggle bibles into russia and he told a story once of when they would go and give them out and they had a certain place in this particular place in Red Square actually but they had to give secret messages or secret signs before they would let them even pass a book along and this person had arranged to meet some person and I wondered who it was after they had given the secret codes that were all right he put his hand on his pocket and he took out that rumped piece of paper and he said can you tell me is this God's work is it really part of the Bible so whoever it was

I don't think it was Brother Andrew himself it might have been he says I can assure you that is God's work what is it please please can you give me the next page he was happy with the next page and yet we have well I've got seven or eight versions of the Bible on my smartphone and there's just a few years ago these people the next page oh we go home rejoicing well in the Gospel of Luke alone we're told things that the Saviour the Saviour asks us to pray for chapter 6 pray for your enemies challenging isn't it pray for your enemies ministers people to go out with the Gospel chapter 11 pray for the Holy Spirit all I think the greatest version of the Bible sometimes chapter 11 verse 13 if you then being evil if you evil know how to give good gifts to your children do you give good gifts to your children on the birthday

[ 15 : 00 ] Christmas do you give them good gifts if you evil people know how to give good gifts to your own children how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit who do to his children wouldn't you think that's what the story if the illustration if he's appealing to sinful people giving their own children the blessing wouldn't you see the heavenly Father gives blessings the Holy Spirit to his children but that's not the Gospel that's not what it says Luke 11 13 how much more will your heavenly Father will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask how's that for the Gospel to those who ask isn't that wonderful but that's the one thing you know you see situations you see trouble you say well they need this they need that they need that

I don't know what to pray for first the one thing every situation is just the Holy Spirit just give them the Holy Spirit he'll prioritize it he'll do it to pray that we enter not into temptation I guess chapter 22 and then chapter 20 without admonish in January we tend to think well I surrender to it end our prayers with I I what does that mean it doesn't mean well I'm finished now that's I press all of it it's not what it means I mean really means it I suppose you'd say in today's language I seriously mean it Lord I seriously mean it

I'm genuinely asking for these things well just three things in conclusion three lessons we can summarize it all do you find do you find you have to pray day and night seemingly for ages before you get what you're praying for do you have that experience if you do what a mark you're on that you left isn't that how the passage is I tell you yes verse 7 and shall God not avenge his own elect and then there's the description of the elect who cry at day and night to him though he bears long with them see other people give up if you don't get an answer quickly but his elect continually cry day and night to him second lesson groggings groggings are often our best prayers we get that in Romans 8 26 we think oh

I could do nothing but groggings have you actually got a few prayers oh have you I always remember one of my I call them patron saints or gurus when I was young in the pastor Al Martin an American preacher a very powerful preacher and I remember him speaking about the prayer of confession and the prayer of repentance sometimes he felt that his confession of sin was a greater sin than the sin he was confessing he felt it so often just groans not articulate he couldn't get these words right it was just groans but you see Romans 8 chapter Romans 8 chapter verse 26 Romans 8 26 I think tells us likewise the spirit also helps us in our weakness for we do not know what to pray for as we ought but the spirit himself makes intercession for us with groggings don't complain that your prayers are full of groggings it's a holy spirit wagging how can you read the sounds of David and not discover how he groaned and felt

God wasn't just wasn't listening Habakkuk oh isn't Habakkuk Lord how long will I cry and you will not answer that's that's the burden the burden of Habakkuk verse 1 chapter 1 verse 1 how long will I cry and you won't hear it's God's experience of God's elect God's people Job Paul David Habakkuk they all had experience and final final lesson weakness and helplessness in prayer are actually strengths are actually strengths but I didn't do it when I am weak then at that point

[ 21 : 39 ] I am strong God do you know as his purposes I mentioned Basil I find it very sad reading about the church fathers this man that went to the cave to memorize scripture he was plagued with headaches very severe headaches which prevented him he thought from getting on with the work of the gospel so he prayed to God and said Lord he prayed to God that you would take away the headaches and God took him away God took him away quickly but he noticed after a long while he noticed after a long while he was far far more subject to temptation since the headaches disappeared so what would you do

I asked myself what would have that do you know what Basil did Basil prayed to God and he said Lord if these severe headaches were your way of keeping me from temptation bring the headaches back and God sent them back they all serve the purpose these things which we think are against us they're actually for us they're sanctifying us they're preserving us my strength my strength do you want God's strength do you want God's power it's made perfect in our weakness our groans our helplessness our confusion our

I don't know what I should be praying for God's strength is made perfect in these situations one last verse Isaiah 40 29 he he God gives power to the faint if you're fainting you're feely God gives power to the faint by Isaiah 40 29 well the son of man is coming back him will he find faith on the earth will he find us continually going to him continually trusting him and continually believing him weak definitely helpless certainly turning to him and calling on his name may

God the Holy Spirit make his work his truth effectual to everyone else let's just bow heads in prayer  
our father in heaven take the things of Christ and make an option unite us in a living ongoing faith  
Lord we thank you for your word teach us teach us may we food to us keep us in your love keep us  
in your fear wash all our sins away in that fountain filled with blood drawn from Emmanuel's veins  
for sinners plunged beneath that blood to lose all their guilty sins hear as inertia answers in peace  
as we pray only in all in the name of the  
Lord Jesus Amen come to söz the cow insightsía Woah