



Sermon Discussion Guide for Groups

Parable of the Persistent Widow

Preached by Pete Greig

May 10, 2026

Summary

Have someone in your group read the following summary aloud.

Pastor Pete Greig teaches from the parable of the persistent widow in Luke 18:1-8, emphasizing the importance of persevering in prayer even when answers seem delayed. Using the metaphor of 'bruised knuckles from beating on heaven's door,' he explains that persistent prayer is not about manipulating God but about faithfulness in the face of difficulty. Pastor Pete addresses three reasons to persevere: human free will, spiritual warfare with Satan, and the complexity of God's will. He shares personal stories, including one about Sheila, a woman who suffered migraines for decades but remained faithful in prayer, ultimately receiving healing after years of persistence. The message encourages believers to continue praying with faith, knowing that God hears and cares, even when circumstances suggest otherwise.

Key Passages

- Luke 18:1-8
- Matthew 7:7
- Romans 5:3-4
- Ephesians 6:12
- Daniel 9:3

Opening Prayer

Open your session in prayer, using the words below or your own

Heavenly Father, we come before You today with open hearts and minds, ready to receive what You have for us in this time together. We acknowledge that You are the God who hears our prayers and cares deeply for each of us. As we gather to discuss Your Word and share our hearts, we ask that You speak to us through Your Holy Spirit. Help us to be vulnerable with one another, to listen well, and to encourage each other in our faith journey. Open our eyes to see You more clearly and our hearts to trust You more deeply. We pray this in Jesus' name, **Amen**.

Getting Going

Allow time for each member to answer the following questions before moving on.

What's something you've had to persistently ask for or work toward in your life, and how did it feel when you finally achieved it or received it?

Discussion Questions

Answer as many of these questions as time and interest allow.

1. Pastor Pete described prayer as 'beating on heaven's door with bruised knuckles in the dark.' How does this image resonate with your own prayer experience?
2. The parable contrasts an unjust judge with our loving heavenly Father. How does understanding God's character change the way you approach persistent prayer?
3. Pastor Pete mentioned three reasons why we need to persevere in prayer: human free will, spiritual warfare, and God's will. Which of these resonates most with your current prayer struggles?
4. How do you distinguish between being persistent in prayer versus trying to manipulate God to get what you want?
5. Pastor Pete shared the story of Sheila, who prayed for healing from migraines for decades. How do you maintain faith and avoid bitterness when prayers seem unanswered?
6. The message suggested that prayer is more about influence than power. How might this perspective change the way you pray for others?

7. What role does community play in helping you persevere through seasons of unanswered prayer?
8. How can we celebrate faithfulness in prayer even when we don't see the outcomes we're hoping for?

Making It Personal

Take the opportunity noted below to apply this week's sermon to your everyday life.

This week, identify one prayer request that you've been carrying for a long time. Commit to praying about it daily, but also consider fasting for a meal or finding a prayer partner to join you. Remember that persistence in prayer is about faithfulness, not technique. Keep 'stacking dominoes' through consistent prayer, trusting that God hears you and cares deeply about your concerns.

Key Takeaways

Commit to memory one point from the message before dismissing.

- Persistent prayer demonstrates faithfulness to God, not an attempt to manipulate Him.
- God is not like the unjust judge - He hears us immediately and cares deeply about our needs.

- Three factors require persistence in prayer: human free will, spiritual warfare, and the complexity of God's will.
- Prayer is more about gentle influence than forceful power, working through God's timing and methods.
- Faithfulness in prayer, even during suffering and unanswered requests, builds character and brings eternal reward.

Closing Prayer

Have someone from your group close your time in prayer, using the words below or your own.

Lord Jesus, thank You for this time of fellowship and learning together. We're grateful for the reminder that You hear every prayer and care about every concern we bring to You. Help us to be faithful in prayer, even when our knuckles are bruised from knocking on heaven's door. Give us strength to persevere through seasons of waiting and trust in Your perfect timing and will. May we support one another in prayer and encourage each other to keep seeking You. We place our deepest longings and persistent prayers into Your loving hands, knowing that You are the God over all. In Your precious name we pray, **Amen**.