

PERSISTENT CONSISTENCY

Jon Egan / Desperation Band

I was recently thinking about what to share at our next Team Night. I had gone into our office early so I could get some space. If you're like me, solitude is about your only chance to hear a thought. With 6-year-old twins and a 3-year-old at home, life can feel a bit like an acrobat hoping the bar shows up at the right time. It's a rush. It's rewarding. It's a passion, but it teeters on death! Okay, so that was dramatic, but I think you get my point. So, as I sat there with a blank screen looking at me with condescending emptiness, I realized something that has now had extraordinary impact on our team and me.

Look at Luke 18. Jesus tells a provocative story about a woman, widowed and in need of protection. She shows up every day at the courthouse and makes a scene. She needs rescue, and her best hope is a corrupt judge to hear her plea. She doesn't have an appointment. She's disruptive. She's persistent. Her need is real, and her heart is pure. So, the basic laws of manners and etiquette will just have to take a back seat. Eventually, the judge gives her what she wants, not because he's moved with compassion about her situation, but because he's annoyed

by her constant disruptions. Jesus then highlights the good Father who will surely come to our rescue. Now here's the stinger. He says, "*BUT* how much of that kind of persistent faith will the Son of Man find on the earth when He returns?" (Luke 18:8 MSG)

I'm not one to blame the culture or world we live in for our difficulties. With the amazing free-market-world we live in, what are the things that hold us? What keeps our attention? It's the newest, sexiest, coolest product that not only delivers something great but it also convinces us that what we once held in our hands is old, dated, and really uncool.

I sat there and had to confess something to myself and to God. With 50-60 volunteers under my care, I have fallen into the same thinking a marketing guru would have about selling the newest phone. I must wow, woo, and lead this team into the great and wild unknown with reasons why it's better, sexier and worth following. Now don't get me wrong, we have an amazing team of musicians, singers, and creative people—they didn't put this on me. I was putting it on myself.

Though I LOVE vision, direction and leadership, I began to wonder if my approach was creating "consumers" in the worship ministry by constantly encouraging NEW vision, NEW direction, NEW breath. So there I sat, looking at the empty page when I realized that the vision I had pumped into our team started feeling old because it was articulated a month ago. Then I looked at what Jesus was asking, "... will I find that type of persistent faithfulness on the earth upon my return?"

I shut down the computer, not because I didn't want to prepare, but because I knew I wouldn't need notes for this. In front of our team, I shared about the persistent widow and confessed my own temptation to re-sell everyone in the room each time we gathered.

Then I said, "We're gonna get back to beating the drum of persistent faithfulness." We started to awaken as we thought about prayers we once prayed as a team or individually that we stopped praying because the answer wasn't quick enough. We leaned in as the Father beckoned us to get back to those prayers. Our role is to beat the drum of persistence and not stop.

We will be the persistent ones He finds faithful.

The prayer that I had stopped praying publicly was the one I shared with our team: *for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit to refresh, heal, and renew.* We did just that. The rest of the meeting was an emotional rush of the team praying for things that have not been uttered for too long. The innocence and simplicity was stunning.

I'm a vision guy. I just love it. I won't stop promoting vision, but by the grace of God, I pray I never forget what this woman at the courthouse taught us.

Pick up the prayers on the bookshelf that have sat there for years collecting dust. The good Father wants to hear them. Be faithful with your prayers and watch the faithfulness of God remind us that we are alternative people. The world may need something every other day to capture their attention. Let us never forget that we need to beat the drum of faithfulness, and that takes time.

