



Men Ought To Pray



And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; (Luke 18:1)

I feel like I've never read this before. That was my first response to seeing this verse, although I have studied it in times past. In light of how many people seem to be "fainting" in their Christian walks, it is vitally important that we all receive these words from our Lord Jesus Christ himself.

This parable begins with the end of the matter, so to speak. In other words, when you walk away from this teaching, these points are what



you should remember. Jesus said that men ought always to pray. That's easy enough to understand, but what about the second part, "and not to faint?" He also said that we are not supposed to be fainters. *How often do you feel like giving up, fainting, in the midst of your daily struggles? If you experience the need to faint, which means, "to give up and stop," you should consider transforming yourself from a fainter*

into a prayer! There's a hidden character in these words too. It is the adversary who is causing others to faint. I'll have more to say about that later.

Prayer is an action you can do at any time and in different ways. You can pray quietly, you can pray out loud. You can pray in public and you can pray alone. You can always choose the place, time and method. As Christians, God gave us several ways to pray. We can pray with our understanding. For instance, "Dear God, thank you for your blessing." We can also pray by speaking in tongues. That's perfect prayer, and awesomely wonderful too!

In this parable, Jesus proceeds to

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tell us about a rather interesting judge. This guy isn't exactly the type you'd want to invite over to dinner.

Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: (Luke 18:2)

He had no fear of God and he didn't regard man either. I imagine him as a stoic, one who remains completely emotionless towards life. I wonder how he ever got this "judge" job?

And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of [vindicate or punish] mine adversary [of the one who is taking vengeance on me]. (Luke 18:3)

This poor lady needed some help. It seems that she had no one to turn to but the judge. She came asking him to avenge her of her adversary. Avenge means, "to vindicate or

punish." The adversary is someone most likely influenced by satan. She came to the judge asking him to punish a person who was doing some pretty bad things to her.

Do you have someone doing some pretty bad things to you, maybe not all the time, but enough that you'd really like some help?

Then read on.

And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; (Luke 18:4)

Mr. Judge didn't want to do anything for her - at first. Look how he admitted that he did not fear God, nor man. That's really something. He sounds like an adversary too.

Yet because this widow troubleth [she stays near] me, I will

avenge [retaliate] her, lest by her continual coming she weary [antagonizes] me. (Luke 18:5)

But this woman was doing something to him that really upset him to the point of changing his mind. She troubled him. This means, "she wouldn't leave him alone." She kept on and on and on, bugging him, pleading with him to help. This man was her only hope. When you have such a serious problem, you really do need someone powerful to help. She did, so she wouldn't leave him alone, so much so, that he decided to retaliate against her adversary.

It's almost as if the issue wasn't about how bad her adversary was, but how much she antagonized the judge. I'm sure the judge

knew the person who was plaguing her, and I'm sure he already knew just how bad he or she was. But he

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wouldn't act based on these points.

The reason he decided to act was because of how the widow was antagonizing him! Hold onto that point.

And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. (Luke 18:6)

I'm glad Jesus called the judge "unjust." I didn't want to say it until I read it in the Word, but that's exactly what I thought about him when I first started reading. This judge was a bad boy. He didn't want to help people, but I guess he still wanted his paycheck. At any rate, he was unjust, and the widow had to practically beat him up just to get some help. He finally helped her.

But there's a greater message than wondering about some unjust judge. It lies in the next two verses.

And shall not God avenge his own elect [His favorites], which cry [shout – halloo] day and night unto him, though he bear long [makrothumeo – puts His anger far away from Him] with them? (Luke 18:7)

The main character quickly changes from the unjust judge to Our Righteous Judge, God! God's people cry out to Him too, but, for the most part, He is unable to fully revenge us presently, although He does revenge us in part. Jesus said that God SHALL avenge His favorites (us), the ones that cry out day and night until God. Verse 8 tells us when and we'll see that in a minute. Do you remember the first verse, verse one? It said, "Men ought always to pray and not to faint." This statement is the purpose of the parable. Now we see what God will do for those who pray day and night. I told you to hold onto a certain point regarding how the widow antagonized the

judge. *You have the right to antagonize God with your prayers! He wants you to do so.* After all, He had Jesus teach you the parable? He will avenge [relatiate for you] of your adversaries. You can shout out to God at any time, and you ought to. Even though God manifests agape in the form of putting His anger far from Him, we are told to pray so that he can help us now!

I'm pretty hung up on learning, teaching, and living an agape lifestyle and that's what led me to this parable in the first place. I am in the process of documenting an agape "wake up call." That's what I call it. I want to share something with you, something very relevant to this subject, that will empower you further. I've seen far too many Christians hurting other Christians. Here's what I mean by "hurting." *The adversarial Christian*

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pushes the “agape” limits of another. He or she is doing something to make you mad. The bible says to “put away anger,” but just how long can you go before you start having trouble putting it away? It says that there is no anger in the agape lifestyle, but why do you find anger feelings within yourself?

If you find yourself second-guessing your Christian walk, while at the same time, know you ARE walking as a Christian should walk, then you probably have an adversary pushing your limits.

For instance, if you find yourself angry after another Christian acted a certain way with you, but you did nothing wrong, then the other person probably did something to hurt you. We tend to look at our walks rather one-sided, refusing to realize that the problems we face may not always be our own. They

may belong to those with whom we deal. *No Christian has the right to anger another, not one.* Imagine what it would be like if no one angered anyone? Wow! Wouldn't that be great? It would be amazing. Your marriages would be sweet, your fellowships would be sweet, your friendships would smooth out. It would be fantastic. But life isn't that way. Individual's prides and egos bring in chaos and ruin. And the end result is a lot of pain in the recipient's heart.

If you are involved with someone who is angering you, and if you are walking Christ-like, recognize that the problem could very well be coming from the other person.

Stop second-guessing your own walk, trying to convince yourself that something is wrong with you. No one has the right to hurt you,

just no one. This is the other side of the agape walk that I have been learning and what a tremendous experience it has been. For years, I saw ONLY the “my” behavior side. Isn't that mostly what we are taught in our churches, the “how” of being a nice Christian? Now, I am also seeing the “their” behavior side and I'm REALLY letting it sink in. We are seldom taught “how” to deal with others in the wrong. Continuing to allow their abuse in your life is NOT the right way to handle these kinds of negatives. I used to refuse this side because I was taught something I now, no longer believe, which was, “I am totally responsible for all of my feelings.” I was taught that no one can make me mad, that no one can control my feelings, that I, and only I could do that. The end result has been years of second-guessing my walk. For years, I couldn't figure out why I'd be angry when someone would hurt me. I couldn't figure out why I felt

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so confused after being mistreated in a “friendship” after giving so very much into it. Perhaps you have felt similar feelings and judged yourself as wrong for having them. Maybe it’s time for you, too, to stop second-guessing yourself, and start realizing that there are a lot of really messed up people out there who would like nothing better than to push your buttons and test your agape limits, all in the name of their own pride and ego. ***No one has the right to push your agape limits, just no one.*** If you find your ability to restrain anger being pushed, stop thinking you are the problem and start looking around you. Who is doing what, that is making you feel such a way? Pay attention to what he or she is doing and let it sink in for once, that whatever action is forthcoming, that it isn’t you. It’s him, it’s her. This, in no way, gives you a license to sin, a license to let your anger rage against another.

Agape demands that you push anger FAR away from you and you are still commanded to do this.

This is a wake-up call to get you to recognize that others can and do bring harm to you. Just because you feel angry when someone does something bad to you doesn’t make you a bad Christian. The person doing the hurting is the “bad” one.

If marriages were operated this way, there’d be a lot less trouble because someone with a clear mind would be at the helm. I’ve seen wives torment their husbands to the point that the man becomes so “pussy-whipped,” he won’t utter a word against her vain actions. Then he stays this way. I’ve seen women so verbally abused that they take “submission” to a new level, turning into a most pathetic

emblem of slavery. Then she stays this way - a slave for life. I’ve also seen the adversary in these roles become so confident in his or her terrifying walk that most people quake in their booties when he or she comes around. ***If you are walking a Christ-like walk, you have nothing to fear, and you have NO REASON TO SECOND-GUESS yourself!*** But you do have to take charge of these situations. You can’t stay pussy-whipped or in slavery forever. Get out! If someone is abusing you in your agape walk, put a stop to it once and for all. Don’t ever let it happen again. Recognize it, deal with it, and walk away from it.

I know what you might be thinking. You’re thinking, “What do you mean, walk away from it?” “Do you mean, “Leave him/her”? No, I don’t. ***I mean what I just said, “Don’t ever***

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let it (second-guessing yourself) happen again. Recognize it, deal with it, and walk away from” the abuse.

For instance, husband, if your wife has become progressively hateful towards you, and you find you working harder and harder to please her, but nothing seems to help, you have one of these situations on your hands. Recognize that it is not you, but that it is she. When she attacks you with her words, stand up to those words as a Christian should. But, most importantly, don't blame yourself. I always want to qualify this with, "you better be walking a Christ-like walk." Don't second-guess yourself. Realize that she has a problem. You can certainly switch roles in this example, and you can also apply it to other relationships too.

1. Recognize that the other person has a problem.
2. Deal with it in a Christ-like

way.

3. Never second-guess yourself.
4. Walk away from it. You may have to completely remove yourself from this person too. Only time will tell. I've found that when I am walking the Word, the adversaries don't want to be around me. Too much light!

Well, in my quest to find a great biblical example of makrothumeo, putting anger far away, I found that God provides us with the absolute greatest example there is. (See verse 7.) While you may be pretty perturbed at those who seek to do you harm, you can be guaranteed that God is too. Even though He might not execute His wrath upon them now, He will! That's a promise. In the meantime, when you are exposed to adversaries, instead of fainting, be one of God's praying favorites. *Can you imagine how your*

*confidence will change if you apply these principles starting right now. Stop second-guessing yourself and **DEFINITELY START PRAYING!***

He doesn't want you fainting every time you come up against another of life's challenges. He wants you proud and powerful as one of His favorites. If you are ever going to get to that kind of stature, you must become a "praying fool" as I've heard it called. Most Christians pray far too little. Let's change that right now. Stop fainting and start praying!

I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth? (Luke 18:8)

Just how long do you pray instead of faint? When Jesus Christ, the Son of man returns, that's when you can stop. Our churches should

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be full of praying people, people who know God will avenge them of their adversaries. These are the people of faith, the same ones that Christ WILL find when he returns to gather us together. *If you are a “faith” person, you aren’t a fainter.* When and where you have fainters, you don’t have prayers. There were three types of people exposed in this parable - prayers, fainters and adversaries. The adversaries are the ones who cause people to faint and who bring about the need for prayer. I pray none of you are another’s adversary.

God Bless you

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