

常常祈禱、毋通厭

路加福音 18:1-8

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人在等主再來的日子以前, 尚介大的問題就是厭倦、灰心。基督徒的一生中有多多挑戰和難關, 咱 tloh 常常祈禱, 咱才不會失去信心。耶穌用守寡人和判官的譬喻來教示 in。

喪鄉的守寡人, 一個人, 沒有人為她辯護, 可能受忽略, 沒公義, 甚至可能受剝奪。更加嚙盼望的, 就是她睹到一個無敬畏上帝 ma 無尊重人, 法官他是不公平, 不道德的, 他沒有考慮法律, 但是為著自己的利益, 做任何他想欲做的代誌。總是, 因為她的堅持。最後她有得到公道。面對法官的冷漠, 守寡人只有不斷地要求法官伸張正義, 來作她唯一的武器: 因為她的堅持, 她實現了自己的目標。法官答應她的請求, 這不是因為他憐憫受感動, 也不是因為他的良心。他承認: 「因為這個守人杳杳來攪擾我, 我欲替她伸冤辯護, 免得她永永不斷來苦楚我, 互我倦倦」。

耶穌講, 連世間不義的判官隴會因為佢呢來主持公義。全能、全知、全愛的上帝更加會在伊的時刻來主持公義。咱所祈禱的對象不是一個壞的判官、是一個值得咱倚靠的上帝。伊欲祿「延遲很長時間」替您伸冤, 會「緊緊」採取行動(第 7-8 節)。

經文講, 當耶穌再來的時, 祂欲看到 in 的信心。在千變萬化, 風起雲湧的世界, 保存信心的秘訣和關鍵是什麼? 只有常常祈禱, 才能倘在充滿試煉的人生中間, 保持咱的信心。

什麼是祈禱? 祈禱不是一直在講話, 咱不免說服祂, 或是改變祂。祈禱的就是認識上帝。上帝是要咱和祂有親蜜的關係, 在祈禱中間,

和祂面對面, 給祂塑造咱的機會。此, 所講的祈禱, 是欲和上帝有親蜜的關係, 互上帝塑造咱, 不是用祈禱來改變上帝, 要上帝為我所要求的代誌來背書。

在最困難和沒望, 沒公義的時準, 哭賴上帝, 上帝在咱堅持祈禱的時, 也就是祂塑造咱的過程。耶穌比任何人都了解, 在咱的人生中間, 咱猶原會睹到風浪、有試煉, 祂知影, 咱有時會跌倒, 很容易失志, 耶穌要咱常常祈禱, 祂自己 ma 在上帝彼為咱祈禱。

為什麼耶穌鼓勵咱「著祈禱, 毋通厭(不要灰心)」? 咱隴曾有過厭倦和失志的經驗, 特別是在咱感覺祈禱親像無效的時準。祈禱可以幫助咱保持對上帝的信, 就算講咱不明白伊的旨意, 咱猶原將自己交託付互他。

耶穌自己也是一個不斷祈禱的人! 上帝已經回答耶穌在客西馬尼園的禱告。耶穌因為就欲來的痛苦感覺驚惶, 他向天父祈禱, 求伊將這杯苦酒移走, 總是, 他因為祈禱, 他完全將自己的意念交託互他, 祂仆佇地裡, 祈禱講: 「父啊, 若會做得, 著將此個杯離開我。總是, 毋是照我所愛, 是照你所愛。」(太 26:39)。最重要的是他與天父的關係。這就是祈禱的目的: 它改變自己慾望, 並根據上帝的旨意改變慾望, 祈禱的人首先渴望及慈悲的、愛的上帝結連。有絕對的、很深的關係。

從今仔日, 到主又來的日中間, 最為重要的代誌就是祈禱。堅持到底的祈禱。咱的祈禱是建立在對上帝的確信和祂的應允。

Pray Always and Do Not Lose Heart
Luke 18:1-8

Before the Lord returns, our greatest problem is facing the challenges and difficulties of life without losing heart. Jesus teaches us how to face life with the story of the persistent widow & the judge.

A widow, alone & neglected, with no one to defend her, reaches out to a judge for justice. But the judge has no respect for God and doesn't care for people. He is both unfair and immoral. He does care about the law, but only to protect his own interests. He does whatever he wants to do. But, because the widow is persistent in appealing to the selfish judge, she finally got from him the results she desired. The judge granted her request, not because he was moved by compassion, nor because of his conscience. He admits: "Because this widow keeps bothering me, I will give her justice, so that she will not beat me down by her continual coming."

Jesus is pointing out that even unjust judges can be moved to serve justice out of self-interest. How much more then can we expect justice from the Almighty, omniscient, and loving God of the universe. We do not pray to a bad judge, but a God worthy of trust. He will not delay for a long time, "He will give justice to them speedily."

"When the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?" Jesus wants to see our faith. What is the secret preserving our faith in this chaotic world? To maintain faith amidst the trials of life we must pray continuously, without ceasing.

What is prayer? Prayer does not always mean talking. Praying is to be constantly tuned toward God, to know God and what God wants. Prayer is to have an ongoing relationship with Him, allowing him to permeate our thoughts to shape us and move us. The goal of prayer is not to change God, but to let God transfigure us.

When we cry out to God in the midst of the suffering of life, that is how God shape us. Jesus knows us better than anyone else. He knows that we will face many winds and waves, confront trials, pass through shadows. We will sometimes fall. Jesus knows that it is easy to lose our heart. Jesus wants us to pray persistently, to keep our focus on God. God can help us when we do this.

I have had the experience of being discouraged and losing heart, even feeling that my prayers were pointless. But persevere! Don't be tempted by emotions to turn away from God. Persistent Prayer can help you keep your faith in God, even if you don't understand His will and cannot see how or where he is leading you. Entrust yourself to him and in time He will reveal to you the meaning.

Jesus himself lived in constant prayer! In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus endured terrible grief and pain, and wanted it to be taken away. He prayed to the Father and asked him to remove the bitter cup. But, because of his prayers, he was able to completely entrust His will to God: "My father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me, nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will." (Matthew 26:39).

The most important thing is to keep our relationship to the Father. This is the purpose of prayer: it changes our desires so that we want to follow God's will. This should always be the focus of our prayers. From now until the Lord returns, pray constantly to stay in the will of God no matter what burdens you carry. God has promised to be with us and give us all that we need to endure and triumph in the end.