

Sunday, January 15, 2017 - "Persistent in Prayer" - Doug Kempton

Key Passages: Luke 17:20-18:17

- Feel free to read the passage(s) out loud as a group
- Allow the group to share freely about what stood out to them from the passage or from Sunday's message

Main Ideas

- The past few weeks we have been examining Jesus telling his disciples what it means to be FAITHFUL
 - Everything we have in play for the kingdom. putting our faith into action, forgiving those who sin against us
- Jesus tells the parable of the women and the judge and ends with v8: Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?"
- When the son of man comes...
 - is referring to the 2nd coming of Christ and he is really answering the question from Chapter 17:20-21 "When will the kingdom of God come?"
 - He's talking about eternal life and he says the Kingdom of God is in the midst of you or inside you
 - The kingdom of God is all around us, in our reach, and it's here
 - Kingdom of God is both NOW & NOT YET (here AND more to come)
- But in 17:27-28 Jesus presents a list of GOOD THINGS that can distract us from being faithful to God
 - Good things in the wrong place of priority can choke out our faithfulness
 - Doug gave the example about how some good things have gotten in the way of him doing **15 minutes with God**
- The question becomes: **How are we to stay faithful amidst the noise?**
 - Jesus answers with a parable of a woman and a judge
 - Prayer = the antidote for not being in faithful
 - There is call to be Persistent in prayer
 - Widow = helpless/oppressed (only the judge ruling in her favor could give her what she needed)
 - We are the widow
 - 18:5...The judge responds to the widow so that he doesn't get a headache from her nagging
 - And Jesus makes a profound point... If an unrighteous, selfish judge who doesn't care about anyone but himself can give justice **how much more will God give justice IF we are willing to be persistent in asking**
- Why to stay persistent in prayer?
 - The need is still there
 - It's the path to peace (Philippians 4:4-7)
 - It's the path to humility
 - Lack of prayer —> we think we don't need God
 - Us saying to God, If you don't show up, I have nothing
 - **Your Prayer life is an indicator of your humility**
- The pharisee and the tax collector (Luke 18:9-14)
 - Pharisee exalts himself (sometimes we have more of the pharisee in us than we know or like to admit)
 - Tax collector knows he is a "widow"
 - Like children we need to know our desperate need for our abba father

Questions (Feel free to use all of these, some of these, or none of these)

1. How has God or how is God challenging you to be faithful over the past couple of weeks?
2. How does the idea that the Kingdom of God is now AND not yet impact your thinking and your life?
3. What are some of the things that distract you from being faithful? Specifically what are some of the good things that do or have the potential to distract you from faithfulness?
4. How are you doing at being persistent in prayer?
5. What are some of the things in your heart or your life that you need to recommit to praying for?
6. If your prayer life is an indicator of your humility, how are you doing at being humble before the Lord?
7. How would your life look different if you wholeheartedly believed that you have and can do nothing without God?
8. What is God calling you to or inviting you into as a result of this passage and/or message?