

Persistence

No. 226

Introduction.

I. Luke records this parable of Jesus in the 11th chapter of his gospel. (Lk. 11:5-13).

5 And He said to them, "Suppose one of you shall have a friend, and shall go to him at midnight, and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves; 6 for a friend of mine has come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; 7 and from inside he shall answer and say, 'Do not bother me; the door has already been shut and my children and I are in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything.' 8 "I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will get up and give him as much as he needs. 9 "And I say to you, ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you.10 "For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it shall be opened. 11 "Now suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he? 12 "Or if he is asked for an egg, he will not give him a scorpion, will he? 13 "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?"

A. Turning to Luke the 18th chapter Luke records a similar parable of Jesus. (Lk. 18:1-8).

1 Now He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart,2 saying, "There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God, and did not respect man. 3 "And there was a widow in that city, and she kept coming to him, saying, 'Give me legal protection from my opponent.' 4 "And for a while he was unwilling; but afterward he said to himself, 'Even though I do not fear God nor respect man, 5 yet because this widow bothers me, I will give her legal protection, lest by continually coming she wear me out.' " 6 And the Lord said, "Hear what the unrighteous judge said; 7 now shall not God bring about justice for His elect, who cry to Him day and night, and will He delay long over them? 8 "I tell you that He will bring about justice for them speedily. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?"

B. These parables teach us a lesson on “Persistence.”

1. Both the needy host at midnight and the widow are real examples of persistence.
 2. They refused to give up until they obtained their requests.
- II. The word “persistence” means “persevere, keep going, never give up, be unyielding, never say die, stick to it, stop at nothing.”
- III. Persistence is an admirable characteristic and it is a characteristic that is needed in so many aspects of life.
- I. **Rearing Children** - We need persistence in rearing children.
- A. It has never been easy raising children, and it is certainly not easy today.
 - B. What father or mother has not felt like “throwing in the towel” on certain days? Yet the successful parent is the one who never quits trying despite many setbacks and problems and discouragements.
 - C. We need to realize that the prizes of life are not at the beginning of any journey, but at the end.
 1. God has commissioned us to train them in the way they should go, and we should persist and stick to our great assignment.
 2. We must lay one brick at a time until we have built into our children the love of God, respect for authority, undying faith in Jesus. We cannot, we must not quit, but must try and try again.
- II. **Teaching Someone The Gospel** - We need persistence in teaching someone the gospel.
- A. Some have never known the joy of leading someone to Christ because of a lack of persistence. They tried, but when rejected they quit.
 - B. **This should not be our course.**
 1. We must think of each person as a potential “gold mine” for Jesus and persist in our endeavors to win that soul to Christ.
 2. **We must not let Satan discourage or hinder us from teaching others.** We must never let Satan deceive us into thinking that teaching others is not our responsibility.
 3. As long as there is breathe in our bodies and the love of God is in our souls, we must never cease to try to reach others with the gospel. We are debtors. (Rom. 1:14-15a).
 4. **The friend who recently passed away &** Couple in western Kansas who were married about 40 years.
- III. **Bible Study** - We need persistence in Bible study.
- A. Some people only occasionally study the scriptures, but are disappointed that they do not get more out of the Bible and are not able to teach others.
 - B. It is only through persistent study that the precious truths of the Bible will be ours to benefit from and to share.
 1. Let us systematically and diligently study the scriptures each day.
 2. Let us follow these exhortations. (Psa. 1:1, 2; 119:105; 2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Pet. 2:2; 3:15; 2 Pet. 3:18).

IV. **Work** - We need persistence in work.

- A. Too many of us work hard for a while and then quit.
- B. One reason for this is a lack of persistence, **a lack of stick-to-it-I've-ness**. We fail to recognize that a hit and miss religion will never get the job done. To be successful we must be persistent. It often takes years to see the results of a good work, but the results are worth it.
- C. The scriptures admonish us to be persistent. (Gal. 6:9, 10; 1 Cor. 15:58; Tit. 2:14).

V. **Prayer Life** - We need persistence in prayer life.

- A. Jesus emphatically stressed that fact in the 2 parables we read at the beginning of our lesson. There are many time when we feel that we are not “getting through.” Certain days we feel like prayer is not worth all the effort.
- B. But we should continue to pray, said Jesus, like the host who continued to “bug” his friend at midnight and the widow who continued to “bug” the judge.
 - 1. **Persistence in prayer will pay off.** God said it and I believe it.
 - 2. **When the devil whispers in our ears**, “You don’t need to pray today...you are too tired or too busy,” we should ignore his destroying advice and get on our knees in prayer. We must never cease to pray.
 - 3. **Jesus said.** (Lk. 11:9).
 - a. The words “ask, seek, knock” are present tense in the original Greek language that denotes continuous action.
 - b. More literally Jesus’ words should be rendered, “Keep on asking and it will be given you; keep on seeking and you will find; keep on knocking and it will be opened to you.”
 - 4. Paul wrote. (Col. 4:2; 1 Thess. 5:17).

Conclusion.

- I. **After a great snow storm a little fellow** began to shovel a path through a large snow-bank before his grandfather’s door. He had nothing but a small shovel to work with. A man passing by asked, “How do you expect to get through that drift?” The boy replied, “By keeping at it.”
 - A. **Without question we need to keep at it.** We need persistence in life.
 - B. Persistence will bring rich blessings to us in life and will enable us to win the prize of everlasting life. The quitter is a loser.
- II. Some years ago **the wife of a prominent Kentucky man** had a nervous breakdown and her mind became almost blank. Specialists were called in, but they could do nothing for her. They advised her husband to take her to the Rocky Mountains where she could become aroused and be her old self again. He closed his business and their home, and took her to a beautiful mountain resort where all was quiet and peaceful. He served her with the most devoted affection but never but never one time did she give any hint that she knew him. All he received in return for his devotion was a blank stare. **Then he took her to the sunny shores of Florida.** One Sunday afternoon she lay down on the couch and dropped off into a deep sleep. Her breathing was long and regular. Her husband sat beside her and stroked her forehead and kissed her cheek, and prayed that she should come back to him. Finally, she opened her eyes, looked up at her husband with the old look of love, and said, “Where have you been so

long?" And with tears of love and gratitude running down his cheeks he replied, "My darling, I've been right here, waiting for you to come back to me."

- III. **Friends, don't you see!** That is what God has been doing. God has been waiting for you to respond to His love.
- A. Some of you are His children who have gone back into the world. He is waiting for you to come back.
 - B. **Some of you are unsaved.** You have never committed your life to Christ. He is waiting for you to come to Him for salvation and everlasting life.
 - C. Come now and be baptized for the remission of sins. Come to Christ and serve Him all your days. Come as we sing.

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