

Luke 18:1-8 Talking with my Father – Why pray?

CONSIDER: We often feel weary, physically as well as spiritually. What times do you feel physically weary? What are the times / things that cause you to feel Spiritually weary? Are there ever times when you feel you just want to give up?

1. Jesus is not unaware of the difficulties we face. The context of this passage is quite a difficult passage (17:20-37). Jesus used the question of the Pharisees to address the disciples and warn of difficulties in the days before Jesus returns (i.e. now!!). What difficulties does Jesus point out (v22-24, v26-28, v30-33)? [I know that this is a hard passage to work through, so you may need prompts from your group leader!!]. How is what Jesus points out seen in this day and in our struggles?
=> Actually, there is real encouragement for us here ... Jesus knows what we are going through, and is concerned to teach us and help us in these difficulties!!
2. What is Jesus' answer to these difficult times (18:1)? What are the two options here? The term in the NIV 'not give up' is translated differently in some versions – have a look at the other translations. What is implied by these terms? [I really like the AV rendering: 'not faint' ... it's not about turning back from God, but being overcome and unable to cope or keep on going on]. Do you ever feel like that – if appropriate, share what kind of times you struggle in!
3. The story Jesus tells in 18:2-8a isn't intended so that we can think that God is like the judge nor that we are like the widow. In what ways is God *not* like the judge? What does it mean about how ready we should be about coming to God in our difficulties? We are both like and unlike the widow in her circumstances – what parallels can we draw with the widow? We are most unlike the widow in her actions – what do we learn about what happens when we come to God?
4. v7 says 'Listen to what the unjust judge says' [i.e. not what he does]. What are we supposed to see of what God says? Is that our experience? Why might it seem not to be so some times?
5. v7-8 point to God's justice. When is that fully seen? Why might it sometimes appear that we are having to continually cry out to God? What *should* our response be?
6. v8b bring the big challenge. What is the implication for how our prayer life should be? But, also, what is the implication in regard to 'keeping going'?

CONTINUE TO APPLY & RESPOND:

- If there was one thing you could highlight that God is challenging you about to pray over / change / seek His help in, what is it?
- What can others pray for you to help you respond to His challenge?

Don't forget to leave time to share and pray together.

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