



International Bible Lessons Commentary

Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series

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Luke 18:1-8 New International Version July 15, 2018

The [International Bible Lesson](#) (*Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series*) for **Sunday, July 15, 2018**, is from **Luke 18:1-8**. **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** follow the verse-by-verse *International Bible Lesson Commentary*. **Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further** will help with class preparation and in conducting class discussion: these hints are available on the [International Bible Lessons Commentary](#) website along with the *International Bible Lesson* that you may want to read to your class as part of your Bible study. You can discuss each week's commentary and lesson at the [International Bible Lesson Forum](#).

(Luke 18:1) Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up.

The Apostle Paul wrote, “pray without ceasing” (1 Thessalonians 5:17). Depending on your translation, we should either “pray always,” which can mean to be in a spiritual state to pray before and whenever a situation calls for prayer and whenever a need arises, as well as at daily regular times for prayer; or, “always pray” which can mean before making any decision, taking any action, and as often as the Holy Spirit prompts us to pray. Pray and do not give up or lose heart — pray until God tells you “yes” or “no” or “wait.” Pray for God to give you grace to persist in prayer until you receive God’s answer, or until you see that you were praying for the wrong things or for the wrong timing and need to stop praying.

(Luke 18:2) He said: “In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared what people thought.

This judge was the opposite of God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ love and respect each other and both love, care for, and respect the people they have created in their image. Jesus evaluated the character of the judge and the judge serves as a bad example for anyone to follow. The love of Christ for us encourages us to always pray. Jesus always prayed — even in the darkest hours on a mountaintop and before His greatest trials — Jesus serves as our good example. If a bad judge will help a persistent widow, how much more will our heavenly Father and Jesus help us in answer to our prayers.

(Luke 18:3) And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, ‘Grant me justice against my adversary.’

The widow had no husband to help her, perhaps he had been murdered and their land stolen by her adversary. Queen Jezebel had Naboth murdered to steal his land for King Ahab (see 1 Kings 21). The widow may have had children to care for and no means to keep them from starving. Whatever the issue, she had been treated unjustly by her adversary or opponent and the judge was acting unjustly by repeatedly refusing to hear her case.

(Luke 18:4) “For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, ‘Even though I don’t fear God or care what people think,

Jesus did not say how long she persisted or whether or not she called out to the judge morning, noon, and night, but she was relentless in her pursuit of justice. She approached the judge as though her life and the life of her children depended on her receiving justice (and perhaps their lives did depend on a just verdict). The judge admitted to himself that he did not fear the judgment of God or God’s punishment for failing to do his duty as God’s law demanded. He knew what was right, but he had hardened his conscience and heart to avoid doing what was right. He did not care for an unjustly afflicted widow in desperate need. Fear of God would not prevent him from taking a bribe to pervert justice. He did not care for his reputation

among people, for he lived entirely for himself. He was totally self-absorbed. As Christians, we need to remember that when we are praying we are praying to our Father in heaven who wants to help us, that Jesus is also praying for us, that the Holy Spirit is helping us pray rightly, and God has good reasons for delaying His answers when they seem to be delayed to us.

(Luke 18:5) yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won't eventually come and attack me!"

The unjust judge was self-centered and thought of no one but himself; neither God nor any other human being mattered to him — only his personal peace and prosperity concerned him and whatever might disturb his comfort or diminish his wealth. He did not want something to happen to himself — either being attacked with more than words or just being worn out from the widow's relentless pestering. How different from our knowing that the Judge of all the earth will do right. Furthermore, our Heavenly Father loves us so much that He graciously sent His only Son to save us and give us justice, mercy, and eternal life through faith in Jesus.

(Luke 18:6) And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says.

Jesus intended His hearers to learn from the evil example of the unjust judge so we can avoid his example, and so we are not surprised when we face uncaring, unjust judges who are only judges for personal selfish reasons. We do not want to become as the unjust judge and we want to be aware that some think exactly as he did.

(Luke 18:7) And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off?

God's children, God's elect, or God's chosen ones have faith in God and they trust God to do the right, loving, just, merciful, and wise thing always. By grace through faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, people become

chosen ones. Jesus taught many other truths about prayer for believers to understand — to pray in His name, for example, but here Jesus wants to emphasize the importance of persistent prayer. When Daniel prayed twenty-one days there was a reason for the delay in getting his answer from God — the angel God sent to answer Daniel had to overcome an opposing angel (see Daniel 10:13), and Daniel's persistent prayers made a difference. We have spiritual enemies that must be overcome, so we must keep on praying. There may be many reasons for delays in our receiving answers to our prayers, so Jesus said, "Keep on praying."

(Luke 18:8) I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?"

God will answer our prayers: "yes, no, or not yet." Sometimes we need to change our attitude or our minds about someone or something that is a concern in our prayers. God has concern for all the consequences of every prayer we pray, and God in His timing must consider all the consequences of our prayers and work everything out for the best of all concerned. We can trust God to do what is best, right, just, merciful, and loving at all times; for He has shown that faithfulness through our Lord Jesus Christ. How much faith did Jesus find when He first came to earth? How much faith will Jesus find when He comes again? Will He find us and others persistent in prayer and trusting Him every day? Will Jesus find us praying when we meet Him face-to-face?

Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. What is a difference between God the Father and an unjust judge?
2. What does a person do to himself who knows the truth and who knows what is right, but then refuses to conform his thoughts to the truth and refuses to do what he knows is right?

3. Describe some differences between self-centeredness and Christ-centeredness.
4. Give one or two reasons why our answers to our prayers might be delayed.
5. When the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?

Begin or close your class by reading the short weekly
International Bible Lesson.

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