

# SABBATICAL SUNDAYS

## DON'T LOSE HEART.

Do you ever feel like you pray & pray & pray... and don't have much to show for it? If you do, you're certainly not alone. It can get discouraging and, frankly, downright annoying. Sometimes our prayers peter out when we don't get a clear answer... and after a few rounds of this, it can be tempting to stop going to God with our questions and problems at all.

However, in the story of the Persistent Widow, Jesus shares how important it is to *keep* praying, to *keep* seeking, and to *keep* knocking. Persistent prayer gives us an opportunity to trust in God's faithfulness and to show up in his presence each and every day.

It also slowly but surely aligns our hearts with God's will. One of my favorite prayers for a long time has been, "Lord, help my desires align with your desires for me." As we keep showing up in prayer, we become more attuned to His voice and in line with his Spirit.

So keep showing up in prayer, boldly approaching your Father with confidence, knowing he hears and delights in answering our prayers - even if the timing (or the answer) isn't the way we'd prefer. He's so good.

# IN THE BIBLE.

## LUKE 18:1-8

One day Jesus told his disciples a story to show that they should always pray and never give up. 2 “There was a judge in a certain city,” he said, “who neither feared God nor cared about people. 3 A widow of that city came to him repeatedly, saying, ‘Give me justice in this dispute with my enemy.’ 4 The judge ignored her for a while, but finally he said to himself, ‘I don’t fear God or care about people, 5 but this woman is driving me crazy. I’m going to see that she gets justice, because she is wearing me out with her constant requests!’” 6 Then the Lord said, “Learn a lesson from this unjust judge. 7 Even he rendered a just decision in the end. So don’t you think God will surely give justice to his chosen people who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? 8 I tell you, he will grant justice to them quickly! But when the Son of Man returns, how many will he find on the earth who have faith?”

## MATTHEW 7:7-11

Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. You parents—if your children ask for a loaf of bread, do you give them a stone instead? Or if they ask for a fish, do you give them a snake? Of course not! So if you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask him.

# QUESTIONS.

*Feel free to talk through some or all of these questions*

- 1.) What sticks out to you in the verses above?
- 2.) What is your prayer life like? Do you ever feel discouraged in your prayer life? Why or why not?
- 3.) Has God ever answered a prayer in an unexpected way or long after you started praying for it? Share that experience with us!
- 4.) What are some steps you can take to be more persistent & consistent in your prayers?
- 5.) Sometimes answered prayers take a looong time - what can you do to begin to notice & keep track of when God answers?

## TAKE TEN:

- How did you see God work in your life this week?
- What has God been teaching you in His Word?
- What kind of conversations are you having with your pre-Christian friends?
- What good can you do around here? (in your life/circumstance)
- How can we help you in prayer and what do you want us to ask you about next week?

**Whenever you read the Bible, ask yourself these three questions:**

1. What does this tell you about God?
2. What does this tell you about yourself and the world?
3. How is this going to change who you are and how you live?