



***HOW BAD DO YOU WANT IT?***  
**Luke 11:5-8, 18:1-6**

**Woodland Park Church of Christ**  
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And He said to them, “Which of you shall have a friend, and go to him at midnight and say to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves; <sup>6</sup> for a friend of mine has come to me on his journey, and I have nothing to set before him’; <sup>7</sup> and he will answer from within and say, ‘Do not trouble me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give to you’? <sup>8</sup> **I say to you, though he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will rise and give him as many as he needs.** Luke 11:5-8

Then He spoke a parable to them, that **men always ought to pray and not lose heart,** <sup>2</sup> saying: “There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man. <sup>3</sup> Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, ‘Get justice for me from my adversary.’ <sup>4</sup> And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, ‘Though I do not fear God nor regard man, <sup>5</sup> yet **because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.’**” Then the Lord said, “Hear what the unjust judge said.” **Luke 18:1-6**

# CONTEXT

These scriptures deal with being consistent and persistent in prayer and continuing to petition when we are not getting the response we want right away.

- Scriptures also provide guidance about persistence generally.
- We all have aspirations – at least I hope we do!
- Add meaning and purpose to life – give us a sense of direction and a reason for living.
- Not good to simply exist – meandering about.
- If you are going no place, any road will take you there.
- Be expectant and driven about your requests and aspirations . . . Refusing to take “No.”

# Include spiritual pursuits in those goals and desires

- Have compassion on those who mean us no good (**Matthew 5:44-45**);
- Convert **x** number of souls (**Matt. 28:18-20**);
- Be slower to anger (**James 1:19-20**);
- Exercise greater patience (**James 1:4**);
- Be more kind (**Eph. 4:32**);
- Gain a better grasp and greater understanding of God's word, so I can teach others (**II Timothy 2:15**).

➤ Sometimes God answers “NO!”

➤ We have to be mature enough to accept that response.

➤ There are times God wants us in another place or has a different plan for our lives and others.

**David desired to build a house of praise to God. His intentions were noble and non-self-serving, but note Nathan the prophet's message from God to David --**

*“When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. <sup>13</sup> He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. **II Samuel 7:12-13***

- The concern today is sometimes we do not know whether God's ultimate answer is Yes because we pull up too soon and are not persistent enough.
- *"So I say to you, ask and keep on asking, and it will be given to you; seek and keep on seeking, and you will find; knock and keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you. <sup>10</sup> For everyone who keeps on asking [persistently], receives; and he who keeps on seeking [persistently], finds; and to him who keeps on knocking [persistently], the door will be opened."* **Luke 11:9-10 [AMP]**

- ▶ Sometimes we ask or knock once or twice and because there is no immediate response we leave or walk away.
- ▶ Curriculums and tasks are often like this.
- ▶ If we do not get the answer or the result we want instantaneously or if we experience a little resistance, we throw in the towel.
- ▶ We ponder once, maybe twice, but certainly no more than three times, and we move on to something new.
- ▶ One of the problems with this line of conduct is you will always be chasing and never accomplish much.



- I maintain that far too often we call it quits too soon.
- Becomes a question of how long are we willing to fight or hold on / holdout.

## **IN ESSENCE, HOW MUCH DO I WANT IT?!**

Forego temptation of doing something a little less strenuous or tough or taking an easier course or path

Do not cut corners when we should not.

# I. CONSIDER WHY YOU ARE MAKING THE REQUEST (Why do I want this?)

- How will God be glorified if He grants me the desire of my heart?
- If God grants my petition, will it bring me closer to Him or will it drive me farther from Him?
  - Many times, closed doors are blessings!
  - God understands and sees better and farther than we can.
  - He senses the peril and bad ramifications if we are allowed to have our way.

There is a way *which seems right to a man and appears straight* before him,  
But its end is the way of death. Proverbs 14:12  
[AMP]

- *You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. <sup>3</sup> You ask and do not receive, because **you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.** James 4:2-3*

## II. DESIRED RESULTS DON'T ALWAYS COME RIGHT AWAY

*... and he will answer from within and say, '**Do not trouble me; the door is now shut**, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give to you'?* **Luke 11:7**

*Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, 'Get justice for me from my adversary.'* <sup>4</sup> **And he would not for a while** . . . **Luke 18:3-4**

➤ There are times we have to wait on God's promises.

➤ Lessons to be learned and strength to be gained while we wait in eager anticipation of God's blessings.

➤ Continue to commune with him in prayer.

➤ In talking to God constantly, He continues to shape and mold our being while we wait on Him for the victory.

## ➤ THIS IS NOT NECESSARILY A PASSIVE, STAGNANT "WAIT."

- It is an "active wait," that is characterized by calm endurance and continuous effort with the expectation that God will see us through.
- Proceed in faith because we don't know when the breakthrough will come.

"Consider a stone cutter hammering away at a rock, perhaps a hundred times without so much as a crack showing in it. Yet at the hundred-and-first blow it will split in two, and I know it was not the last blow that did it, but all (the blows) that had gone before." **Jacob A. Rios**

- In our microwave society, where results and outcomes are expected in a nanosecond, far too many are unwilling to continue to answer the call when it seems that nothing is happening.
- Too few are around to strike the rock the 101<sup>st</sup> time.
- Evangelism efforts, diets, exercise programs, academic pursuits, etc.

*What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe—as the Lord has assigned to each his task. <sup>6</sup> I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. I Corinthians 3:5-6*

# III. WE HAVE TO DECIDE WHAT CARRIES GREATER WEIGHT

- Goal achievement really is a matter of deciding what matters most.
- There will always be competing interests.
- Two or more ideas and pursuits may enter the mind, but only one can be carried out.
- Make sure our practices/actions match what we pray for and/or claim we want.
- When we set on a mission, there will always be opportunity to get off on a side street, take an exit or otherwise become distracted.



- Pursuit of spiritual growth/maturity –
  - Reading Bible vs. spending time on social media
  - Attending Bible classes vs. shopping or entertaining friends
  - Interacting with God's people vs. hanging with the spiritually-challenged
- Daily activities and secular strivings
  - Family nurturing: being available (QT)
  - Diet/exercise: food choices and time allocation
  - Personal/professional growth & development: courses, books, mentors

► Are you willing to sacrifice your hopes, dreams and aspirations for a moment of fleeting pleasure or temporary fix?

By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, <sup>25</sup> choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, <sup>26</sup> **esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward.** Hebrews 11:24-26



**MUST DECIDE HOW BAD  
YOU WANT IT!!**





# Lord's Invitation Extended to All

## ➤ Be added to the Lord's body

Hear the gospel (**Acts 15:7; I Corinthians 15:1-4**)

Believe (**Acts 15:7; Rom. 10:17**)

Repent (**Acts 2:38**)

Confess (**Acts 8:37; Rom. 10:10**)

Be baptized (**Acts 2:38, 8:38**)



## Lord's Invitation (cont'd)

- **Be reconciled unto the Lord** (1 John 1:8-9); or
  - **Desire prayer** (James 5:16).
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