

# Sermon Discussion Questions



LOOKOUT  
MOUNTAIN  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH

## “THE NECESSITY OF PERSISTENT PRAYER”

### Discuss

In C. S. Lewis’ children’s classic *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, the character named Edmund makes his way to the castle of the White Witch. He’s confronted at the door of the castle by a gray wolf, “Fenris Ulf,” the chief of the Witch’s Secret Police. After the wolf runs to check with the witch about admitting Edmund, he bounds back to say, “Come in! Come in! Fortunate favorite of the Queen—or else not so fortunate.” If you’ve read the whole book (or seen the movie), you’ll know how truly the wolf is speaking here. Edmund receives favor from the queen only so long as she can use him for her own purposes. Otherwise, she cares nothing for him.

The unjust judge in Luke’s parable similarly has no concern for the widow who “importunately” pleads her case (i.e., she’s troublesomely or overly urgent and persistent), but he ultimately shows her favor just to be rid of her. “And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night?” (v. 7) The problem, of course, is that we sometimes *feel* like God’s “unfavorite” child. What are we to do when we doubt God’s presence and caring provision?

- 1) Psalm 10 begins with the plea, “Why, O LORD, do you stand far off? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?” The parable of the unjust judge is followed by the promise, however, that God “will see that they get justice, and quickly.” (v. 8)
  - What do we know about God’s justice from reading his Word? (Consider, if time, Ps. 7:11, Ez. 16:59-60, the gospel story, and even the story of Jonah or Job.) What is good about God’s anger?
  - What does Jesus’ explanation of this parable, given before he began the parable, suggest about what his disciples would experience in this life? What is at least one reason for the delay in ultimate justice that we now experience? (See 2 Pet. 3:8-12.)
  - What gives us hope as we wait for justice? Explain in terms of practical steps a person can take to “lay hold of” hope.
- 2) We are told in Matthew 6:7 not to “keep on babbling like pagans” when we pray, thinking that we’ll be heard because of saying so many words. We’re not to be like pagans because our Father knows what we need before we ask him. (v.8)
  - How do we square this instruction with the point of this parable—that Jesus’ disciples should always pray and not give up?
  - Is it right or wrong to think that God is more likely to answer prayers that are persistently or repeatedly prayed? What about prayers that are prayed by lots of people versus a handful?
  - What is the relationship between faith and prayer? Why did Jesus end his teaching here by asking whether the Son of Man would find faith on the earth when he comes? (Luke 18:8)

DATE: February 2, 2020

SPEAKER: Joe/Brian

SERIES: Prayer

PASSAGE: Luke 18:1-8

### Pray

O GOD, OUR LOVING FATHER,  
We are so prone to not only growing weary in well-doing, but growing weary in well-praying. Forgive our prayerlessness and lack of persistence in prayer. Forgive us when we ask you once for something and then abandon praying for it when we don’t get the answer that we want right away.

We know that you do see trouble and grief, that you hear the desires of the afflicted, and that you defend the fatherless and the oppressed. Your justice will be swift. How grateful we are to know that your justice is also perfect and we can count on its coming.

So we pray with the psalmist, “Arise, LORD! Lift up your hand, O God. Do not forget the helpless.” (Ps. 10:12) We take our refuge in you, now and forever. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

**PRAY FOR HOME MISSIONS**  
Young Life Chattanooga

**PRAY FOR WORLD MISSIONS**  
International Justice Mission