

## Day 17

“And he told them a parable to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart” (Luke 18:1, ESV).

Grandfather Mountain topped Kaden’s list of hikes to conquer. I studied the distance and difficulty level, the topographical map, the reviews and photos of survivors of the hike. Daunting, to say the least. Time spent with my youngest whose imminent launch into the world grew closer every day led to my new mantra—I can do this—though I questioned the truth of the mantra.

At the visitor center, we were required to sign a waiver—ominous, right? *I’ll just turn around and come back and let Kaden finish on his own if it gets too difficult.* The problem with that thought? The left side of the loop consisted of one steep ladder or rope-assisted climb after another. Backing down the way we had climbed was not an option. What made the biggest difference was my hiking partner. Kaden offered his hand when needed, carried my water bottle when I held on for dear life, and repeated at every difficulty, “You got this, Mom!” After surviving the treacherous, ice-covered right side of the loop, we cheered our victory at the end of the trail.

Jesus told a parable—a relatable story—to teach us to pray always and without losing heart. I could not have completed the trail on my own. Just as I desperately needed Kaden’s encouragement, we desperately need God’s help. When we recognize that and pray always and without losing heart, we make a difference in the lives of others and in our own lives.

The persistent widow in this parable begged for justice from the judge. She trusted that her requests would be heard if she only continued to ask. The judge is not portrayed as a righteous man, and he is not meant to be compared with God. We do not serve a God who is indifferent to our requests. “My faithful love for you will remain. My covenant of blessing will never be broken,” says the Lord, who has mercy on you” (Isaiah 54:10, NLT). Instead, the parable asks us to identify with the persistent widow.

Have you lost heart in praying for someone or something? What caused you to lose heart?

Who or what do you need to continue to pray for?

*Lord, I thank You that You are the God who sees me. I present this request before you, and I commit to continue praying and to not lose heart.*