



Wednesday Prayer

19th Sunday after Pentecost – Persistent Prayer

Then Jesus told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart. He said, “In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for people. In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying, ‘Grant me justice against my opponent.’ For a while he refused; but later he said to himself, ‘Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming.’” And the Lord said, “Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long in helping them? I tell you, he will quickly grant justice to them. And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?”

Luke 18:1-8

The Good Samaritan, the Prodigal Son, the Lost Coin and the Lost Sheep are probably the most familiar parables of Jesus that we know and love. The parable of the Persistent Widow was not as familiar to me, but it certainly provides inspiration for us in our lives and in the work of Cherish All Children. Our primary prevention model for Cherish All Children is to **pray**, educate, equip and engage.

The gospel begins with Jesus telling a parable about the need to pray always and not to lose heart. The woman in this parable represents what it means to be a positive example of the persistence required of us through prayer. Without a husband, a widow was left at the mercy of relatives to provide for her. It would have been unusual for a widow during this time to be able to advocate for herself. As a widow, she was one of the marginalized in society. And yet, despite her marginalized status – she persisted.

We can become discouraged in our pursuit of justice for children that are victims of trafficking, but we cannot lose heart. This parable is about those characteristics of resilience that develop when we decide to never give up. Resilience is the strength of character to keep going even when we encounter discouragement or other challenges.

This widow’s persistence illustrates our need to pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17). Prayer changes us more than it changes the people around us. It deepens our faith and trust in God and empowers us to wait with hope for God to act. Jesus ends the parable to his disciples with the question of whether or not the Son of Man will find anyone faithful when he comes. We must not lose heart.

Dear Savior, we come to you day and night longing to hear your voice and not lose heart. Give us strength of your Spirit to persevere in our prayers for all children. Amen.

Written by Gwen Kuhrt, Cherish All Children Advisory Board Member and LSS Foundation Board Member. Gwen is also a member of Mount Calvary Lutheran Church, Excelsior, MN.