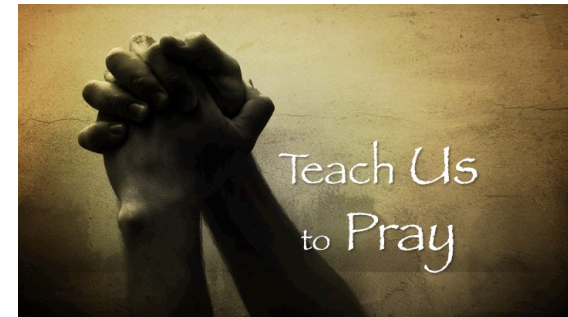


## **Praying Together**

Spend time praying together with your group, giving time to share joys and concerns, but making sure you have enough time to actually pray. Jot down your own prayer requests before your gathering begins.



## **An Invitation to Prayer**

**Luke 18: 1-8**

**Eric Sorenson**

**April 15, 2018**

## **Notes on How to Pray for Others**

### **How to Pray for our Church**

Pray for unity and a growing sense of community

Pray for the Senior Pastor search committee as it begins to form

Pray for the church staff during this time of transition

Pray that our church board will be filled with God's wisdom and insight

### **Other Concerns:**

Pray for our Community, the World, and our Missionaries.

## Opening Up

Is there a particular parable (biblical or not) that you find to be memorable? Why is it so memorable?

## Digging Into Our Text

Think about prayer for a few minutes. In a few words, how would you describe it? What do you find compelling about prayer, and what do you find intimidating? What is it about prayer that you find to be mystifying? What is a thing or two about prayer that you would most like to learn in this teaching series on prayer?

Read over Luke 18.1-8. What is the point of this parable? Assuming Jesus made up the story, why do you think he spins this particular story to make his point? Using just three or four adjectives, describe the way the widow is feeling. What kind of character is the judge? Why won't he grant this woman justice, and what finally makes him give in? Is our God like this judge? Compare the judge and the God of the Bible.

What is Jesus trying to assure his listeners of in verse 7 and the beginning of verse 8? The very final line of the parable inserts a comment about faith. Why does Jesus bring in faith at the very end; what has this parable to do with faith? What do you glean about prayer from this parable?

This woman is described as crying out to the judge in verse 7, which is a common way the Bible describes prayer. Take a look at some of these passages: 1 Samuel 1.15; Psalm 27.7; 88.1; Hebrews 5.7. Why do you think prayer is so often described as crying out; what does that say about the nature of prayer? (Note that in Lamentations 2.19, God's people are even encouraged to cry out in prayer)

Can you think of any other verses or stories in the Bible that urge people to pray? How do those passages help us better understand the call to prayer? What does the parable in Luke 18 tell us about how God regards our prayers? What else does Jesus say about that in Luke 11.10?

The last line of the parable seems to indicate that the widow is an example of faith. How does this story about her demonstrate faith? Philip Yancey writes: "Prayer for me is about alignment between me and God. It's as much about me listening to God, and changing through that experience, as it is about God listening to me and responding in some miraculous way to my requests." Do you agree? How do we change by praying?

## Getting Personal

Think more about how prayer changes us. Are there any ways that you can think of that prayer has changed, or is changing, you?

## For Pondering in Private

How does your encounter with Luke 18 affect your thinking about your personal prayer life? Is there something concrete you can do to extend or deepen your prayers?

