

## PERSISTANCE IN PRAYER

Video clip transcript is extracted from the talk: Persisting in Prayer  
by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

Luke 11:1-13 "He was praying in a certain place, and when he ceased, one of his disciples said to him, 'Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.' And he said to them, 'When you pray, say:

Father, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread; and forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive every one who is indebted to us; and lead us not into temptation.'

And he said to them, 'Which of you who has a friend will go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; and he will answer from within, 'Do not bother me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything'? I tell you, though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him whatever he needs. And I tell you, Ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For every one who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

You remember in another piece he says, "How much more will your Father give good gifts to those who ask?" Jesus has told us our Father hears us. He hears us, so you keep asking. You keep asking. In other words, Jesus says, "Put your mouth where your heart is. You believe that God loves you and that He will answer your prayers, then put your mouth right there. You keep on asking. You keep on keeping on, year after year after year after year, until you die, you keep on asking. But you don't step back from it because you've been at it 10 years."

See, you look at those situations, look at some of them. You know why they're like they are, because actually you've backed off. I mean, isn't that what we do? We all arrange in our lives problems that we can do something about and ones that we can't do anything about and these grow and grow as the years go by and we train ourselves to forget them. Actually what we do is we stop praying for those situations and we stop believing God for them and so they pile up as a growing, hard, frozen block of unbelief that makes it more and more difficult to believe even for the things that are easy.

So loved ones, when you think of your dad or your mom or the loved one who is an alcoholic or the frozen situation in that relationship or the attitude that will not change, loved ones, I say lovingly to you, you know why it's like that. It's like that because you gave up after a year or three months of prayer and actually what is needed is somebody there to hold steady and to stand with that, year after year after year. That's believing God.

To stop praying is not believing God. Brothers and sisters, you can't prove to me from that chapter that you are right. I can always answer you that God will do it. He said He will do it. All you can answer me is He hasn't done it inside my timeframe but do you see the promise is not inside a timeframe? See loved ones, where we're being deceived.

See, we're saying, "We've prayed for 5 years or 7 years or 10 years or 20 years or 30 years", and then we stop praying. Except that, who of us here has prayed for 10 years, 20 years, or 30 years -- a few of us maybe, but probably very few. Most of us have given up on the thing after maybe two or three years of prayer. Some of us who live with these situations in our home day after day have prayed for 20 years. But 20 years is nothing. 20 years is nothing in God's timeframe and His promise still stands here.

So there's no place in which we will be able to go to Him at the end of this world and say, "Lord, we did not respect you because your promises here were not kept." He will respond, "How long did you wait for me to fulfill my promise?" All we can answer is, "Well, I waited three years. Well, I waited 5. Well, I waited 7, well, I waited 10, well, I waited 20 and then I gave up." But loved ones, you see we haven't a leg to stand on. This chapter is very clear.

If an ordinary father will give his children fish when they ask for fish and won't give them a scorpion, then your Father will much more readily give you good gifts. And if some host who is called upon by a guest at midnight will get up just because the guest keeps irritating him by asking and asking and asking then how much more will your Father give you who loves you?

Full Sermon: Persisting in Prayer by Rev. Ernest O'Neill