

*The* PERSISTENT WIDOW

Luke 18:1-8

*The*  
STORIESJESUS  TOLD

## — INTRO

WELCOME TO WEEK FOUR OF THE STORIES JESUS TOLD SERIES!

**As you get ready to dig into the parable of The Persistent Widow, take a moment to refresh yourself on (or even bookmark) the COMA [Overview](#) and [Worksheet](#) to help you navigate your group time together.**

READ 

AS A GROUP, READ LUKE 18:1-8

One person could read the whole passage, or you could take turns reading verse by verse. Note any initial thoughts or questions that come to mind. It's okay if you aren't super confident or clear; the Context and Message sections below will help clarify your journey through the text.

## CONTEXT

After noting your initial observations, read through the context of the passage provided below. Note how these insights challenge or clarify your understanding of the story.

In Old Testament culture, judges had highly powerful positions because they were the ultimate administrator of God's justice; they served as both judge and jury. According to the Law, judges were to fear God (2 Chronicles 19:7) and therefore defend the oppressed. There were severe penalties for unjust judges who neither administered justice nor defended the oppressed.

The widow serves as the ultimate example of an oppressed person because she had no means of support. God especially cared for widows and orphans saying, "Do not take advantage of the widow or the fatherless. If you do and they cry out to me, I will certainly hear their cry" (Exodus 22:23).

In Jesus' story, because of the judge's position of power and lack of fear for God or care for others, this story would have traditionally ended badly for the widow. She wouldn't receive the care and justice she needs. But, even the corrupt judge responds because of the widow's persistence. By this, Jesus shows that God (who is just) will certainly respond to those who persistently call out in need.



# OBSERVATION

With the text's context in mind, reread the passage together. When you're finished, pause for a few minutes to silently note your own observations and questions. Utilize the Observation questions listed on the [COMA Overview sheet](#) to guide you. Remember, we believe every word is inspired by God and included for a reason.

When your group is ready, share both your initial observations and how those were impacted by the context of the story. Share anything particularly interesting, curious, confusing, or convicting. Notice if there are any themes for you and your group.

# MEANING

DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS TOGETHER AS A GROUP TO HELP DRAW OUT THE MEANING OF THE AUTHOR'S TEXT.

1. What was this story meant to teach the disciples about prayer?
2. What stands out about the widow's requests?
3. Share a time you had a request granted because you persisted despite initial rejection. Why do you think it was granted?

*Note:* UTILIZE THE MEANING QUESTIONS ON THE [COMA OVERVIEW SHEET](#) FOR ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION, IF DESIRED.



# APPLICATION

Luke 18:7 affirms God not only hears but responds to persistent prayers. He will bring justice, but we can often get caught wishing he would bring that justice on our own terms. Instead of worrying, working, or manipulating circumstances to bring about the justice we seek, we can surrender our struggles and pray (persistently), trusting God will make all injustices right in his time and on his terms.

1. Would you describe your prayer life as persistent or faith-filled? Why or why not?
2. Think through the typical calendar of your week and identify some persistent times and days you could build prayer into your schedule. Share them with your group.
3. Are there any common opportunities for prayer with people in your group? Make a simple plan to support and challenge each other to pray persistently this week.

## PRAYER

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING PRAYER PROMPTS TO GUIDE YOUR TIME WITH GOD AND YOUR GROUP:

- Thank God for the access we have to him in prayer.
- Ask God to grow a heart and desire for prayer this week.
- Ask him for specific prompts during the week to stop and remind you to pray and spend time with him.
- Thank him for how he answers us, even if the answers aren't always what we hope or expect.
- Ask him for help in relinquishing control of our hurts and injustices so we can continue to surrender every aspect of our lives to him.

## KEEP GOING

Each week, we're providing additional resources to help you continue to learn how to read, navigate, and study Scripture beyond the stories Jesus told. We hope these additional "tools in your toolbox" will help you engage in Scripture more clearly and consistently.

[The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament](#)  
by Craig S Keener

[The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament](#)  
by John H Walton, Victor H Matthews, & Mark W Chavalas

Background commentaries such as these are designed to provide background information to understand the biblical author's original concerns and purposes. Provided in verse-by-verse format, these commentaries include a glossary of cultural terms and historical figures, maps, charts, bibliographies, and introductory essays about cultural information for each book of the Bible.