

Rest Your Case With God

‡ **Are you a quitter?** (vv.1-4)

‡ **God is a quick Acquitter.** (vv.4-8)

In the name of Jesus, our determined Judge and Savior, dearly redeemed believers:

Americans may be the “sue-happiest” strangers ever to populate the planet. Our kind of justice keeps driving us to court. Consider the couple on a lake near Bakersfield, California, a few summers ago. Did they have reason to sue? No matter how hard they tried, their brand new 22-foot Bayliner would not get up on plane. It was sluggish in the water even with the throttle wide open. An hour of frustration finally brought them angry to the marina, hoping someone might know what was wrong. Topside, everything checked out. The engine purred, the prop raised and lowered at perfect pitch. Finally a dock hand jumped into the water to look underneath. He came up laughing so hard he nearly choked. Under the boat, strapped tightly, was the trailer. Do we need instructions that say, “First remove the trailer”?

Sometimes Christians get so disgusted with frivolous lawsuits, we forget the importance of the courtroom in our relationship with God. The Almighty Judge who declared us all “Not Guilty” in Christ is still producing evidence of faith in our lives. Have you learned to **Rest Your Case With God**? Or...

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Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. With her husband dead, no one supported her in court or even seemed to care. Imagine someone trying to repossess your car. Or a developer claiming “imminent domain” in a nasty attempt to seize your home. Legal hassles are painful enough. But to stand before a crooked judge bent beyond recovery, would make any widow want to lie down and die. This one simply refused.

Our sinful hearts twist every Word of God. The Third Petition of our Lord’s Prayer says, “Thy will be done.” But does that make each of us a **quitter**? Should we accept wickedness in high places and just give up when things don’t go our way? If you’re John Walter, fired by AT&T, do you stay and fight, or take the \$26 million severance package? Most of us don’t have a “gold-plated” parachute.

The widow in Jesus’ parable sure didn’t. Her adversary was trying to tear away her last support, and the judge refused to budge. Was she supposed to pray, “Thy will be done,” and wait for blessings from heaven? God’s Son did not think so. Jesus commended her. She figured out the one thing that motivated the unjust judge. With no respect for men, or widows for that matter, he did not fear that he was already in the courtroom of God Almighty. His god was convenience. So the widow took her only weapon, the hammer of time, and started pounding away on the stone cold toes of that man’s idol. When his time was threatened, the unjust judge gave up, because the widow never gave in.

There is a time to say, “Thy will be done,” and accept whatever the Lord sends. Yet sometimes our motivation is not God’s glory, but our own convenience. Like the boy who complained to his mom that no one would hire him. She told him, “You ride your bike back tomorrow and tell the man you want to work.” Second day, same thing. The sod boss shook his head and sent the scrawny kid home. Mom listened, then said again, “Tomorrow is another day.” It took several tries and many miles on his bike. But finally the boss asked, “Were you here yesterday?” “And the day before,” the boy answered. “You really want to work, don’t you?” “You bet I do.” “You’re hired.” But that’s not the end of the story. The man became one of the largest landscapers in the state. And in a few years the determined young man was designing water systems for his golf courses. And two of his brothers got summer jobs as well. **Are you a quitter?** Not if you **Rest Your Case With God**. That’s because...

✠ **God is a quick Acquitter. (vv.4-8)**

Are we communicating with God? A man made a frantic call to 911: “My wife is pregnant, and her contractions are only two minutes apart,” he told the operator who asked, “Is this her first child?” “No!” the man shouted, “This is her husband!”

The more tense the situation and the greater our need, the harder it is to pray. But while things are calm right now, stop and think a moment. Only one intelligence has ever heard every emergency call. God has been listening since long before Jesus told the parable about the widow and the unjust judge. Jesus is totally sympathetic about how hard this is for us. That’s why God commands us to pray. It’s why God promises to hear us. And if you keep watching Him closely, you’ll soon realize that God loves to give far more than we can ever ask or imagine in the best of our prayers. God wants us to pray, “Thy will be done,” but He also wants us to realize God’s will is to bless. Then you can **Rest Your Case With God** in the firm conviction that **God is a quick Acquitter**.

The unjust judge just wanted the widow out of his face. She was wearing him down, and they both knew it. Her determination meant “No” was not acceptable. He was desperate to be done.

Is God anything like that? Absolutely not! Take the atheist in the forest, for instance. Walking along admiring the majestic trees, rivers, animals – suddenly a seven-foot grizzly charges from the underbrush, closing fast. The atheist trips. You know how Americans take God’s name in vain? This must have been an American atheist. He shouted, “Oh my God!”

Time stopped. The bear froze. The forest went dark and silent. Then a bright light and a voice from the sky: “You deny my existence for all these years, teach others I don’t exist, and credit creation to a big bang, and now you want my help? Am I to count you as a believer?”

Realizing his hypocrisy, the atheist answered, “Maybe you could make the BEAR a Christian?”

“Very well,” and the light went out. Sounds in the forest resumed. The bear brought his paws together, bowed his head, and said, “Lord, bless this food, which I am about to receive....”

So far as we know, bears don’t pray to our Father in heaven, but He wants us to bear all and **“pray without ceasing.”** (1 Thessalonians 5:17) If the unjust judge finally gave in, what about the God of justice, love and mercy? He gave His own Son as our Substitute to suffer our penalty under the law for every perverse prayer, every mindless petition mumbled heavenward. Can you answer Jesus’ question? **“Will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?”** (NIV)

Jesus predicted fewer and fewer people would trust God’s verdict. **“The blood of Jesus Christ [God’s] Son cleanses us from all sin.”** (1 John 1:7 KJV updated) Yet that’s why you can **Rest Your Case With God**, why we **“should always pray and not give up.”** With our entire penalty paid by His own Son, God wants us free and clear to pray and play with boldness – widow, orphaned, married or single. When the curtain goes up on your life, you may feel like a little boy plunking away at “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star.” But the Master steps up and whispers, “Don’t quit. Keep playing.” Then He reaches His left hand around to start filling in the bass. Soon his right arm has a descant running across the high keys. Together, the Master and His child fill the music hall with beautiful melody improvised with skill. It’s nothing we can do on our own. Broken keys and sprained fingers are the least of our worries with an unjust judge. But our God is full of mercy and kindness, righteousness and justice for all the oppressed. Hear Him whispering in your ear, “Don’t quit. Keep playing.” So never stop praying as He wraps His loving arms around you and sets His strong hands to the concerto of your life. **Rest Your Case With God**, and He who quickly acquitted us all on the cross will turn His courtroom into a full concert hall of grace. Such is the music of Christ’s love and faith’s perseverance in prayer. Amen.