

SERMON FOR LONDON - JULY 21, 2024

LUKE 18:1-8

Today we will meditate on the parable of Jesus found in the Gospel of Luke, chapter 18, verses 1 to 8, which deals with the theme of Justice. I want to highlight three important points that each of us can apply throughout our lives:

1. Persistence
2. Unceasing Prayer
3. The Presence of God Who Delivers Justice to His Own (Just God)

Jesus uses the figure of a persistent widow and an unjust judge to teach us about the importance of not giving up on seeking what is right and just in life.

1. Persistence

The fact that the judge neither feared God nor respected men did not stop the widow from persisting in her cause. She was perseverant and knew that this was her only option. If you do not know what you want, you will do what others want. Do not give up on your miracle, move forward and walk according to the word of God.

This widow represents those who are marginalized and powerless in society. In the biblical context, widows were particularly vulnerable, often helpless and without resources, with no one to defend them. This is something which can still be found today in our world, because the main provider is no longer present.

The widow had a just cause. She wanted justice, not revenge. The perseverance of this widow teaches us that we must be tireless in our pursuit of justice. Often, in the face of difficulties and injustices, we feel like giving up. But today we are called not to give up. Do not give up, you are capable and have a powerful God.

2. Unceasing Prayer

Jesus teaches us that prayer builds our miracle in the spiritual world. The widow knocked on the judge's door seeking a solution to her problems. Just as in Matthew 7:7-8, "Ask and it will be given to you, seek, and you will find, knock and it will be opened". You have a depiction of this here at St. Paul's, in William Holman Hunt's painting 'Light of the World'.

Praying is a duty expected of everyone. Let us pray with perseverance, for prayer is the oxygen for the Christian's soul and the thermometer of our faith.

Praying is a privilege given to us freely. We were separated from God, and Jesus brought us closer to Him, giving us the freedom to seek Him in prayer every day, at any moment. Individual prayer can be done in the temple at any time of the day, not just during formal worship.

3. The Presence of God Who Delivers Justice to His Own (Just God)

If even a judge without a sense of justice answers the widow's plea, how much more will our God, who is just and loving, respond to our prayers. We can be sure that He hears our prayers and intervenes on our behalf, even in ways that are unknown to us.

Do not let the enemy steal your faith during the waiting period. Psalm 40:1 says, "I waited patiently for the Lord; he turned to me and heard my cry." God will deliver justice to His own because His name is our justice. Therefore, renew yourself in the Lord and remain firm, for your hope in God will never be frustrated.

However, Jesus ends the parable with a challenging question: "When He returns, will He find faith on the earth?" Jesus calls us to reflect on our own persistence and faith. Are we truly trusting in God's justice? Let us remain in prayer and cry out for justice, even when we do not see immediate answers. For He is God yesterday, today, and forever.

Conclusion

People of God, this parable of the persistent widow and the unjust judge encourages us to be persistent in prayer and in the pursuit of justice. We are encouraged to continue trusting in God, who is just and loving, and never to give up in the face of adversity. We must follow the example of the widow, continuously crying out for justice, knowing that our Lord hears and will respond. We have to ask ourselves how we can be agents of justice, in a world full of injustice.

Let us pray that God strengthens our faith, gives us courage to fight injustices, and uses us as instruments of His justice in this world. May the Lord bless this message and may the grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.