

Persistence in Prayer
2-17-13
Luke 11:1 "Lord, teach us to pray..."

When Jesus taught about prayer, He did not speak much about physical aspects of prayer, such as closing our eyes, clasping our hands, or kneeling. He spoke about the spiritual ways in which prayer perfects us, and how we ought to think about prayer.

In Luke 11:5-11 and in Luke 18:1-8, Jesus in particular emphasized the importance of persistence in prayer. What is Persistence? We will call it the application of effort, based on what the Bible says in 2 Timothy 2:15 ("Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.") and 2 Peter 1:5 ("But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith")

Jesus Demonstrated Persistence in Prayer. We see that "He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed" (Luke 5:16). There are over 20 examples of Jesus praying, and many are examples of hours of time dedicated to prayer. Why? It was not because God was seeking a certain level of prayer, or God cannot act until a certain point. This was the Son of God, God in the flesh who prayed. Instead, we must conclude that persistence in prayer is for the good of the one who prays .

Let us look at three examples of people who were persistent in prayer. The first is Cornelius. In Acts 10:1-4 we see he was persistent in prayer. In the end, he benefited because he was the first to hear the Gospel. The second is the prophetess Anna. In Luke 2:36-38 her persistence in prayer gave her the honor of seeing the Messiah as one of the first to know Him. Finally, we see that in Acts 6:4 the Apostles needed to devote their time to prayer. Although baptized in the Holy Spirit, they too needed time in prayer.

What we are seeing is that the real need for persistence in prayer is not by God, but by Men. We are rewarded for persistence with Spiritual strength and blessings. We must be more diligent in prayer to be successful in prayer. Diligence in Prayer demonstrates Faith. Diligence in Prayer contemplates Purpose.