

Men ought always to pray and not to faint (Quality: Good)

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[0 : 00] As the Lord may enable me to see me, I would ask your attention to three verses in the 18th chapter of the Gospel according to Luke.

The 18th chapter of the Gospel according to Luke, verses 6, 7, and 8. And the Lord said, hear what the unjust young said.

And shall God avenge his own men, which cry their life unto him, though he bear on with them?

I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth. It is not because there is no command in the Word of God for us to pray that we do not pray.

And it isn't because there is no example in the Word of God that we do not pray. And it is not because there is no encouragement in the Word of God that we do not pray.

[1 : 08] But my friends, if we spend an hour or two of prayer is to say, if we should spend a day of prayer is to say, we may be sure of this, it is because of sin in us, not because of any lack in our God.

I think it is well for us to remember that in the exercise of every grace, it is not a lack in our God, but it is a lack in us that does occasion that. You may say to me, well, of course, this is just to be a demonstration of our own fallen condition.

Yes, my friends, it is, but I do want us to remember that there is still and abiding and available fullness in the Lord Jesus Christ for those who are really needy.

And in this particular incident from which our text is taken, you will find that there is a parable set before us here, a description of a woman who was very brave in her need.

I don't think really that I need any of them that. Perhaps it would be true to say, my friends, that there are two people living upon the face of the earth, that is, in general condition of humanity, that are more needy than widows.

[2 : 17] They are the rekt of the one who is their breadwinner, the one who is their support and much of their comfort, and of their strength in times of difficulty and trouble.

Somebody of them who, with a woman in her weakness, can be bleak if a man is a real man. But in this case, we find that this woman was in great need.

Of course, she was poor. She had things taken away from her that were her real right, and they haven't been returned. And out of her poverty and her need, she tries to do something.

She feels that the man who is laid upon her spirit with such weight, and also her necessity is so great, that she must try to do something for herself. And therefore, she goes to this unjust yard, who neither fears God or man, and presents her position to him.

I have thought marital through the years, because when I was very exercised and concerned about the invitation that I had for the pastor at Rochdale, I'd come to the conclusion that there was no one, and nowhere, where I could receive any instruction from God as to his will, as to whether I could go on earth.

[3 : 34] And I will remember, trending over from his age of Newton, in those days, to hear Mr. John Reagan preach, and he preached from this particular parable, the parable of the importunate widow.

And I believe that that night, my friends, that I was very strongly and sacredly persuaded that my God could give me direction, that he could supply the need I had with some word or opening from himself that I might know what the will of the Lord was.

And from that very time, the Lord did open up the vine, and he did show me what the Lord's will was in that matter. It's a wonderful thing, Chris, to find, that the word of God is used, and brought, and applied, where I am in such a way, that faith is gone out toward the Lord Jesus Christ, toward God, revealed in Jesus Christ, and that we can really believe that he's able to do exceeding abundant about what we can ask of him, or even about what we can expect him to do.

You see, my vision was that. I felt that I really couldn't expect that the Lord would give me some special, extraordinary revelation of his will, and there didn't seem to be anything in the whole of the Bible from beginning to end.

I felt that I searched it to the very best of my ability, and there just didn't seem to be anything that the Lord would speak or give to me that would solve the problem that was upon my spirit.

[5 : 02] But the Lord is able to do those things that even we, in our sin, doubt whether he will do. But I also want us to notice, concerning this parable, that it does seem to be somewhat unlike most of the other parables.

We are told, of course, at the beginning of the parable, the reason why the Lord taught it, why he said it, he spoke a parable unto them, to this end, that men all have always to try and not to play.

We're not left in any doubt as to what the purpose of the parable was in the mind of Christ. Men might interpret the parable in some different ways, make some other application of it.

But you see, friends, we are told here, by the writer of the Gospel, under inspiration, exactly what was in the mind of the Lord Jesus Christ when he spoke this parable to his disciples, and others that were gathered around him at this time.

It was that men ought always to try and not to play. It doesn't just simply say, apostles ought always to try and not to play. And it doesn't say, priests ought always to try and not to play.

[6 : 14] And it doesn't say, my friends, a person who had some special office but in the church ought always to try and not to play. But this word used here, men, is a very extensive and universal one.

It says that man is of such a character and he is a creature of such great need and if he really does know himself, and this is the truth, he must be dependent upon his creator for everything that is good and he has sinned against God and the only way in which he can have any good from God is as a petitioner, one to extend an empty hand and ask the Lord to put it out of the riches of his grace and so the dear Lord Jesus doesn't say certain men or certain women or certain patriots of deity ought always to try and not to play.

And he doesn't say before you have been so richly blessed in the past, you ought on the ground of that, always to try and not to play. But he says, men, whatever be their condition, ought always to try and not to play.

And so this is of course the revelation of the mind of the Lord Jesus Christ. The fact that so many men and so many women of course here the word he used in a general sense applied to humanity in general, we realize this of course and it is well for us to remember that when the Lord Jesus Christ said men ought always to pray and not to play, he is speaking about a continuity and a constancy of prayer before the Lord.

He says, my creatures are needy creatures and wherever they look and whatever they do, they will always have need. The time will come when that need will remain known to them even if they don't know it now.

[8 : 05] And men ought always to try and not to play. This is the right position of men. All his needs before God, a dependence upon the God of all grace and the grace that he alone can give.

And although my friends have a multitude of persons I've said who never tried and never feel their heart inclined in prayer at all, that does negative the imperative nature of this truth.

Christ has said and he is showing that men are always trying to support of that which was in his mind. It is as though the Lord have crowned upon the condition of prayers in the world and there he knows that in some cities and towns there would be just and just and unjust and instead my friends are taking a just judge who deals rightfully with those who he administers the law to.

He takes the case of an unjust judge and here we see the contrast to the parable. There is comparison in it of course. The widow goes to the unjust judge she goes to die and again evidently by the application the Lord makes of it she doesn't only go during office hours but she goes during the night time as well and knocks him up and wakes him and he gets so weary of it in the end he says I will avenge him that speedily.

There is a parallel in the constancy of the widow going with the constancy of poor sinners approaching the mercy seat pleading for goodness and grace from God but there is also the contrast the Lord says look see that wicked man who's got no real principles at all within his heart or mind of regard to God or God in it he's not real by honesty or integrity he's not even an upright man he's an unjust judge he's a violator of the law that he himself is the administrator of and yet see the unjust judge gives ear to a woman who constantly goes and then of course there is the application that is in the word of our king and I want you to notice friends how the Lord Jesus Christ at the beginning of the word of our king says hear hear hear hear take notice of this what the unjust judge says do take notice of this this is an invaluable message you and I need to take notice of this hear what the unjust judge said but what did he say so I fear not God nor regard man dreadful condition the position my friends are in these people really

[10 : 37] I don't fear God or man bold brazen rebel against God and his authority as this judge said because this widow troubleth me I will avenge her lest by her continual coming she will admit it is as though the Lord says to my heart I trust this evening that I feel it has been light with some weight and power from my spirit that I have been yearning about and I hope that it may light with weight upon your spirit as well take notice take notice of the wife in which this judge reacts to the constancy of this woman coming to him above it take particular notice of that see how an unjust judge his resistance and his determination should take no notice of this poor woman is born down by the constancy of her coming to him now hear hear what he said hear what he said bear this in mind that even unjust judges and unjust men can be moved by constant cunning of persons and they are determined to deal with this man because it becomes a burden and now the Lord brings us contrast before his people

I am inshallah God all my friends the contrast here the unjust judge part of heart and infidel in nature one that is completely unconcerned with regard to the welfare of those who be covering as a judge and there is the contrast God all I know there are men and women in the world today whose spirit toward God is just the same as those of ancient day when they said thou art a hard man grieving where thou hast not serve and gather where thou hast not score that's just what the unjust judge did but you know it's an absolute lie friends with regard to God an absolute lie you and I know my friends many of us in this place I trust everyone of us in this place we know that our God is a God of grace but he gives he gives!

but my friend our God is a God who gives it's a character our God he gives he's a God of grace and that's what it means he gives he gives and he is mine for the cries of his needy one and he's willing to give out of the riches of his grace he's a God who gives oh I'm thankful for that and some of you that's bad that's the pathway of your life that you can spot out the places my friends where you prove the very character of your God he's a God yes yes that's why I told you I don't know about little marriage that my sister told me to elderly people gathered in their homes and all to be very good to them very gracious to them on a particular particular manner and the dear woman said to her husband she said my dear that is good she said he's been married he gives characteristic of our God he gives not mean things not mean things no the unjust grudging things but all my dear friends think of the origin of this right thing this very great characteristic of our

God it originated in our past eternity it's not something that just affects our God in time it isn't because man keeps going and worrying God but God does certainly isn't that but it originated in the eternal covenant of grace when the covenant was set up and was supported my friends in all things by the three glorious persons of the trinity declared in those three persons and there a very characteristic of our God was declared then I will give I will give that oh he did oh it's a blessing things this right here I come with my that's my heart by stone some of you may feel to be the same and then perhaps you've tried to cry your prayers are very very different to what you happen to be you want to feel more fervor more devotion more real desire more spiritual longing within your heart a greater urgency in waiting upon the Lord in prayer and there seem to be so many things that intervene and cover you and distract your attention and draw you away from the mercy seat but oh my friends our God is a God that lasts again he lasts again he lasts again not only the answer to prayer but also the very spirit of prayer itself think of the one with that if you should nag it you give it then you give it oh yes if we've dealt with nag it for days and days weeks and weeks is there a petitioner that my friends who is so far off from God who would go and prostrate themselves before him at the throne of his grace and say well if I perish

I'll perish but I must venture to him again and ask him to give me a spirit of God and heart of utterance doing his prayer because I feel to be so dried up in spiritual days well he's a God that gives and shall not this God this God who has revealed himself in Jesus Christ this God who has done such wonderful things as a gift to his only son this God who has led the course of heaven and has become a couple of this earth very man but also very God this God that did the man and did what he did and spoke what he did and placed his work on the name of the precious man and died to provide the sins of his people and who reminiscence of this work truth and shall not this God tell us this God to do great things great things prophet my friends of ancient days he says the Lord will do great things the Lord will do great things now you can look through the history of Israel and speak my friends of recent days what has happened to God's ancient people and there if you look through the history of Israel you'll see that

[16 : 57] God has done great things God has done great things don't forget that you know in one of these days Israel the Jews had their eyes open but behold that God has done great things Jesus and when they think of the campaign of Antigua from Syria and Jordan and the rest of them you know that came round like a host of hornets as though they were going to completely destroy them when their eyes were opened my friends they'll look back to 1967 and they'll say God has done great things of course it's our arms at present that have done great things they said you see it's just an adjudication of the creature that my dear friend of any eye of a man of an ancient is really open to the spirit of God they'll have to dress themselves with their crowns and their glory and their laurels and they'll have to be cast before the mercy team and they'll have to say it's God that has done great things that's what it will be don't forget that ministers of God will do the same sort of thing around in their congregations and think my friends well you see

I've labelled a lot and I've labelled hard and I've prayed ever so much and I've done it the word and how my friends are in the end you have to lay all the logs down before his feet and it's the Lord that has done great things that's where Israel has gone come to both spiritualism and an nationalism is our yesterday and if you come to that place my friends is where they say the Lord has done great things shall not God shall not God avenge deal just with you say no I don't like death I don't like death I don't like the word avenge I don't like the deal just with that's the meaning of the word and Christ said shall not God deal justly with his only name you say I wish Christ had said and shall not God deal graciously with his only name the friends Paul said that this evening if God deals graciously with you it will be on the ground of justice oh it will it will be a just act on the part of God everything that the Lord does for you in answer to your prayers my friends and I would that you might trace the hand of God in answering your friends more clearly than you have done but I would have you remember your friends that he never be here to have justice in answering the prayers of his people he will deal justly in all things in all things oh he who says make incredible the things of the justice of God be mended upon such a sinner as my soul all I could expect was judgment and condemnation and death if God should deal justly with me my friends look away to the cross there you will see the demonstration of that justice all the bending of indignation upon sin the bringing of one holy and pure as to be the place of another right down to death and to right there you see the exceeding sufferings of the man of

God I don't expect my friends there are many people really that attend chaplains and churches today that believe Isaiah 53 but listen friends there are still people on this earth who believe these words surely oh the evidence is so clear in my sight now there was a time when I was mine to it but surely he had borne our grief and carried our glory yet we did his feet and the spirit of God as though he was one suffering from his own sins and now we know that he never did sin he was doing this standing in their fights bearing their burden and their guilt bearing it as wide as the straight go to his people that's what he!

He did do! Oh friends here is a wonderful thing the eyes of the understanding being enlightened to see too big things that we have never seen under mind first the sinner and then the riches of God's grace in Jesus Christ justly justly and show not God be you justly with his own with his own I like to break up the verse here with his own with his own or they belong to him they belong to him this unjust judge you might have had no relationship with the middle at all when she came to him he could have said you're not my son you're not my daughter you're not my daughter in law I've got no interest in you no interest in you you're not my own you're not my own but he's not my God God God revealed in Jesus Christ deal justly of age of course it means deal righteously it can't be otherwise but it's on the ground of the perfection of eternal justice he will deal justly to his own his own my own children my own sheep oh said

Christ and he speaks about the church of Christ but my friends he also speaks about the individual members of the church the individual believers within the church his own little land and his own little sheep he says my sheep hear my voice they belong to me they belong to me that they will try and pluck them out of my hand and he will see that there is a strength that surrounds them and a purpose that will never be for him you see now my sheep they belong to me perhaps some of you may feel friends at the present time that you're losing somebody they're gradually sticking out of your hands as it were there was a time when you felt they were really yours and you could hold them and deal with them and mold them as you will and now that's slipping away from them perhaps my friends we have to learn a lesson like that in order that we may know that there's one out of whose hands his people weren't my sheep they are my sheep

[23 : 01] I'll never cast them off I'll never allow them to leave them away I'll never allow them to plunge into the pit even if they do become god even in their sin and way of foolishness I'll go where they are and I'll bring them up out of the horrible pit and the mire clay and set their feet again up on the rock and they go I will do that because they are my!

shall not God be his own elect his own chosen one his own who are chosen in Christ his own who looks upon his own dear son the first elect and because of the love that he bears toward his only a son that he views there being him he bears the same love with it and shall not God be his own elect my friends if you view the doctrine of election as indeed it is wonderfully and gloriously shown in Jesus Christ you'll find that that doctrine is a doctrine of inevitable and eternal love if you view the doctrine of election anywhere else but in Jesus Christ you'll say it's a hard thing and we can't hear it we can't listen I don't wonder that multi-fews of religious people who hear the doctrine of election proclaimed and taught that they turn away from it because they have no eyes to see this blessed doctrine in

Christ there is the doctrine of the person yet a multitude of people who there were laid upon the heart of Christ committed into the hands of Christ who were united mystically under Christ and his union with him entitled his life of suffering and his grateful death the agony of himself as matter that is his body and there for the elect Christ out the elect Christ out shall not God avenge his own elect which cry oh yes that's all they can do they say I can't cry all I can do is cry they cry they cry to them cry well friends it may be that you've got to that place when you don't feel you can pray long all you can do is to cry I perhaps have mentioned to you how some long time ago

I happened to be reading those verses in the book of the Exodus where the Lord comes along and closes in the desert! and at the burning foot he speaks to him and he says I am the Lord God of my father with our claim and Isaac and Jacob and he says I have surely seen the of my people in Egypt and I have heard their cry by reason of their pastness and now my friends as I began to examine that word even the Hebrew word is translated the word cry there it doesn't seem to be associated with orders, prayer, the expression of words before God but rather the shriek of anguish that goes out of this man's lips when the bit of the taskmaster comes to believe that that's all he can do just if he shriek out the Lord said I have even heard that I have even heard that and they couldn't do anything else but cry like that I even heard that yes I heard that my ear was also attuned to them and my eye was so upon them and my heart was so lunging to the Lord that he didn't miss that he didn't miss that it wasn't the loudness of the shriek though Moses having his author for 40 years I've been unminded and might be reading my dear friends there's someone here in the list of the troubles and distress of their soul who says I'm afraid the Lord has grown up mind for me it's such a long time now that I be crying and shrieking if you like to the Lord with regard to this painful man that I'm asking to surely he must have forgotten to be gracious oh you're not the inventor of that word it was written long ago in my faith but no mind you this it wasn't true to be expressive not a place but an unbelief my dear friends if you look at the Lord to correct the person who says he has touched me on my belief if you believe him he didn't he didn't he had the word he shall not go to any of his own electric crown and let no explain now

I said to my friends that the widow woman probably went to the judge not only an office house but an hour and an office house dying night he says here's the aspiration of a thousand you see that's where I got it from we don't react to the widow going back and like that do we?

[27 : 48] but the Lord says it in his own word he says here is someone that cries day and night my people cry day and night sometimes the cries seem more intense by night than day you know very well my friends that sometimes the burden of the combined spirit keeps you awake through the hours of the night becomes more intense toward the morning perhaps between two and three o'clock when the natural power of the body of mine seemed to wane to their lowest head that's the time my friends when the devil will take a bang and try and come in and up this siege train and lay it over the cat but I will say to the Lord if you can't get a slip do remember this my child that I have a son of a sheep beautiful day no doubt when you lie awake at night and I hope you don't forget the Lord is in the street you won't be lying if you're doing good great walk in the morning when the devil's besetting you you haven't got any defense you won't be lying if you're here to still cry

I never snuck a lot of sleep so good I use this of course in a purely definite sense to really definite sense I don't know why I think you have experience by night and by day I don't know what it is when I have some weight during the night it isn't so very often I have to I'm glad to because the Lord does give me good deals because if they have been tired and they hanged out and if you've been so heavy upon my spirit I just haven't been able to sleep all night it's a wonderful thing to be persuaded of when we kept awake like that with all my friends sitting here outside even tonight as well as tonight and I think there's also another application of this and that is tonight it is a good thing to cry when we're in the daylight in the sunlight you see when the Lord is near and the Son of Righteousness has arisen upon us for healing in his wings it's a good thing to cry down and to continue in prayer when the Lord is near all take advantage of those vast seasons when the Lord draws near and still present your supplications to him the friend says the Lord withdraws himself and you say

I know why because I'm bringing the Spirit of God I've ruined this blessed out of my best best my mind I am sick for a friend of his night time don't forget day and night day and night day and night he restored my soul in the night time when the daylight's gone and it's all dark and I brought the darkness upon myself and I'm dispensed as it were by my very simple action this blessed one who was the light of my soul I was still crying in the dark as well as in the night yes so I'm not going to do you let me cry that night unto him though he bear long with them though he bear long with them yes it may seem a long delay but oh my friends don't think that delays are occasioned by any weakness of the Lord any alteration of his mind or heart of all his children now he is still very very critical although he long been up the apostle Paul asked the Lord to take away his dreadful falling in the flesh his piercing spacer was driven through his person from which he couldn't deliver himself at all and it seemed to be so painful and distressing and obstructing of every good thing that he wanted to do he asked the Lord

Christ of everyone he writes about fifteen years afterwards and he says it's still with me though he bear long with me and yet my friends how many thousands of prayers that were acquainted in that dear man's heart by the very thought in the flesh the Lord had heard an answer during those fifteen years think my friends how that painful thought had been the contributory cause of so much good to that dear man's soul so he said nevertheless I rejoice in my infirmity that the power of Christ may rest for me and I think the way my friends in which the Lord uses this painful and adversity to contribute to the good of the dear apostle though he bear longer but I tell you that he will heal just in them he will avenge him he will be gracious oh friends bring the three words together see here the harmony of these sins in Christ how heaven's love and heaven's justice meets in one blessed person and shall not go away heal just and be gracious unto his own who cry that night

I tell you he will avenge him and that's been there never too late never too late say not my soul from whence can God relieve thy care remember that omnivotence had servants everywhere his matters are supply and his thoughts supremely kind God never is before his time and never is behind that seems to me my friend sung just a little of the wonderful lessons in these words of the Lord concerning this for me little did she think my friend when she was dealt with by the judge like that and so persistent that she went and then in the end the judge did restore probably to her what had been taken false to promise little did she think my friend there would be a record of this not just simply in the annals of some parish or town not just simply in some legal document that was put in the archives of that city but my friend in the very word of God very very word of God it's written for our instruction written for our comfort written for our encouragement

[33 : 32] God's God has made to say I feel like dear friend of mine you saw and say that this preaching came out of the Lord there's there any application there's there any application there's there won't be required to some poor sinner stop there going to be some good result of that which has been sown well then your heart knows whether there hasn't been any application of this truth or no I do trust that as a result of the few words that we've spoken particularly as a result of the blessing of God getting his own word to your heart you may be able to cry and to continue to cry to try and believe that here is the air that is open and here you'll cry whether it be my life or whether it be or not the Lord has his blessings as you may be as you may be