

Pray Persistently

Preamble

- We are blessed to be a blessing to the world around us
- We have the privilege to set aside the next 21 days to pray, fast and seek God
- What a privilege to set aside 21 days to pray and seek God
- A time to re-energise in the Lord
- A time to Fast - Fasting turns down the volume of the world and turns up the volume of the Lord
 - Fasting isn't about impressing God but simply enlarging our Spirit man by saying no to our soul and body
- A time to bring him our worship
- A time to give him our praise
- A time to Bring him our requests
- A time to STOP and to seek
- A time to linger in his presence

This is also a time to be a blessing to those we interact with each other

- **Begin with Prayer** - I will pray for the people in my life and the places I am in.
- **Listen** - I will listen to and discover the needs of others and the places where God is at work
- **Eat** - I will share meals and spend time with people
- **Serve** - I will respond to the needs of others and help them in practical and impactful ways
- **Share your story** - I will share the story of Jesus and he is doing in my life with others

Introduction

- How long should you pray?
- What if it seems there has been no answer?

Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. [2] He said: “In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared what people thought. [3] And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, 'Grant me justice against my adversary.' [4] “For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or care what people think, [5] yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won't eventually come and attack me!' ” [6] And the Lord said, “Listen to what the unjust judge says. [7] And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? [8] I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?” **Luke 18:1-8**

- Jesus told them a parable to SHOW them that they should ALWAYS PRAY and NOT give up.
- Kept coming with her plea - Grant me justice against my enemy
- No answer for some time

"I live in the spirit of prayer. I pray as I walk about, when I lie down and when I rise up. And the answers are always coming. Thousands and tens of thousands of times have my prayers been answered. When once I am persuaded that a thing is right and for the glory of God, I go on praying for it until the answer comes. George Mueller never gives up!" **George Muller**

- The widow eventually gets justice
- Will not God bring Justice for his chosen ones who.
- Cry out to him Day and Night
- He will see that they get justice and QUICKLY
- However will he find faith on the earth - People who believe, and hold onto God's Word

Faith Prayer Moves Mountains

In the morning, as they went along, they saw the fig tree withered from the roots. Peter remembered and said to Jesus, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree you cursed has withered!"

"Have faith in God," Jesus answered. "I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins. " **Mark 11.20-16**

- Have Faith In God
- You Have the divine ability by faith in God to move mountains - no doubt
- Whatever you ask for in Prayer, believe that you have received and it will be yours
- And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them
- So that your father in heaven may forgive you your sins

It's impossible to please God apart from faith. And why? Because anyone who wants to approach God must believe both that he exists and that he cares enough to respond to those who seek him. **Hebrews 11:6 MSG**

Fervent Prayer

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. [17] Elijah was a man just like us. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years. [18] Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops. **James 5:16-18**

- Confess your sins to each other - Community, cleanses

- The fervent prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective
 - Fervent - Passionate intensity - Spirit, soul and body together in the place of prayer
- Elijah our example - He was a man just like us

Pray till the answer comes

And Elijah said to Ahab, "Go, eat and drink, for there is the sound of a heavy rain." So Ahab went off to eat and drink, but Elijah climbed to the top of Carmel, bent down to the ground and put his face between his knees.

"Go and look toward the sea," he told his servant. And he went up and looked.

"There is nothing there," he said.

Seven times Elijah said, "Go back."

The seventh time the servant reported, "A cloud as small as a man's hand is rising from the sea."

So Elijah said, "Go and tell Ahab, 'Hitch up your chariot and go down before the rain stops you. '"

Meanwhile, the sky grew black with clouds, the wind rose, a heavy rain came on and Ahab rode off to Jezreel. The power of the Lord came upon Elijah and, tucking his cloak into his belt, he ran ahead of Ahab all the way to Jezreel. **1 Kings**

18.41-46

- Six Times with seeming no answer
- On the seventh time a small sign that his word maybe fulfilled
- But Elijah is filled with faith
- Three and half years it hadn't rained and now at the continued and consistent prayers of one man it begins to rain

"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. **Matthew 7.7**

I hope in God, I pray on, and look yet for the answer. They are not converted yet, but they will be. **George Muller**

Conclusion

1. You should ALWAYS pray and NEVER give up - Jesus

"If you have been waiting for an answer to prayer for a long time, remember that long waits often occur right before the biggest mountains come down." **Jim**

Cymbala

2. Pray in Faith - We said this last week

- But it comes up again today - Trust God, he is good

3. Make sure you have no unforgiveness in your heart

If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened; **Psalms**

66:18

"It is not enough to begin to pray, nor to pray aright; nor is it enough to continue for a time to pray; but we must pray patiently, believing, continue in prayer until we obtain an answer." **George Muller**