

# OUR FAITHFUL FATHER LISTENS

A CHURCH WIDE STUDY OF PRAYER

MARCH 2023



## **Participant Guide**

For you, Lord, are kind and ready to forgive,  
abounding in faithful love to all who call on you. Lord, hear  
my prayer; listen to my cries for mercy. I call on you in the  
day of my distress, for you will answer me. **Psalms 86:5-7**

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# Introduction

As a church, this spring, we will use this life group guide to facilitate discussion around our 2023 focus on Prayer! However, you might be reading this guide and have never connected with Jesus Christ. You might be asking, "why do I need to pray to God," or "what does it even mean to pray?" We are glad you are asking those questions, and we would love to talk with you about any questions you may have regarding living a life for Jesus! Give us a call or send us an email! FBC@fbcgarner.org or (919) 772 1772.

## **Our Faithful Father Listens**

In this season of staff transitions, hiring leadership for both our worship and children's ministries and coming off of three culture-shifting years surrounding the pandemic, your pastors felt strongly that we needed to focus on one of the most basic and vital aspects of our relationship with Jesus, prayer. Although much has changed in our church family and in our world over the last few years, our mission remains the same; to know Christ and to make Him known to all people. Both knowing Christ and making him known are entirely dependent on prayer.

This spring, we are not merely studying prayer; we are praying. Church Family, I hope you realize that we need to cry out to God in utter dependence. Not only do we need to cry out, but we must also understand that when we cry out, our faithful Father listens! This truth is expressed in Psalm 86:5-7 which states, "For you, Lord, are kind and ready to forgive, abounding in faithful love to all who call on you. Lord, hear my prayer; listen to my cries for mercy. I call on you in the day of my distress, for you will answer me." What a beautiful description of the relationship between a child of God and their heavenly Father. Our aim is that through this study, you realize that our God is always faithful, ever-present, and listening for His children to call out. Do you call out to Him?

George Muller, the director of the Ashley Down orphanage, states, "I believe God has heard my prayers. He will make it manifest in His own good time that He has heard me. I have recorded my petitions that when God has answered them, His name will be glorified." We need God to intervene in our lives, our families, our church, and our community. Let's be a church full of individuals longing to see the Lord use us for His glory and for the expansion of His name! We earnestly long to see God transform lives through the gospel of Jesus, and we acknowledge that we cannot transform anyone; we must call on our faithful Father!

# HOW TO USE THIS STUDY

## LIFE GROUP STUDY

Your Life Group should be a community of believers discussing and studying the scriptures together. Life Group is not lecture time, that occurs during the Sunday sermon. During Life Group, you will break down the weekly Scripture passage and seek to apply it specifically to your life. In addition to studying the word, we want to encourage you to keep each other accountable, pray for one another, and encourage each other to remain obedient to God's word!

Many of you already read through the guide and answer the questions before Life Group. I want to encourage more of you to try this method. Answering the questions beforehand makes it easier for you to have a discussion and gives you time to process the encouragement and conviction you felt in response to the passage of Scripture! Then in Life Group, you can share that with others!

## FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP: PARENT CONNECT

Each week contains a Parent Connect page. Parents, we include this page as a resource to help you engage with your student during the week. Use it to help start the conversation of what you learned in Life Groups or the sermon, and find out what the Lord is teaching them! Our pastoral staff believes strongly that you play the primary role in discipling your kids! Engage with their spiritual growth!

## SERMON NOTES

Please use this section to take notes during the Sunday Sermon. Taking notes helps you to retain what you hear and will help you reference this teaching of God's word in your Life Group the following week!

# Sermon Notes

Please use this section to take notes during the Sunday Sermon. Taking notes helps you to retain what you hear and will help you reference this teaching of God's word in your Life Group the following week!

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26TH

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

# Interactive Learning Guide:

## 2 Chronicles 14:8-15

MARCH: WEEK 1

### MAIN IDEA OF THE TEXT:

Properly understanding one's relationship with the Almighty God leads to obedience and dependence on Him. King Asa was obedient and dependent upon God, and God faithfully delivered his people for His Glory! This narrative should inspire others to call on God!

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

2 Chronicles is a historical book that starts recording after the death of King David and counts all the kings of Judah until the Edict of Cyrus. The Edict of Cyrus was a document that allowed all Jews to return home from Babylon and rebuild their temple; God used this to fulfill His promise. Today's passage of study falls in the middle of this grand historical narrative with King Asa of Judah. Asa was the third king of the southern kingdom of Judah, and his father and grandfather were wicked Kings. However, he ruled for forty-one years and did what was good and right in the eyes of the Lord his God. During his reign, there was peace and prosperity because he removed the idols and called out to God. Until the Cushites invasion, when Asa called out to God and the people of Judah were victorious in battle, as the Lord crushed the enemy.

### SERIES CONNECTION:

Our spring series, *Our Faithful Father Listens*, focuses on God's response to our prayers. King Asa, in our text of study, called out to God for strength, help, and deliverance and God heard and responded faithfully. King Asa understood that the battle was not his own and that the army of Judah belonged to the Lord. This reality leads him to go against the largest army in the name of the Lord, in the name of its true leader!

### READ 2 CHRONICLES 14:8-15

8 Asa had an army of three hundred thousand from Judah bearing large shields and spears, and two hundred eighty thousand from Benjamin bearing regular shields and drawing the bow. All these were valiant warriors. 9 Then Zerah the Cushite came against them with an army of one million men and three hundred chariots. They came as far as Mareshah. 10 So Asa marched out against him and lined up in battle formation in Zephathah Valley at Mareshah. 11 Then Asa cried out to the Lord his God, "Lord, there is no one besides you to help the mighty and those without strength. Help us, Lord our God, for we depend on you, and in your name we have come against this large army. Lord, you are our God. Do not let a mere mortal hinder you." 12 So the Lord routed the Cushites before Asa and before Judah, and the Cushites fled. 13 Then Asa and the people who were with him pursued them as far as Gerar. The Cushites fell until they had no survivors, for they were crushed before the Lord and his army. So the people of Judah carried off a great supply of loot. 14 Then they attacked all the cities around Gerar because the terror of the Lord was on them. They also plundered all the cities, since there was a great deal of plunder in them. 15 They also attacked the tents of the herdsmen and captured many sheep and camels. Then they returned to Jerusalem.

## GROUP DISCUSSION

### QUESTIONS

1. Restate the military situation outlined in verses 8-10 in your own words.

Verse 11 contains King Asa's cry to the Lord.

2. What relational language is present in this prayer?

3. What does King Asa plead for in his cry?

4. What reason does King Asa give to God for helping His people?

5. How does God deliver in verses 12-15, what is attributed to the Lord?

## APPLICATION

### Matthew 6:9-13

9 “Therefore, you should pray like this: Our Father in heaven, your name be honored as holy. 10 Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. 11 Give us today our daily bread. 12 And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. 13 And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one

6. How does Asa's cry compare with the model prayer in Matthew 6:9-13?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. How does your view of God compare to Asa's? How does that affect your prayers?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. In what areas of your life are you dependent upon God?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. What areas of life do you need to surrender to God and depend upon Him?  
Bring these things boldly to God as King Asa did against the Cushites!
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
10. What should be the ultimate goal of your prayers?



# Parent Connect

## Family Discipleship Guide: 2 Chronicles 14:8-15

Get your family to discuss what you are learning at church during the week. Help your child navigate the truths of Scripture and apply it to their lives.

### BED TIME

#### Prayer & Scripture Memory

**Read the memory verse and pray in alignment with the prompt every night.**

Memory Verse: "Lord, there is no one besides you to help the mighty and those without strength." - 2 Chronicles 14:11

Pray that God will give you the strength to fight your battles. For older children, have them name temptations or trials they want to the Lord to help them fight.

### DRIVE TIME

#### Discussion / Check-In

"Asa did what was good and right in the sight of the Lord his God. He removed the pagan altars and the high places." - 2 Chron. 14:2-3

This past week at church, we discussed King Asa, and the Bible says he was good and right in the sight of the Lord. What do you think that means?

How are you right before God? Through a relationship with Jesus Christ!

### DINNER TIME

#### Family Devotion

**Pray the same prayer as Asa as a family.**

"Lord, there is no one besides you to help the mighty and those without strength. Help us, Lord our God, for we depend on you, and in your name we have come against this large army. Lord, you are our God. Do not let a mere mortal hinder you." 2 Chron. 14:11

Help us rely on you. Help us find our strength in you. Help our family glorify you in our actions and display your love and power to our neighbors and friends.

# Sermon Notes

Please use this section to take notes during the Sunday Sermon. Taking notes helps you to retain what you hear and will help you reference this teaching of God's word in your Life Group the following week!

SUNDAY, MARCH 5TH

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# Interactive Learning Guide:

## John 11:1-44

MARCH: WEEK 2

### MAIN IDEA OF THE TEXT:

John 11:1-44 demonstrates a very important theological truth regarding prayer. When life becomes difficult, we want God to respond immediately. If He doesn't, we are tempted to believe He does not care. However, God is not governed by time or space. His delays are because He loves us and He is working for our good and for His glory. We can learn from our text the importance of developing a growing and maturing faith by praying and waiting.

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

The gospel of John clearly states its purpose in John 20:30-31, "Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name." This background is important for the study of John 11 as it is the singular account of Lazarus' resurrection in the gospels. This is a significant sign of Jesus' miraculous power; therefore, it is commonly asked why this event is not recorded in the other gospels. In addressing this common question, it comes down to the purpose of the writing. Each of the gospel authors, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, are intentional in the signs and wonders they include, as John states, "many other signs" occurred! Matthew, Mark, and Luke focus primarily on the teachings of Jesus, supported by his miracles. We observe this through the heavy uses of parables in the synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke), which do not appear in John. Instead, John's teaching focused directly on Jesus' relationship with the Father and his identity as the Messiah!

### SERIES CONNECTION:

Babbie Mason says it well in her song, Trust His Heart. You will find in the lyrics these powerful words, "God is too wise to be mistaken, God is too good to be unkind, so when you don't understand, when you don't see His plan, when you can't trace His hand, Trust His Heart". In our text today, we see the Lord intentionally delay the request of Mary and Martha to come and heal their brother Lazarus. Why the delay? It was to accomplish a greater good in building the faith of those who were witnesses to the resurrection of Lazarus and to bring glory and honor to the Lord. We must in faith, learn to see beyond our hurt and trust that God is doing a work that is bigger. A work that will meet our need and bring glory to the Father.

## READ JOHN 11:1-44 (CSB)

11 Now a man was sick, Lazarus from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. 2 Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair, and it was her brother Lazarus who was sick. 3 So the sisters sent a message to him: "Lord, the one you love is sick." 4 When Jesus heard it, he said, "This sickness will not end in death but is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it." 5 Now Jesus loved Martha, her sister, and Lazarus. 6 So when he heard that he was sick, he stayed two more days in the place where he was. 7 Then after that, he said to the disciples, "Let's go to Judea again." 8 "Rabbi," the disciples told him, "just now the Jews tried to stone you, and you're going there again?" 9 "Aren't there twelve hours in a day?" Jesus answered. "If anyone walks during the day, he doesn't stumble, because he sees the light of this world. 10 But if anyone walks during the night, he does stumble, because the light is not in him." 11 He said this, and then he told them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I'm on my way to wake him up." 12 Then the disciples said to him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will get well." 13 Jesus, however, was speaking about his death, but they thought he was speaking about natural sleep. 14 So Jesus then told them plainly, "Lazarus has died. 15 I'm glad for you that I wasn't there so that you may believe. But let's go to him." 16 Then Thomas (called "Twin") said to his fellow disciples, "Let's go too so that we may die with him."

17 When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. 18 Bethany was near Jerusalem (less than two miles away). 19 Many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them about their brother. 20 As soon as Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him, but Mary remained seated in the house. 21 Then Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother wouldn't have died. 22 Yet even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you." 23 "Your brother will rise again," Jesus told her. 24 Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day." 25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me, even if he dies, will live. 26 Everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" 27 "Yes, Lord," she told him, "I believe you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who comes into the world."

28 Having said this, she went back and called her sister Mary, saying in private, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you." 29 As soon as Mary heard this, she got up quickly and went to him. 30 Jesus had not yet come into the village but was still in the place where Martha had met him. 31 The Jews who were with her in the house consoling her saw that Mary got up quickly and went out. They followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to cry there. 32 As soon as Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and told him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother wouldn't have died!" 33 When Jesus saw her crying, and the Jews who had come with her crying, he was deeply moved in his spirit and troubled. 34 "Where have you put him?" he asked. "Lord," they told him, "come and see." 35 Jesus wept. 36 So the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" 37 But some of them said, "Couldn't he who opened the blind man's eyes also have kept this man from dying?"

38 Then Jesus, deeply moved again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. 39 "Remove the stone," Jesus said. Martha, the dead man's sister, told him, "Lord, there is already a stench because he has been dead four days." 40 Jesus said to her, "Didn't I tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?" 41 So they removed the stone. Then Jesus raised his eyes and said, "Father, I thank you that you heard me. 42 I know that you always hear me, but because of the crowd standing here I said this, so that they may believe you sent me." 43 After he said this, he shouted with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" 44 The dead man came out bound hand and foot with linen strips and with his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unwrap him and let him go."

## GROUP DISCUSSION

### QUESTIONS

1. What response did Jesus give when He learned of Lazarus being sick?
2. Why did the disciples not want to go to Judea where Lazarus was? What was the response of Jesus?
3. How does Martha express her feelings/emotions along with her faith in the Lord?
4. The raising of Lazarus from the dead is among many miracles of Jesus. Why would this miracle be considered one of His greatest and most important?
5. Why does Jesus weep at Lazarus's death?

## APPLICATION

6. What assurance can we find in this passage during our own times of suffering?
7. Can you remember a time when it seemed God was not hearing your cry for help?  
From this text what can we learn about God's delay in answering our prayer?
8. What hope and encouragement can you take from this passage as it relates to your prayer life?
9. When Jesus raised Lazarus, He gave him life, but he was still wrapped in his grave clothes. Jesus instructed the friends of Lazarus to "unwrap him and let him go".  
What lesson can we learn from this example for our LifeGroup?
10. How does this passage prompt you to pray?

# Parent Connect

## Family Discipleship Guide: John 11:1-44

Get your family to discuss what you are learning at church during the week. Help your child navigate the truths of Scripture and apply it to their lives.

### BED TIME

#### Prayer & Scripture Memory

**Read the memory verse and pray in alignment with the prompt every night.**

Memory Verse: "Then Jesus raised his eyes and said, "Father, I thank you that you heard me. I know that you always hear me, but because of the crowd standing here I said this, so that they may believe you sent me." - John 11:41-42

Thank God in prayer that He always hears your prayers, and thank God for sending Jesus to make it possible for us to have a personal relationship with our Father!

### DRIVE TIME

#### Discussion / Check-In

"The dead man came out bound hand and foot with linen strips and with his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unwrap him and let him go." - John 11:44

This past week at church, we discussed the importance of Lazarus's friends unwrapping his grave clothes. Pastor Travis explained that we need to help other Christians remove sinful habits through accountability. We want you to know, you can be open with us about anything because we are your parents and we love you!

### DINNER TIME

#### Family Devotion

#### Opening Question:

What do you remember about the resurrection of Lazarus?

#### Read John 11:21-27 Together!

What does the resurrection of Lazarus teach us about Jesus?

That Jesus is the resurrection and the life, meaning that eventually, the pain of death and suffering will be no more, and we will have eternal life!

# Sermon Notes

Please use this section to take notes during the Sunday Sermon. Taking notes helps you to retain what you hear and will help you reference this teaching of God's word in your Life Group the following week!

SUNDAY, MARCH 12TH

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# Interactive Learning Guide:

## Ephesians 3:14-21

MARCH: WEEK 3

### MAIN IDEA OF THE TEXT:

Paul prays for believers to experience the transformational power and presence of Jesus Christ, filled with His love, and fulfilled by His glory.

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND & SERIES CONNECTION:

Maybe you have asked someone before “how can I be praying for you?” Perhaps someone has asked you the same question and you have shared requests and concerns with them, possibly even deep concerns that you would appreciate having lifted to the Lord in prayer by another person.

The Apostle Paul gave some brothers and sisters in Christ by sharing with them how he was praying for them. See, Paul was imprisoned in Rome when, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he penned an epistle to the church in Ephesus (along with Colossians and Philemon). The overall message of the book of Ephesians is to give instruction in the truths of God’s redemptive work in Jesus, the unity of the church among Jews and Gentiles, and proper conduct in the church, the home, and the world.

In this particular section of Ephesians, Ephesians 3:14-21, Paul figuratively opens the door to his “prayer closet” to allow the church at Ephesus in to see the pastoral heart of Paul as he prays for them. Paul shares specifics of the content of his prayers for the believers in Ephesus. What Paul prayed for the followers of Jesus is informative to believers today for how we can and should be praying for Kingdom concerns. There is nothing at all wrong with praying for the temporary needs we have in our lives on this earth. Our health, jobs, material needs... all of these represent real needs and concerns which we bring to the Lord seeking His provision. But as we grow deeper in our relationship with Christ and mature in our faith, our praying will reflect a heart that is more and more concerned with God’s Kingdom than our own. As in the model prayer of Jesus found in Matthew 6, we can and should certainly pray “Give us today our daily bread”, but also can and should lift up our voices to the Lord to proclaim “Our Father in heaven, your name be honored as holy. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”

Paul prayed for believers to experience the transformational power and presence of Jesus Christ, filled with His love, and fulfilled by His glory. Today in this study, let’s consider how Paul’s prayer inspires and challenges us as God’s people to know His power, presence, love, and glory!

## **READ EPHESIANS 3:14-21 (CSB)**

14 For this reason I kneel before the Father. 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named. 16 I pray that he may grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with power in your inner being through his Spirit, 17 and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. I pray that you, being rooted and firmly established in love, 18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the length and width, height and depth of God's love, 19 and to know Christ's love that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. 20 Now to him who is able to do above and beyond all that we ask or think according to the power that works in us— 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Take a moment to write down your initial takeaways and summarize the text.

### **GROUP DISCUSSION**

## **QUESTIONS**

1. Who made up the original audience of this epistle?
2. What would this passage mean to the original audience that was made up primarily of Gentile believers?

3. This passage expresses important truths about God. List all the truths about God that you can find in Ephesians 3:14-21.
4. Think about the various life circumstances you have faced in 2023. Which of these truths about God are you drawn to or especially thankful for in light of your life circumstances?
5. What does this passage indicate about man? List your observations here:
6. What does it mean when Paul is praying for strength in the Ephesian believer's "inner being"?
7. Think back over your life since you've become a follower of Jesus. How has the Lord transformed your "inner being" and what are some of the differences that has made in your thinking, actions, attitudes, and relationships? Consider sharing those with your life group! These are worth celebrating!

8. What does this passage demand of me (how is this passage instructional for my walk with Jesus as His follower)?

9. For your personal response (not necessarily to share with your life group), prayerfully consider what is a “room” of your heart that needs to be surrendered to Jesus through repentance and confession, that He may bring restoration?

10. How does this passage change the way you relate to people?

11. How does this passage impact your praying?

**Application:** Read back over this passage. At each verse, stop and pray God’s Word, making it personal for yourself. You are speaking God’s Word back to Him as you pray for yourself.

For example: Paul says in verse 14-15: 14 For this reason I kneel before the Father. 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named. Your prayer may be something like: “God, thank you for adopting me into your family along with every other believer in Jesus, from every nation, tribe, and tongue.” Pray through the whole passage by yourself. May God bless your time together!

# Parent Connect

## Family Discipleship Guide: Ephesians 3:14-21

Get your family to discuss what you are learning at church during the week. Help your child navigate the truths of Scripture and apply it to their lives.

### BED TIME

#### Prayer & Scripture Memory

**Read the memory verse and pray in alignment with the prompt every night.**

Memory Verse: " I pray that he (God) may grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with power in your inner being through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith." - Ephesians 3:16-17

Tonight pray out loud this prayer for your child. It's important for them to hear you pray for them.

### DRIVE TIME

#### Discussion / Check-In

"For this reason I kneel before the Father. " - Ephesians 3:14

In Life Groups, we discussed why Paul prays to God in Ephesians 3.  
Why do you pray?

### DINNER TIME

#### Family Devotion

**Read Ephesians 3:20-21**

"Now to him who is able to do above and beyond all that we ask or think according to the power that works in us— to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen." Ephesians 3:20-21

How does this truth give each person in your family comfort?

# Sermon Notes

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SUNDAY, MARCH 19TH

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# Interactive Learning Guide:

## Luke 18:1-8

MARCH: WEEK 4

### MAIN IDEA OF THE TEXT:

Luke 18:1-8 records one of the two parables in the chapter on prayer. This first parable Jesus used to teach the disciples the need and importance of being persistent in prayer. He knew the struggles that were ahead of them and He was concerned that they would become weary and give up. In this parable He refers to an unjust judge and a persistent widow who was seeking justice. It was the persistence of the widow that prompted the unjust judge to do what was right for her. The lesson to take from this parable is this. If a judge who, “did not fear God or respect people”, did what was right for the widow, then how much more will a loving Heavenly Father do what is right for His children.

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

To understand the context of his parable you must first read Luke 17:20-37. In these verses Jesus is sharing with His disciples what things will be like in the last days before the rapture of the church. He closes in Ch. 17:37 “where the corpse is, there also the vultures will be gathered”. He is speaking of the time when there will be the absence of Truth and this will result in spiritual and moral decay. The absence of Truth will result in a rotting and dying culture. Where there is an absence of spiritual life and Truth demons will come and take up residence. They will gather around a rotting culture, just like vultures gather around a dead corpse. This is the setting that prompts Jesus to teach His disciples to always pray and never give up. Also notice that in Ch. 18:8b Jesus asks this question, “Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on earth?” So, it is obvious with the parable falling between the description of the end times and the question in Ch. 18:8b about the coming of the Son of Man, Jesus is teaching the importance of being persistent in prayer in these days when there is spiritual decay and a rotting society leading up to His return.

### SERIES CONNECTION:

The cry for justice is a familiar one today. It seems that injustice is all around us and always prevails. Jesus taught his disciples with this parable, more can be accomplished on our knees seeking justice than in any other way. We all know what it is like to become discouraged in our prayer lives. We lose heart and as a result falter at best and sometimes even quit all together. We assume God must not be listening or at least will not give us what we are looking for. The more I pray, the worst things become. In our text today, Jesus uses this parable to teach a good lesson on being persistent in prayer by using the bad example of an unjust judge. It was because of the persistent request for justice by the widow that eventually the judge who, “did not fear God or respect people” did what was right for the widow. We too, can be assured that God our Father, who is nothing like the unjust judge will always act in our best interest. So, we must not lose heart, but pray always and never give up.

## **READ LUKE 18:1-8 (CSB)**

Now he told them a parable on the need for them to pray always and not give up. 2 “There was a judge in a certain town who didn’t fear God or respect people. 3 And a widow in that town kept coming to him, saying, ‘Give me justice against my adversary.’ 4 “For a while he was unwilling, but later he said to himself, ‘Even though I don’t fear God or respect people, 5 yet because this widow keeps pestering me, I will give her justice, so that she doesn’t wear me out by her persistent coming.’” 6 Then the Lord said, “Listen to what the unjust judge says. 7 Will not God grant justice to his elect who cry out to him day and night? Will he delay helping them? 8 I tell you that he will swiftly grant them justice. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?”

Take a moment to write down your initial takeaways and summarize the text.

### **GROUP DISCUSSION**

## **QUESTIONS**

1. What reason did Luke give for Jesus sharing this parable with His disciples?
2. How does Jesus describe the Judge in this parable? Why is this important?



3. What are some challenges the widow would face in seeking justice?

4. Why did the unjust Judge finally give in to the request for justice by the widow?

## APPLICATION

5. How is God different than the unjust Judge?

### **READ LUKE 18:1-8 & 12:31-32 (CSB)**

Now he told them a parable on the need for them to pray always and not give up. 2 “There was a judge in a certain town who didn’t fear God or respect people. 3 And a widow in that town kept coming to him, saying, ‘Give me justice against my adversary.’ 4 “For a while he was unwilling, but later he said to himself, ‘Even though I don’t fear God or respect people, 5 yet because this widow keeps pestering me, I will give her justice, so that she doesn’t wear me out by her persistent coming.’” 6 Then the Lord said, “Listen to what the unjust judge says. 7 Will not God grant justice to his elect who cry out to him day and night? Will he delay helping them? 8 I tell you that he will swiftly grant them justice. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?”

31 “But seek his kingdom, and these things will be provided for you. 32 Don’t be afraid, little flock, because your Father delights to give you the kingdom.

6. How are those who are in a relationship with the Heavenly Father different than the widow?

7. Life comes at us all on a fast pace. It is easy to become discouraged as a child of God and to even give up. In your own words what does it mean to not faint or lose heart? What are some warning signs I am in danger of losing confidence and trust in the Lord to answer my prayers?

8. How have you seen persistent prayer to be helpful to a wavering faith?

9. Jesus ask this question at the close of his parable, "...when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith?" Lead your group in a discussion on this quote from John Piper.

"Prayer and faith stand and fall together. If we lose heart and drift away from prayer, then the Son of man will not find faith in us when he comes. Faith is the furnace of our lives. Its fuel is the grace of God. And the divinely appointed shovel for feeding the burner is prayer. If you lose heart and lay down the shovel, the fire will go out, you will grow cold and hard."

10. How does this passage prompt you to pray?

# Parent Connect

## Family Discipleship Guide: Luke 18:1-8

Get your family to discuss what you are learning at church during the week. Help your child navigate the truths of Scripture and apply it to their lives.

### BED TIME

#### Prayer & Scripture Memory

**Read the memory verse and pray in alignment with the prompt every night.**

Memory Verse: "I tell you that he will swiftly grant them justice." - Luke 18:8a

Thank God in prayer that He is a God of justice, and praise Him for giving you victory over sin and death through Jesus!

### DRIVE TIME

#### Discussion / Check-In

"I tell you that he will swiftly grant them justice." - Luke 18:8a.

This week we are praying in response to God's justice.

What injustices (or wrongs for younger kids) do you see in our world?

### DINNER TIME

#### Family Devotion

**Read Luke 18:1 Together:**

"Now he told them a parable on the need for them to pray always and not give up." Luke 18:1

This teaching of Jesus is clear; we need to pray always!  
Spend some time in prayer as a family!

# The Prayer Tracker

This page has been added to help you keep track of the prayer requests from other members of your Life Group. We desire biblical community, and a significant aspect of that community is lifting one another up in prayer. Use this to keep a list of requests and track your prayer time.

[illegible]

# March 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

## Prayer Tracker

After praying over this list of requests, check off the date on this calendar.

Prayer Request	Who Asked?	Date Asked	Date Answered

## Weekly Prayer Prompts

### March 5-11: Adoration - Read Psalm 116:4-6

Praise God for his graciousness, righteousness, and compassion. Praise him for your salvation and the strength he gives you to share the gospel in Garner and beyond.

### March 12-18: Confession - Read 1 John. 1:9

Cry out to God and ask him to show you the sins in your life; confess them, and ask for his forgiveness. Admit you don't always take the opportunity to share the gospel, ask for his strength to do that today.

### March 19-25: Thanksgiving - Read Psalm 106:1

Give thanks to the Lord because he is good and deserving of our praise. Thank him for the place he has you in right now and for the opportunity to share the gospel where he has placed you.

### March 26-31: Supplication - Read Phil. 4:6

Pray for the lost around you. Ask God to show you one specific person you can pray for and share the gospel with.

Church-Wide Prayer Prompts are sent out every Monday morning; join your church family in calling out to the Lord in prayer every week.

Scan the QR Code or Call the church office M-TH (8 am-5 pm) to be added to the group prayer reminders if you are not already receiving them!



# Resources

Use these links to explore the Scriptural passages and questions in more detail!

1. Commentary John 11

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/16SEmlcS3V3u3qxETgJDX\\_Kt98GbpWPa8/view?usp=share\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/16SEmlcS3V3u3qxETgJDX_Kt98GbpWPa8/view?usp=share_link)



2. Commentary John 11

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/11YKJiKQg\\_xlkl-tNccRPRBaNF29ziQ2L/view?usp=share\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/11YKJiKQg_xlkl-tNccRPRBaNF29ziQ2L/view?usp=share_link)



3. Commentary Luke 18

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ibJEHQ5sinUVXxxjL3ATGiNuMvqsEaFF/view?usp=share\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ibJEHQ5sinUVXxxjL3ATGiNuMvqsEaFF/view?usp=share_link)



4. Commentary Luke 18

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1sgk2Acszikf35XwyLELRFitFoQV29QF\\_/view?usp=share\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1sgk2Acszikf35XwyLELRFitFoQV29QF_/view?usp=share_link)



5. Commentary Ephesians 3

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Qx-EBwcZZ6YgTzUjTv-PcQh-i7UFd3tM/view?usp=share\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Qx-EBwcZZ6YgTzUjTv-PcQh-i7UFd3tM/view?usp=share_link)



6. Commentary Ephesians 3

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/17h8yAm3pwiTVdkP5h1l1QV\\_cclrJnMvy/view?usp=share\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/17h8yAm3pwiTVdkP5h1l1QV_cclrJnMvy/view?usp=share_link)



7. 2 Chronicles Commentaries

[https://www.preceptaustin.org/2\\_chronicles\\_commentaries](https://www.preceptaustin.org/2_chronicles_commentaries)



8. Luke 18 Commentaries

<https://www.preceptaustin.org/luke-18-resources>



9. Ephesians 3 Commentaries

[https://www.preceptaustin.org/ephesians\\_3\\_resources](https://www.preceptaustin.org/ephesians_3_resources)



10. John Commentaries

[https://www.preceptaustin.org/john\\_commentaries](https://www.preceptaustin.org/john_commentaries)

