

### RELATED SCRIPTURES

### STUDY FOR SERMON FROM 7.30.23

Hebrews 7:23-25 | Luke 17:20-37 | 2 Corinthians 5:6-10

### SUMMARY

In many of the parables Jesus taught, he would begin by saying, “For the kingdom of heaven is like this.” The Parable of the Persistent Widow is different; Jesus could have started this parable by saying, “For the kingdom of heaven is *not* like this.” In this parable, we read about an unjust judge and widow who continually pesters him until he finally relents and gives her justice. A hasty interpretation might make one think God operates similarly: “If I pester God enough, he will eventually answer my pleas.” However, Jesus is utilizing extremes in this parable. If an unjust judge can be persuaded to give justice to a widow—the most marginalized of the marginalized in society—how much *more* will the Father give justice to those he loves? The Lord is not only just, but he is perfectly just. Those who trust in the Lord are not marginalized by him; instead, they are brought near and given intimate access to him. Additionally, a quick read of this parable might make one believe that the Lord will give his children anything they ask for if they only ask him enough; however, this is not the case. Sometimes (quite often), the Lord tells his children “No.” This parable should be considered in context to be understood correctly. The narrative that immediately precedes this parable details questions posed to Jesus regarding God’s coming kingdom. The prayer for his return is the one prayer the followers of Jesus can pray persistently for with full assurance that he will answer in the affirmative. Jesus *will* come again, and when he does, he will set right everything that is wrong. He will bring his perfect justice into the world; he is the Just Judge.

### GROUP QUESTIONS

Share something that surprises, encourages, or troubles you from the sermon or your direct reading of Luke 18:1- 5.

Does God answer our prayers according to our deepest desires? Why or why not? How does the way God answers our prayers differ from how the parable’s unjust judge responds to the widow?

How does the hope of Christ’s return give you hope? In what way does that knowledge affect how you face your day, if at all?

If there’s one thing Jesus would want you to walk away believing and receiving as a result of this portion of Scripture, what is that thing?

### CLOSE IN PRAYER

As you pray, be sure to include today’s themes in what you bring before God.