Luke 18:1
"And He Spoke a parable unto this end, that men ought always to pray, and not faint;"

Effective Praying

Note: Jesus was concerned that His followers pray continually to accomplish the will of God for their lives. From this parable of the persistent widow, we learn several things **(1)** we must persevere in prayer regarding all matters until Jesus returns **(vs. 7-8; Romans 12:12; Ephesians 6:18; Colossians 4:2; I Thessalonians 5:17)**. **(2)** In this life we have an adversary **(vs.3)**, Satan **(I Peter 5:8)**. Prayer can protect us from the evil One **(Matthew 6:13). (3)** In our prayers, we should cry out against sin and for justice **(vs.7). (4)** persistent prayer is counted as faith **(vs.8). (5)** In the final days before Christs return, there will be increased diabolic opposition to the prayers of the faithful **(I Timothy 4:1)**. Because of Satan and the pleasures of the world, many will cease persevering in prayer **(8:14; Matthew 13:22; Mark 4:19)**.

Prayer and Confession: [James 5: 13-16]: read in class

Note: The prayers of the Righteous **(1)** draw them near to God, open the way to a spirit filled life, and bring them power for ministry and Christian devotion also builds them up spiritually. **(2)** give them sight into Christ's provisions for them, helps to overcome Satan, clarifies the will of God, enables them to receive spiritual gifts, brings them into fellowship with God.

When we are experiencing affliction, poverty or distress, Scripture invites you to seek strength from God through prayer. Draw near to the mediator Jesus Christ. He will represent you before God, make intercession for you, and give mercy and grace to help in the times of need. Take seriously God's Word: "Casting all you care upon Him for He cares for you.

[James 5:17-18]
Elijah's Example

[I Kings 17:1]: ***And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, as the Lord God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these days, but according to my word***.

Note: as God's messenger, Elijah spoke a word of judgement from the Lord against disobedient Israel. God would withhold rain for three and a half years. This judgment also mocked Baal, for the worshipers of Baal believed he controlled rain. The N.T. states that this drought came as the result of Elijah's earnest prayers **[James 5:17]**.

[I Kings 18:42]: ***So, Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Mount Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his***

knees, and said unto his servant, go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said there is nothing. And he said, go again seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said behold, there arises a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, go up and say unto Ahab, prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not.

Elisha's Ministry

[II King 2:9-14]: read in class

[II King 2:19-24]: read in class

<u>Final thought</u>: ***Therefore, I say unto you, what things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye shall receive them, and ye shall have them***. **[Mark 11:24].**