

LIVING THE FAITH

As we Gather

In the time of Jesus all disputes in the Jewish community were taken to the elders, not to a court of law, so by telling the parable of the persistent widow Jesus was emphasising the need for prayer and also that God's children take their prayers to a loving and generous Father who gives them what He knows they need.

Reading Scripture **Psalm 119: 97-104** **Jeremiah 31:27-34** **2 Timothy 3:14-4:5**
Luke 18:1-8

Thinking Together

In Luke's record of the parable, Jesus was encouraging His disciples to live prayerful lives of courage, faith and hope. He did this by

- Contrasting praying with giving up (Luke 18:1)

If we don't pray we will lose heart and become discouraged. Living by faith means not giving up

What does it mean to "... always pray" or "pray continually" ? Discuss
1 Thessalonians 5:17 **Matthew 6:5-11**

Prayer is more than the spoken word. It is the desires of our hearts, and these are always before God. Heart's desires of believers are always within the will of God, so we are constantly in loving communication with the Father petitioning Him for His blessing

Why don't we always get what we want (think we need) when we want it? Discuss
2 Timothy 3:17-17 **John 17:17**

- Contrasting the widow with God's elect (Luke 18:2-5)

As a symbol of the poor and defenceless she was a woman, alone, without representation, without resources; her only weapon was her persistence

How are we different? Discuss **(Luke 11:13** **Ephesians 2:18 + 3:12** **Hebrews 4:14-16 +**
10:19-22 **1 John 2:1** **Romans 8:26-27** **Philippians 4:19)**

- Contrasting the judge with the Father (Luke 18:6-8)

The judge – appointed and not Jewish - made the rules of the court to suit himself. Judges in those days were known to be rapacious, corrupt and unjust

By contrast, how do you experience the Father? Discuss

In Closing

Jesus ends His teaching with the question "...when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on earth?"

If Jesus returned today, would you be ready and glad to meet Him?

PRAYER

God of judgement and mercy:
Help us to live the faith we have received so that
when Christ returns we may be found worthy to be
received into your presence, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen