

## Come and Listen (A Sermon Series on the Parables of Jesus)

Will He Hear?  
Luke 18:1-8

Dr. Steve Horn

May 13, 2018 (Mother's Day)

**Text Introduction:** We are in a new series for the summer on the Parables of Jesus. Jesus was a master story teller. People of Jesus' day were not really any different from people of today in the sense that they related to stories. Jesus took these stories using the familiar things of every day life in the first century to capture the attention of His listeners.

Last week, we considered the parable of the Sower and the Seed. We drew the conclusion that this parable regards "How we hear the Word of God?" Today, we turn that question around. "Does God hear us? How will He hear us?"

Come and listen to the parable of the Widow and the Judge

**Text:** Now he told them a parable on the need for them to pray always and not give up. <sup>2</sup> "There was a judge in a certain town who didn't fear God or respect people. <sup>3</sup> And a widow in that town kept coming to him, saying, 'Give me justice against my adversary.'

<sup>4</sup> "For a while he was unwilling, but later he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or respect people, <sup>5</sup> yet because this widow keeps pestering me, I will give her justice, so that she doesn't wear me out by her persistent coming.'"

<sup>6</sup> Then the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. <sup>7</sup> Will not God grant justice to his elect who cry out to him day and night? Will he delay helping them? <sup>8</sup> I tell you that he will swiftly grant them justice. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"

**Introduction:** As we began our study last week, we gave a literal definition of parables. Literally, the word means "to throw alongside." Jesus took these stories and threw them alongside the principles that He was teaching. Last Sunday, with the parable of The Sower and the Seed, we had a rather atypical parable, actually. I say, "atypical" because Jesus gave the explanation of how to interpret the parable. He usually didn't do that. The parable before us is more typical of how Jesus used the parables. He simply threw the story alongside the teaching.

So, we probably ought to back up just a bit this morning and present several principles for interpreting parables. These principles will serve us well today and for the remaining study of the parables.

### **Basic Principles for Interpreting Parables:**

1. Look before and after the story.

We find the point of the parable usually either right before or right after the story. Here, we actually get both!

2. Look for the unusual detail of the story.

We find the point of the parable usually in the unusual detail of the story. And remember, this is the unusual detail in the first century setting, not the 21<sup>st</sup> century. For example, consider the most well-known parable of all—the Prodigal Son. The twist in the story is that the younger son asks for his inheritance before the father dies. If that is not enough of a surprise, we are dumfounded to learn in the story that the father grants the request. The use of this unusual detail is Jesus’ hook to “Come in close and listen.”

3. Look for the point of the story.

We need not press every detail of the story, but rather look for the “punchline” of the story.

#### **Applying these Basic Principles to this Parable:**

1. Look at verses 1 and 8.
2. Widows had no rights.

Widows did not get hearings with judges. Klyne Snodgrass describes the plight of such a first century Palestinian widow this way:

Since women married in their early teens, widows were numerous but not necessarily old. Widows were often left with no means of support. If her husband left an estate, she did not inherit it, although provision for her upkeep would be made. If she remained in her husband’s family, she had an inferior, almost servile, position. If she returned to her family, the money exchanged at the wedding had to be given back. Widows were so victimized that they were often sold as slaves for debt. (*Stories With Intent: A Comprehensive Guide to the Parables of Jesus*, p. 453)

3. What is the punchline? Here is the big idea!

#### **The Big Idea:**

If a judge, who is no respecter of person and does not fear God, hears the cry of a widow, who had no rights or privileges, how much more will a righteous God hear the cries of **His Children!**

God is not like the judge, and we are not the widow. Will He hear? The answer is a resounding, exclamatory, “YES!”

***The Father’s Love Letter ( Barry Adams )***

***My Child***

***You may not know me, but I know everything about you  
I know when you sit down and when you rise up  
I am familiar with all your ways  
Even the very hairs on your head are numbered  
For you were made in my image  
In me you live and move and have your being  
For you are my offspring  
I knew you even before you were conceived  
I chose you when I planned creation  
You were not a mistake, for all your days are written in my book  
I determined the exact time of your birth and where you would live  
You are fearfully and wonderfully made  
I knit you together in your mother's womb  
And brought you forth on the day you were born  
I have been misrepresented by those who don't know me  
I am not distant and angry, but am the complete expression of love  
And it is my desire to lavish my love on you  
Simply because you are my child and I am your father  
I offer you more than your earthly father ever could  
For I am the perfect father  
Every good gift that you receive comes from my hand  
For I am your provider and I meet all your needs  
My plan for your future has always been filled with hope  
Because I love you with an everlasting love  
My thoughts toward you are countless as the sand on the seashore  
And I rejoice over you with singing  
I will never stop doing good to you  
For you are my treasured possession  
I desire to establish you with all my heart and all my soul  
And I want to show you great and marvelous things  
If you seek me with all your heart, you will find me  
Delight in me and I will give you the desires of your heart  
For it is I who gave you those desires  
I am able to do more for you than you could possibly imagine  
For I am your greatest encourager  
I am also the Father who comforts you in all your troubles  
When you are brokenhearted, I am close to you  
As a shepherd carries a lamb, I have carried you close to my heart  
One day I will wipe away every tear from your eyes  
And I'll take away all the pain you have suffered on this earth***

*I am your Father, and I love you even as I love my son, Jesus  
For in Jesus, my love for you is revealed  
He is the exact representation of my being  
He came to demonstrate that I am for you, not against you  
And to tell you that I am not counting your sins  
Jesus died so that you and I could be reconciled  
His death was the ultimate expression of my love for you  
I gave up everything I loved that I might gain your love  
If you receive the gift of my son Jesus, you receive me  
And nothing will ever separate you from my love again  
Come home and I'll throw the biggest party heaven has ever seen  
I have always been Father, and will always be Father  
My question is.....Will you be my child?  
I am waiting for you*

*Love,*

*Your Dad.  
Almighty God*

### So What?

- **Pray with Desperation**

The widow was desperate. She had no rights, but she had no choice. Prayer begins at the point of our desperation.

- **Pray with Duration**

Don't think of it as pestering God. Here and elsewhere, we are told to pray unceasingly. The context of this parable goes back at least to 17:20. How long are we to pray about a matter? Until He comes!

- **Pray with Dependence**

Look to the next parable—The Pharisee and the Tax Collector. There's at least a little bit of Pharisee in all of us.

- **Pray with Deep Faith**

Here may be the greatest question of all. Remember the context established back in 17:20. "When He comes will He find faith?"

I suspect that there are lots of praying mothers here today. Susannah Wesley, mother of John and Charles Wesley, prayed with an apron over her head. That was the sign to her 10 children to leave her alone because she was praying. Billy Graham said, "What a comfort it was for me to know that wherever I was in the world, my mother was praying for me." Mom's keep praying.