



# Charting the Course:

a devotion by Chuck Hall

## Don't Give Up

It has been said, "The lack of persistence in prayer is the *Achilles heel* of those who pray." Oftentimes our prayers go unanswered simply because we do not persist; we give up before the answer comes. Jesus taught, regarding the persistent widow, that we are **"always to pray and not give up."** (Lk. 18:1-9 NIV).

On my recent trip to the Philippines with Dale Pugh, I learned the importance of persistence. On the trip over, our flight from Seoul to Cebu was diverted to Jeju, Korea. Someone had checked a bag but failed to get on the plane. Since 9-11, that is always a red flag. Because of the diversion, the four-hour flight to Cebu took eight hours. This was especially tiring after the long flight from Los Angeles to Seoul. When I finally lay down for a quick nap before leaving to preach that Sunday morning, I had been up for over 20 hours.

Dale made up his mind, because of the difficulty we experienced on the flight over, to get us a complimentary upgrade to business class on our return flight. (Those of you who fly coach and know what business class is like will understand why the upgrade would be desirable.) All the next week Dale kept telling me, "They are going to give us an upgrade to business class on our return flight to Los Angeles." Dale was determined, and he believed that we were going to get an upgrade. And he said so! Words are powerful, especially when coupled with faith. Paul says, **"And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, 'I believed and therefore I spoke,' we also believe and therefore speak."** (2 Cor. 4:13 NKJ)

After completing our work in Cebu we went to the airport to check in for our return flight. True to his word, Dale explained to the ticket agent the problem we had encountered the week before. When he requested an upgrade to business class, the agent just looked at him with a blank stare. Dale's same request was twice denied in Cebu. Undeterred, Dale said he would ask again in Seoul. He asked four more people upon arriving in Seoul but met with the same denial, along with the *I-don't-believe-you-are-asking-me-this* look. The last man that Dale asked also refused; but he later returned and said with his thick foreign accent, "This is your lucky day. We are giving you an upgrade to business class."

Persistent faith is a powerful force. When Jesus taught on prayer, one of his main themes was *The Importance of Persistent Faith*. In Luke 11: 8, Jesus says of the man who went to his friend at midnight asking for bread, **"I say to you, though he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will rise and give him as many as he needs."** Also, the passages regarding asking, seeking, and knocking, in verses 9-13 of Luke 11, are written to teach us persistence: ask and keep on asking, seek and keep on seeking, and knock and keep on knocking.

I believe that it was because of the favor of my Father in Heaven and Dale's persistence that we were given an upgrade on our long flight home. After being told "no" at least *six times*, our final request was answered with a "yes." Remember, we are always to pray and never give up. Once you know the will of God, speak it forth in faith. Say what you believe. Then pray persistently with faith knowing the answer is on the way!