

TEACH US TO PRAY



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WEEK 8 — PRAYING UNTIL BREAKTHROUGH

Luke 18:1 (NKJV)

"Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart."

CONTEXT

This is where everything comes together.

Over eight weeks we've built a foundation, learned the Lord's Prayer, prayed bold like Jabez, walked through the Tabernacle, gotten honest in Psalm 51, learned to pray in faith, and learned to pray with authority.

But all of it requires the refusal to quit.

He knew the breakthrough often comes right after the moment most people quit.

PERSISTENT PRAYER PAYS OFF

1. JESUS TOLD US IN ADVANCE: DON'T QUIT

Luke gives the meaning before the parable: pray always and don't lose heart. Jesus knew that between the asking and the answer, discouragement would show up.

The widow had no power, no leverage, no advocate — just persistence. And persistence was enough. If stubborn persistence worked on an unjust judge who didn't care, how much more will faithful persistence move a loving Father who does?

The enemy's strategy isn't to stop you from praying...
it's to stop you from praying _____.

Many breakthroughs are forfeited not because God said no,
but because we stopped asking too _____.

HOW TO PRAY THIS:

Identify the prayer you've been tempted to give up on. Decide: "I'm not quitting on this." Write it down with a date. Recommit to praying it daily until you see the answer or God clearly redirects you.

Luke 18:1 (NKJV)

"Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart."

Luke 18:7–8 (NLT)

"So don't you think God will surely give justice to his chosen people who cry out to him day and night? I tell you, he will grant justice to them quickly!"

Galatians 6:9 (NKJV)

"And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart."

2. DELAY IS NOT DENIAL

This may be the single most important truth for anyone in a waiting season. When God doesn't answer on your timeline, it doesn't mean no — it often means not yet.

The gap between the promise and the fulfillment isn't empty space, it's where God is working behind the scenes.

When God doesn't answer on your timeline, it often means _____.
Don't interpret silence as absence. Behind the silence, He's _____.

HOW TO PRAY THIS:

Change your prayer from "God, why is this taking so long?" to "God, what are You wanting me to learn in this? Help me see it. I trust Your timing. I believe You're working even though I can't see it." Trust the gap.

Habakkuk 2:3 (NKJV)

"For the vision is yet for an appointed time... Though it tarries, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry."

Isaiah 40:31 (NKJV)

"But those who wait on the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles."

Psalms 27:14 (NKJV)

"Wait on the LORD; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart; wait, I say, on the LORD!"

2 Peter 3:9 (NKJV)

"The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us."

3. PRESS IN LIKE ELIJAH — KEEP LOOKING

After three years of drought, Elijah prayed for rain. He prayed Seven times. And on the seventh — a cloud the size of a man's hand. Then the sky went black and the rain poured down.

Elijah pressed in until he saw the first sign. Persistent prayer isn't unbelief — it's faith that refuses to stop until heaven responds.

Elijah prayed _____ times before the breakthrough came.

Watch for the cloud the size of a _____ — the small first sign.

HOW TO PRAY THIS:

Don't treat a delayed answer as a closed door. Keep sending the servant to look. Pray it again. And watch for the cloud the size of a hand — thank God for it the moment you see it.

1 Kings 18:42–44 (NLT)

"Elijah bowed low to the ground and prayed with his face between his knees... Seven times Elijah told him to go and look. Finally the seventh time, his servant told him, 'I saw a little cloud about the size of a man's hand rising from the sea.'"

James 5:17–18 (NKJV)

"Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly... And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain."

4. SOME THINGS ONLY BREAK THROUGH TRAVAIL

Hannah desperately wanted a child. She prayed in anguish. She wept bitterly and poured out her soul.

But that was the year God opened her womb and gave her Samuel. Some breakthroughs only come through travail — that deep, desperate, soul-poured-out praying that won't be comforted until the answer comes.

Hannah prayed in _____ — she wept bitterly and poured out her soul. Some things only break when you press past comfortable into _____.

HOW TO PRAY THIS:

Give yourself permission to pray with raw honesty over the thing breaking your heart. Don't clean it up for God. Pour it out. Weep if you need to. Some breakthroughs are on the other side of a prayer you've been too composed to pray.

1 Samuel 1:10 (NKJV)

"And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed to the LORD and wept in anguish."

1 Samuel 1:27 (NKJV)

"For this child I prayed, and the LORD has granted me my petition which I asked of Him."

Psalms 126:5–6 (NKJV)

"Those who sow in tears shall reap in joy... bringing his sheaves with him."

Acts 1:14 (NKJV)

"These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication."

5. BREAKTHROUGH IS ON THE OTHER SIDE — DON'T STOP NOW

You've got everything you need now: a foundation, the Lord's Prayer, bold prayers, the Tabernacle pattern, the prayer of repentance, faith, and authority.

The only thing left is to refuse to give up.

The breakthrough you've been believing for may be one more prayer away.

The common thread in every breakthrough is _____.

Don't quit right before the miracle — pray _____ more time.

HOW TO PRAY THIS:

Pray daily using the tools you've learned. And whenever you're tempted to quit, remember the widow, Elijah, and Hannah — and pray one more time. Your breakthrough may be on the other side of the prayer you almost didn't pray.

Matthew 7:7–8 (NKJV)

"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you."

Hebrews 10:35–36 (NKJV)

"Therefore do not cast away your confidence... For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise."

1 Thessalonians 5:17 (NKJV)

"Pray without ceasing."

Galatians 6:9 (NLT)

"At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up."

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. Have you ever given up on a prayer too soon — and later wondered what might have happened if you'd kept going? What did that teach you?**

- 2. How does the truth that "delay is not denial" change the way you view a prayer you're still waiting on?**

- 3. Elijah prayed seven times before he saw a cloud the size of a hand. What's your "cloud the size of a hand" — a small sign you can thank God for even before the full breakthrough?**

- 4. Hannah prayed in raw, desperate honesty. Is there a place in your prayer life where you've been too composed — where God might be inviting you to pour out your soul?**

- 5. What is the ONE prayer you're committing to keep praying — and which tool from these eight weeks will you use to keep pressing in?**

SOAP — LUKE 18:1

S — SCRIPTURE

Luke 18:1 (NKJV)

"Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart."

O — OBSERVATION

Jesus states the purpose before the parable: persistent prayer, no loss of heart. "Always" means continually — prayer isn't a one-time event but an ongoing posture. "Ought" signals necessity, not suggestion. "Not lose heart" acknowledges the real temptation to quit — Jesus doesn't shame us for feeling it, He prepares us to overcome it.

A — APPLICATION

Choose the one prayer you've been most tempted to abandon. Write it down with today's date. Commit to praying it every day for the next 30 days using the tools from this study. Watch for your "cloud the size of a hand," and thank God for every small sign. Refuse to quit before the breakthrough.

P — PRAYER

Father, I don't want to be someone who quits right before the breakthrough. Forgive me for the prayers I gave up on too soon and the times I mistook Your delay for denial. Today I recommit. I'll keep asking, keep seeking, keep knocking. I'll press in like Elijah and pour out my heart like Hannah. I trust that You are working even when I can't see it, and I believe my breakthrough is on the other side of my persistence. Give me the endurance to pray through. I will not lose heart. In Jesus' name, Amen.

COMMENTARY

Jack Hayford

Hayford teaches that persistent prayer is not about overcoming God's reluctance but about laying hold of His willingness. He emphasizes that the waiting season is where God develops the character necessary to steward the answer. Hayford notes that travailing prayer — the deep, Spirit-led intercession modeled by Hannah and the early church — often precedes significant breakthroughs, and that believers should not despise the seasons of pressing in, for they are often the birthplace of God's greatest works.

Jimmy Swaggart

Swaggart stresses that the contrast in the parable is intentional: if even an unjust judge will respond to persistence, how much more will a righteous, loving God respond to His children who cry out to Him day and night? He teaches that delay is never a sign of God's indifference, and that the believer must anchor persistence in faith, not in anxiety. Real faith and real persistence are partners — we keep praying precisely because we believe God hears and will answer.

Matthew Henry

Henry writes that the widow had no advocate, no influence, and no leverage — only persistence, and that was enough to prevail with an unjust judge. How much more, he argues, will God's elect prevail with a Father who loves them and has appointed a Mediator on their behalf. The danger Jesus warns against is "fainting" — growing weary and giving up — and the great remedy is to keep praying, trusting that God's timing, though sometimes slow to us, is always perfect.

CROSS-REFERENCES

Luke 18:1 — Always pray and do not lose heart

Luke 18:7–8 — God gives justice to those who cry day and night

Galatians 6:9 — Don't grow weary — reap if you don't give up

Habakkuk 2:3 — The vision is for an appointed time

Isaiah 40:31 — Those who wait renew their strength

Psalms 27:14 — Wait on the Lord, be of good courage

2 Peter 3:9 — The Lord is not slack concerning His promise

1 Kings 18:42–44 — Elijah prayed seven times for rain

James 5:17–18 — Elijah prayed again and the rain came

1 Samuel 1:10 — Hannah prayed in anguish and wept

1 Samuel 1:27 — For this child I prayed — God granted it

Psalms 126:5–6 — Those who sow in tears reap in joy

Acts 1:14 — Continued in one accord in prayer

Matthew 7:7–8 — Ask, seek, knock — keep on

Hebrews 10:35–36 — Don't cast away your confidence — endure

1 Thessalonians 5:17 — Pray without ceasing

Daniel 10:12–13 — The answer was set in motion from day one

Colossians 4:2 — Continue earnestly in prayer

CLOSING CHALLENGE

Choose one prayer and carry it forward. Pray it for 30 days.

Watch for your cloud the size of a hand. And when the temptation to quit comes, and it will, pray one more time.

Don't stop before the breakthrough. It may be closer than you think.

Teach us to pray, Lord — and help us never stop.

ANSWER KEY

Week 8 — Praying Until Breakthrough

- 1. JESUS TOLD US IN ADVANCE: DON'T QUIT**
long enough • soon
- 2. DELAY IS NOT DENIAL**
not yet • moving
- 3. PRESS IN LIKE ELIJAH — KEEP LOOKING**
seven • hand
- 4. SOME THINGS ONLY BREAK THROUGH TRAVAIL**
anguish • desperate
- 5. BREAKTHROUGH IS ON THE OTHER SIDE — DON'T STOP NOW**
persistence • one