

ENCOUNTER
PRAYER

Persevering in Prayer

SESSION 5

Persevering in Prayer

SESSION 5

01 Not giving up

You may have noticed that our prayers are not always answered straight away. One of the keys to a good prayer life is perseverance - not giving up.

The Bible contains an encouraging story about a man called Jacob wrestling with God. It gives us a great picture of prayer and perseverance.



*“So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak. When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob’s hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man. Then the man said, “Let me go, for it is daybreak.” But Jacob replied, **“I will not let you go unless you bless me.”** The man asked him, “What is your name?” “Jacob,” he answered. Then the man said, “Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome.” Jacob said, “Please tell me your name.” But he replied, “Why do you ask my name?” Then he blessed him there.”*

GENESIS 32:24-29

The most interesting part is when Jacob says: **“I will not let you go until you bless me!”** Persisting and persevering in prayer is about not letting go.

We live in an instant world

We live in a world where we expect things to happen instantly.

We live in a culture of immediacy

 **FREDDIE MERCURY**
[LEAD SINGER - QUEEN]

"I want it all, I want it all and I want it now"

Persistent prayer is one of the hardest habits, because we don't always receive an immediate answer. There will be times where you will feel like you've run out of words, but there is power in repeating prayer requests. Asking for the same thing time and time again; not letting go.



Jesus said,

"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened."

MATTHEW 7:7-8

Another way of phrasing this might be: **"Ask and keep on asking, knock and keep on knocking, seek and keep on seeking."**

Jesus also told the story of the persistent widow:



“Then Jesus told His disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. He said: “In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared what people thought. And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, ‘Grant me justice against my adversary.’ “For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, ‘Even though I don’t fear God or care what people think, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won’t eventually come and attack me!’” And the Lord said, “Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God bring about justice for His chosen ones, who cry out to Him day and night? Will He keep putting them off? I tell you, He will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?”

LUKE 18:1-8

There is a race marked out for you, and you need to run it with perseverance. In your prayer life, sometimes that race will be a sprint; but often it will be a marathon.



“And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.”

HEBREWS 12: 1

We need to persevere in prayer; we need to keep knocking; to keep petitioning God:



“Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying.”

ROMANS 12:12

02

Pray with others

We believe that praying with others is one of the greatest ways to maintain persevering, persistent prayer. We need people to stand with us and encourage us not to give up; to keep running; to keep knocking.

When we get together, we need to ask each other how we are. We need to pray with each other and try to remember what others are praying about too.

Encouragement is a key factor in perseverance because difficult days will come.



CORRIE TEN BOOM
[WRITER, SPEAKER & HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR]

"When a train goes through a tunnel and it gets dark, you don't throw away the ticket and jump off. You sit still and trust the engineer."

03

Reasons prayers may not be answered

God answers prayer in 3 ways: Yes, No or Wait.

Sometimes our prayers are not serious.

If we get a parking ticket, God isn't going to change it into a £50 note! Imagine how many people pray to win the lottery every week!

Sometimes sin gets in the way of our prayer life.



"If I cherished sin in my heart, the LORD would not have heard me."

PSALM 66:18

We, of course, have a God who is the friend of sinners; but sometimes our sin can get in the way of our prayer lives. We just need to say sorry.

Wrong motives can affect our prayer lives:



"You don't have, because you don't ask God. And when you ask you don't receive, because you ask with wrong motives - that you may spend what you get on your pleasures."

JAMES 4:2 -3

We need to examine ourselves when we pray. If our motives are good, there is no sin blocking the way, and the prayer is serious, then we should persevere.

Sometimes we won't understand why God doesn't answer our prayers in the way we would want. But with some things, we're never going to know why He didn't answer the prayer in the way that we'd hoped. That's when we need to start trusting that Almighty God, our Father in heaven, knows best and that He is good.

Although it is challenging, knowing that God has everything under control should give us strength to persevere.



"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."

GALATIANS 6: 9



"Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing."

1 THESSALONIANS 5: 11