

**ETHAN TEMPLE MINISTRIES**  
**TOOLS FOR LIFE**  
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**PERSEVERING PRAYER IN THE SPIRIT**

Throughout the centuries persevering prayer has been considered an essential part of the advancement of God's kingdom on earth. However, those of us who live in the Western culture tend to want quick answers to our problems. Many times this quick-fix attitude finds its way into our prayer life. Often we will pray for something occasionally, but not perseveringly. The truth is that persevering prayer is not an option; it is a necessity, just as united prayer is a necessity, if we are to be victorious over our adversary personally and corporately as a church. Those ready to meet Jesus will know from personal experience what it means to persevere in prayer. Prayer will have played a major role in preparing them for that great event.

Jesus was personally acquainted with the necessity for persevering prayer. Many times He spent entire nights in prayer. In Luke 18, He related a story that clearly illustrated the necessity for every believer to enter into persevering prayer. Two key phrases make His point. Luke introduces the parable with the words:

“And He spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint” (Luke 18:1).

The purpose of this parable was to teach us of the *necessity* of persevering in prayer. Luke knew Jesus taught that we *ought*, or *should* (NIV), *always* pray and not faint, or stop praying, until we get the answer. The Greek form of the verb pray is continuous action. Jesus is teaching in this parable that we should keep on praying, and not stop or give up.

The second phrase that reinforces the importance of persevering prayer is this:

“And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?” (verse 7).

Here Jesus clearly teaches that many times God’s answers to our prayers will come only as the result of our crying to him “day and night.” Quick praying will not bring the results that consistent, persevering prayer will.

Ellen White sensed the spiritual weakness among God’s people in her day. She asked God’s angel why this was the case. Note the answer:

“I asked the angel why there was no more faith and power in Israel. He said: ‘Ye let go of the arm of the Lord too soon. Press your petitions to the throne, and hold on by strong faith. The promises are sure. Believe ye receive the things ye ask for, and ye shall have them.’ I was then pointed to Elijah. He was subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly. His faith endured the trial. Seven times he prayed before the Lord, and at last the cloud was seen” (*Early Writings*, p. 73).

Many of us still “let go of the arm of the Lord too soon.” We must come to learn how to prevail long with the Lord in prayer.

## **Personal Reflections and Discussion**

What does it mean to persevere with God in prayer?

Do you think persevering prayer is easy for the average Christian in the Western world? Why, or why not?

What did Jesus say about the importance of persevering prayer?

What did the angel tell Ellen White concerning the reason there was so little power in God's church today?

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