

A LIVING FAITH Lesson on PERSEVERANCE

Theme: Persistence in Prayer

Object: Hammer, nail, and a thick piece of board OR

Scripture: Luke 18:1-8 and Jeremiah 9:23-24 (NRSV or NKJV)

Paree Looy!

Sometimes when we try to do something that seems difficult, is it easy to become discouraged? I think we have all felt like that at times. Let's see if we can come up with some examples.



Have you ever tried to pound a nail through a thick, hard board? You can't just hit the nail once and call it quits. You must keep hammering until the nail goes through the board. You may get a blister on your hand or bend the nail and have to start over. You might feel as though you are making little progress, but if you give up the job won't get done. You must keep trying.

How about learning to ride a bike? Does anyone just get on the bike and start riding the first time they try? Again, you can't just try once and call it quits. You must keep getting on the bike and trying.

The same thing may happen when you try to write a poem or a story. You can't just write the first line and quit. If you want to say something beautiful or explain how you feel, you will need to work with the words, move them around and listen to how they sound until you capture a poem or a story. You must keep trying.

In these examples we are talking about **persistence**. **Persistence** is a word that means that even if you become discouraged you have to keep trying over and over again.

Jesus talks about persistence in the Bible. He told his disciples to "*always pray, and not give up*" (18:1). He told them a story to encourage them:

There was a woman who went to a judge and asked for assistance because she did not feel she was being treated fairly. The judge did not believe in God and he did not respect people so he refused to help her, but the woman kept coming back to him and asking for help. Finally, because the woman had been persistent and kept trying over and over again to receive assistance, the judge decided to help her.

This was a good story for the disciples to hear and it is a good story for us today. When we get discouraged Jesus tells us to "*pray always and not lose heart.*" Be persistent. Try over and over again and always keep praying.

Questions for discussion

1. If you really want something from your parents, what do you do?
2. What did the widow do?
3. What was she asking for?
4. Why did the judge grant her request?
5. Is it okay with God if we ask for the same thing over and over again?
6. Do you think God would answer any prayer just because you asked over and over?
7. What kind of prayers do you think God likes to answer?