

Week 37 April 26, 2026: Luke 18, Persistent Widow, Pharisee-Tax Collector

Luke 18:1-8 Parable of the Persistent Widow

Luk 18:1 Then He(**Jesus**) spoke a parable to them (**disciples**), that men always (**at all times**) ought to pray and not lose heart (**not give up**) (**God is desiring to produce in us a greater persistence in praying always and dependency on God**),

1Thes 5:16 Rejoice always,

1Thes 5:17 pray without ceasing,

1Thes 5:18 in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

Eph 6:18 praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints--

Col 4:2 Continue earnestly in prayer, ...

1Pet 4:7 But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers.

Col 4:12 Epaphras, who is one of you, a bondservant of Christ, greets you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.

Jesus is praying now for us

Heb 7:25 Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost (**completely**) those who come to God through Him (**Christ Jesus**), since He always lives to make intercession for them.

Correlation: persistence in asking

Luk 11:5 And He(**Jesus**) 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;

Luk 11:6 'for a friend of mine has come to me on his journey, and I have nothing to set before him';

Luk 11:7 "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'?

Luk 11:8 "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.

Luk 11:9 "So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

Luk 11:10 "For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks (keep knocking & asking) it will be opened.

Luk 18:2 saying: "There was in a certain city, a judge, who did not fear God, nor regard (**or respect**) man.

The judge gave no one special treatment to anyone, being very prideful and self-righteous. He was acting like a god.

Luk 18:3 "Now there was a widow in that city; and she came (**kept coming**) to him(**judge**), saying, 'Get justice for me, from (**a dispute with**) my adversary (**opponent**).'

Luk 18:4 "And he(**the judge**) would not (**see her**) for a while; but afterward he(**the judge**) said within himself, 'Though I do not fear God, nor regard man (**nor cared what people thought**),

Luk 18:5 'yet because this widow (**continues to**) troubles me, I will avenge her (**give her justice**), lest by her continual coming she (**annoys and**) weary me (**wear me out by her unending pleas**), (**Lit. hit me, not physical but she is constantly beating me down emotionally/mentally with her persistence, figurative language**).' "

We must guard against any unbelief and doubting when praying and don't stop, keep praying by faith, be persistent in prayer

Luk 18:6 Then the Lord said, "Hear (**listen**) what the unjust judge (**or unrighteous judge**) said.

The judge had no personal interest in the widow only himself; God loves those who pray to Him. This judge was unfair; but God is fair (loving, holy and righteous).

Luk 18:7 "And shall God **not** avenge (**defend & bring about justice to**), His own elect (**chosen ones**) who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them (**yet He is very patient with them, will He delay**)? (**example 12:22–31**)

Correlation Passage

Rev 6:9 When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.

Rev 6:10 And they (**souls under the alter**) cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth (**earth dwellers unbelievers**)?"

Rev 6:9 When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.

Luk 18:8 "I tell you, that He will avenge them (**bring about justice**) speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes (**"Son of Man" is a title Jesus used for himself**), will He really find faith (**persistent faith**) on the earth?"

Heb 10:37 "For yet a little while, And He(**Christ Jesus**) who is coming will come and will not tarry (**delay**). (Isa 26:20; Hab. 2:3).

Jesus asks this question to encourage his disciples to be persistent in prayer and faith. We know that God will resolve all things righteously.

Luke 18:9-14 Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector

Luk 18:9 Also He(**Jesus**) spoke this parable to some (**people**) who trusted (**or had confidence**) in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others (**looked down on everyone, and viewed them with contempt**):

They acted outwardly as upright and in right standing with God

Luk 18:10 "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.

Luk 18:11 "The Pharisee stood (**up by himself**) and prayed thus with himself (**prayed to himself in a self-righteous**), 'God, **I** thank You that **I** am not like other men (**people**)—extortioners (**robbers, evildoers**), unjust (**dishonest**), adulterers, or even as this tax collector.

Luk 18:12 '**I** fast twice a week; **I** give (**or pay**) tithes (**a tenth**) of all that **I** possess.'

Notice: five I's, this passage reveal the pride and self-centeredness of the Pharisee's. Rather than being thankful for what God has done, brags about his self-righteousness and outward religious faithfulness.

Luk 18:13 "And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast (**a sign of mourning, sorrow and remorse, displaying humility and repentance**), saying, 'God, be merciful (**or propitious to my sin, propitiation**) to me, a sinner!'

We need to recognize our true state, a sinner in desperate need of a savior.

Quote from David Guzik Commentary on the Blue Letter Bible

iv. The ancient Greek word translated **be merciful** is *hilaskomai*; it is actually the word for an atoning sacrifice. The fullest sense of what the tax collector said was, "God, be merciful to me through Your atoning sacrifice for sins, because I am a sinner." The only other place this word is used in the New Testament is in [Hebrews 2:17](#), where it is translated *propitiation*.

Luk 18:14 "I tell you, this man (**the tax collector**) went down to his house justified (**forgiven of the guilt and sin and placed in right standing with God**) rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself (**forsaking self-righteous pride & arrogance**) will be exalted." (**James 4:6, 1Pet 5:5, Prov 3:34...**)

We can not way justify ourselves, it is God who justifies through His grace and mercy. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me (John 14:6).

Eph 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,

Eph 2:9 not of works (man's efforts), lest anyone should boast.

Jhn 3:16 "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Jhn 3:17 "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

Jesus gave a practical example

Luk 14:10 "But when you are invited, go and sit down in the lowest place, so that when he who invited you comes he may say to you, 'Friend, go up higher (better seat).' Then you will have glory in the presence of those who sit at the table with you.

Luk 14:11 NKJV - "For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

Luke 18:15-17 Jesus Blesses Little Children (Mat 19:13–15; Mark 10:13–16)

Luk 18:15 Then they (**some parents**) also brought infants (**babies**) to Him(**Jesus**) that He might touch (**and bless**) them; but when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them (**scolded, criticized the parents for bothering Jesus**).

Luk 18:16 But Jesus called them (**children**) to Him (**to Himself**) and said (**to the disciples**), "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid (**or hinder**) them; for of such, is the kingdom of God.

Parallel passages:

Mat 19:13 Then little children were brought to Him(**Jesus**) that He might put His hands on them and pray, but the disciples rebuked them (**the parents**).

Mat 19:14 But Jesus said, "Let (**permit**) the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Mat 19:15 And He laid His hands on them (**blessed them**) and departed from there. (**The laying on of hands is used as a way biblically to bestow blessing on another (1Tim 5:22, 2Tim1:6 ...)**).

Mar 10:13 Then they brought little children to Him(**Jesus**), that He might touch them; but the disciples rebuked those who brought them.

Mar 10:14 But when Jesus saw it, He was greatly displeased (**with the words of the disciples**) and said to them, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God.

Mar 10:15 "Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it."

Mar 10:16 And He(Jesus) took them (babies, little children) up in His arms, laid His hands on them, and blessed them.

1Pet 2:2 as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,

Luk 18:17 "Assuredly, I say to you (I tell you the truth), whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child (that is, with faith and humility) will by no means, enter it."

Quote from ESV footnotes Luke 18 on Blue Letter Bible website

Luke 18:16–17 Let the children come. Jesus' attitude toward children contrasted significantly with that of other religious leaders in Judaism. In most ancient cultures children were regarded as a burden until they were physically strong enough to contribute to the family. For to such belongs does not mean children automatically belong to the kingdom but that the kingdom belongs to "such"—that is, to those who possess childlike trust (see note on Mark 10:13–15; compare Matt. 18:4). like a child. That is, in childlike faith.

Luke 18:18-23 Jesus Counsels the Rich Young Ruler (Mat 19:16–22; Mark 10:17–22)

Luk 18:18 Now a certain ruler (rich young ruler) asked Him(Jesus), saying, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life (eternal salvation)?"

This man is known as the rich young ruler, because he is described as a ruler (Luke 18:18), as rich (Luke 18:23), and as young (Mat 19:22).

Possible a ruler of a synagogue. Example in Luk 8:41 And behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue. And he fell down at Jesus' feet and begged Him to come to his house,

Luk 18:19 So Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good (morally good) but One, that is, God (God alone).

Mat 19:17 So He(Jesus) said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments."

Only by understanding that God is truly good (perfect, holy loving) can a person fully understand their need for holiness and a savior, redeemer and that they cannot earn by good works eternal life

Luk 18:20 "You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not murder,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not bear false witness (testify falsely),' 'Honor your father and your mother.' "(Exo 20:12–16; Deu 5:16–20)

Mat 19:18 He(**ruler**) said to Him (**Jesus**), "Which ones?" Jesus said, "'You shall not murder,' 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not bear false witness,'

Mat 19:19 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' "

Jesus quotes the last five commandments 6 through 10 also included in Lukes 10:25–28 a parallel passage.

Luk 18:21 And he(**ruler**) said, "All these things I have kept (**obeyed**) from my youth (**13 years old**)."

Mat 19:20 The young man said to Him(**Jesus**), "All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?"

From a human perspective it seems right but from Gods perspective and truth it is wrong. Pro 14:12 There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death. Mat 7:13 "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Mat 7:14 "Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.

He actually keep them in a way that made him righteous in his own eyes and the eyes of men, like in the sense that Paul could say concerning the righteousness which is in the law, I was blameless in Phil 3:6 until he understood it was not outward righteousness but from the heart, which makes everyone a failure.

Rom 3:21 But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,

Rom 3:22 even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference;

Rom 3:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Rom 3:24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,

Rom 3:25 whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed,

Rom 3:26 to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

Luk 18:22 So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him(**ruler**), "You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven (**refers to the rewards believers will receive in heaven**); and come, follow Me." (**Luke 9:23 come follow Me**).

Deu 6:5 "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

Luk 9:23 Then He(Jesus) said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself (surrender to the Lord's will), and take up his cross daily (walk as He walked), and follow Me.

Luk 18:23 But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich (riches was his god and he desired them more than the true living God.).

But when the young man heard this statement, he went away grieving and sad; for he was one who owned much property and possessions which he treasured more than his relationship with God (Is there anything in your life that is getting in the way of your relationship with God).

End

Charts:

Examples of Putting Your Treasures in Heaven

<u>Theme</u>	<u>Scripture</u>	<u>Short Phrase</u>
Eternal focus	Matthew 6:19–21	Store treasures, where it lasts
Right priorities	Colossians 3:2–3	Set your mind on heaven
Faithful works rewarded	1 Corinthians 3:12–14	God rewards what endures
Giving to others	Luke 12:33–34	Give → gain heavenly treasure
Using money wisely	Luke 16:9	Use wealth for eternity
Giving to the church	Malachi 3:10	Honor God with giving
Supporting ministry	Matthew 10:41–42	Share in their reward
Ministry partnership	Philippians 4:17	Fruit credited to you
Volunteering / serving	1 Peter 4:10	Use your gifts to serve
Serving faithfully	Hebrews 6:10	God remembers your service
Helping the poor	Proverbs 19:17	Lending to the Lord, He will repay
Helping "the least"	Matthew 25:40	Serving others = serving Christ
Cup of water	Matthew 10:42	Small acts count
Hospitality	Hebrews 13:2	Welcome others
Prayer	Matthew 6:6	Secret prayer rewarded
Seeking God	Hebrews 11:6	God rewards seekers
Perseverance	Galatians 6:9	Don't quit—harvest coming
Generosity	2 Corinthians 9:6	Sow more → reap more
Obedient work	Colossians 3:23–24	Work for the Lord
Self-denial	Matthew 16:24–27	Lose now → gain later
Eternal reward	Revelation 22:12	Jesus brings reward

Practical ways

1) Consistent, sincere prayer

Matthew 6:6 “Pray... in secret, and your Father... will reward you.”

2) Love people (especially the overlooked)

Matthew 25:40 “Whatever you did for one of the least... you did for Me.”

This includes: Poor, Widows, Children, The hurting, less fortunate

3) Generous giving (without seeking attention)

Matthew 6:3–4 “Do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing...”

Give quietly → God rewards openly

4) Seek God first (prioritize eternity)

Matthew 6:33 “Seek first the kingdom of God... all these things shall be added to you.”

5) Walk by faith and be faithful in everyday life

Heb 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please God ...

Luke 16:10 “Whoever is faithful in little is faithful in much.”

A Parable is a short, earthly story used to illustrate a deep spiritual or moral lesson. The word comes from the Greek *parabolē*, which literally means "to throw alongside". Think of it as placing a common, everyday truth alongside a heavenly truth so the listener can understand the unknown by looking at the known. There is always a literal meaning (**the story itself**) and a spiritual meaning (**look for the central point, hidden spiritual lesson and truth, a comparison, then application**). A parable typically has one main interpretation, but it can have many different applications depending on a person's specific circumstances.

In the study of parables, the interpretive principle of Expositional Constancy suggests that God uses symbols with consistent meaning throughout Scripture providing a reliable pattern, consistency or correlation to guide understanding and interpretation.

Mar 4:13 And He(Jesus) said to them, "Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables? Jesus is saying if you don't understand the first parable and the meanings how are you going to understand the others. Remember Jesus took the disciples aside and explained to them the meaning privately.