

LifeWORKS

staying in shape as a Christian



LIFEquestions

Your Story

- What was the best piece of advice that you were ever given about prayer?

God's Story*:

Read the passages on the opposite page.

Take a slow look at the LIFEtext (opposite) and consider these questions:

- Why did Jesus tell the story of the 'unjust judge'? Do you find it surprising that Jesus thought the disciples might give up praying?
- Do we get any clues as to the reason they might have given up on prayer? What reasons might there be today why people stop praying?
- What is the link between faith (trusting that God will act) and prayer in this passage?
- How would you describe the attitude of the widow? What can we learn from her about prayer?
- This is a 'parable of contrast'. If a bad, grumpy judge eventually gives justice, HOW MUCH MORE will a good Father? How does our view of God shape our prayers?
- How would you describe the prayer of the tax collector (13)?
- What can we learn about real prayer from the tax collector?
- Prayer includes many ways of approaching God. Which aspects of prayer are important to people in the group, but do not appear in these stories?

Your Story

- What insights into prayer have people been reminded of? What would they like to do in response?
- Pray for one another.

* These questions are a guide only. Do not feel you have to cover them all. Do feel free to allow the conversation to develop in other directions, if it seems fruitful (and stays on the subject!). Do pray for one another.

LIFEtext

Luke 18 One day Jesus told his disciples a story to show that they should always pray and never give up. 2 "There was a judge in a certain city," he said, "who neither feared God nor cared about people. 3 A widow of that city came to him repeatedly, saying, 'Give me justice in this dispute with my enemy.' 4 The judge ignored her for a while, but finally he said to himself, 'I don't fear God or care about people, 5 but this woman is driving me crazy. I'm going to see that she gets justice, because she is wearing me out with her constant requests!'"

6 Then the Lord said, "Learn a lesson from this unjust judge. 7 Even he rendered a just decision in the end. So don't you think God will surely give justice to his chosen people who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? 8 I tell you, he will grant justice to them quickly! But when the Son of Man returns, how many will he find on the earth who have faith?"

9 Then Jesus told this story to some who had great confidence in their own righteousness and scorned everyone else: 10 "Two men went to the Temple to pray. One was a Pharisee, and the other was a despised tax collector. 11 The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed this prayer: 'I thank you, God, that I am not like other people—cheaters, sinners, adulterers. I'm certainly not like that tax collector! 12 I fast twice a week, and I give you a tenth of my income.'

13 "But the tax collector stood at a distance and dared not even lift his eyes to heaven as he prayed. Instead, he beat his chest in sorrow, saying, 'O God, be merciful to me, for I am a sinner.' 14 I tell you, this sinner, not the Pharisee, returned home justified before God. For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."

LifeSHAPE
live for God

LifeSTREAM
connect with God

LifeSOURCE
rooted in God

