

THE VERDICT

by Patrick Rainville Dorn



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**CHRISTIAN PUBLISHERS
EDUCATIONAL SERIES**

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Parable: The Persistent Widow

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SYNOPSIS: The Wild West is the backdrop for this courtroom drama. Widow Mite testifies about showing mercy to struggling customers at the dry goods store, but Magreedy wants her to pay!

BIBLE VERSES: Luke 18:1-8

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(1 female, 2 males)

JUDGE TORPOR (m)Apathetic jurist and saloon-keeper.
(24 lines)

WIDOW MITE (f.)A persistent woman. *(15 lines)*

AVARICIOUS MAGREEDY (m).....A shopkeeper. *(9 lines)*

DURATION: 10 minutes.

SETTING: An Old West saloon, momentarily serving as a courtroom.

TIME: Late 1800s.

SET

You will need a counter or table for the saloon's bar, plus two wooden chairs for WIDOW and MAGREEDY.

COSTUMES

Black robe and cowboy hat for JUDGE. Typical and appropriate Western wear for the WIDOW and MAGREEDY.

PROPS

- ☐ Gavel

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Parables are earthly stories intended to reveal a heavenly meaning. They are by nature stories that people could relate to and which would inspire questions and discussion, thus providing the opportunity for revelation of the truth. We have brought these parables into present time where the listener can relate and once again ask questions, which will reveal the true meaning.

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PARABLE: Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. ²He said: "In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared what people thought. ³And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, 'Grant me justice against my adversary.' ⁴"For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or care what people think, ⁵yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won't eventually come and attack me!'" ⁶And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. ⁷And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? ⁸I 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?" (*Luke 18:1-8*).



AT START: *JUDGE* stands behind the bar/counter. *WIDOW* and *MAGREEDY* are seated.

JUDGE: That'll be thirty days or thirty dollars. I don't care which.
(*Bangs gavel.*) Next case. And make it quick. I want to get out of this hot woolly robe and open my saloon in five minutes.

WIDOW: (*Stands.*) Your Honor, I—

JUDGE: Oh, brimstone and tarnation. Not you again!

WIDOW: I'm sorry, Your Honor, but—

JUDGE: Let me guess. (*Points at each of them.*) You and Magreedy still ain't seein' eye to eye.

MAGREEDY: (*Stands.*) If it please the court—

JUDGE: No, it don't please me. Not one bit. Sit down and snap your trap.

MAGREEDY: If I could just say—

JUDGE: No, you can't.

MAGREEDY sits.

JUDGE: *(To WIDOW.)* And not you, neither.

WIDOW sits. They ALL stare at each other.

JUDGE: *(Grows impatient.)* All right, make it quick.

WIDOW and MAGREEDY: *(Stand and speak simultaneously.)* Your Honor—

JUDGE: One at a time, one at a time. *(Points at WIDOW.)* You first. *(Points at MAGREEDY.)* You, sit down. *(To WIDOW.)* Come to plead for mercy, have you?

WIDOW: *(Stands.)* No, Your Honor. All I'm asking for is justice.

JUDGE: Justice? What you get in my court is frontier justice. May not be the same critter as you're hopin' for. Go on, now. Spit it out.

WIDOW: Judge Torpor, all I want is what's rightfully mine.

MAGREEDY: She's got no proof. No contract. Not even a handshake.

WIDOW: *(To MAGREEDY.)* We had a verbal agreement. Doesn't that count for something among civilized folk?

JUDGE: Ain't nobody here civilized, Widow Mite. And I'm not even feelin' particular cordial. So you say Magreedy welched on a bargain?

WIDOW: Yes, Your Honor. We agreed that I could work off my debt at his dry goods store in exchange for helping with his bookkeeping and restocking the shelves.

JUDGE: You're boring me, Widow Mite. Sit down. *(She sits.)* Magreedy? What do you have to say for yourself? Is it like she said?

MAGREEDY: *(Stands.)* To an extent, yes, Your Honor. But now she acts like she owns the place. Extending additional credit to struggling farmers, taking payment in trade.... And since she's doing the books, it all seems to work out.

JUDGE: *(To WIDOW.)* You been cookin' the books?

WIDOW: No, Your Honor. Just showing mercy to those in need.

JUDGE: Again with the mercy! I don't care a hoot or a holler for mercy. And I don't care about accounting. I don't care about right or wrong, or verbal agreements, or any of that.

WIDOW: For heaven's sake...

JUDGE: And I sure as shootin' don't care about heaven neither! Jumpin' Jehoshaphat, you're livin' proof that a woman's tongue is a double-edged pig sticker.

WIDOW: I'm sorry, Your Honor.

JUDGE: Me too. (*He's not. To MAGREEDY.*) How 'bout you?

MAGREEDY: Me?

JUDGE: Are you sorry?

MAGREEDY: For what?

JUDGE: For cheatin' a poor widow woman who's doing the best she can to keep skin and soul together, and who's done nothin' but improve your sorry reputation in this town.

MAGREEDY: Should I be?

JUDGE: How should I know? I don't care about any of this. I'm not only impartial. I'm downright apathetic.

WIDOW: I'm only asking for justice.

JUDGE: You said that already! Woman, you can wear a man down quicker than a greaseless wagon axle. All right. I'm ready to make my judgment, unless you got any other complaints.

WIDOW: Actually, I've also been preparing meals for the prisoners in your jail, and the sheriff said he can't reimburse me until you give the go-ahead. So I'm going to need you to sign off on the receipts.

JUDGE: Oh, so you're comin' after me now, are you?

WIDOW: I won't stop until I have justice.

JUDGE: (*Starts to say something but changes his mind.*) Widow Mite, your first name wouldn't happen to be Dinah, would it?

WIDOW: How did you know?

JUDGE: It figures. It's bad enough you're tryin' to hold a snivelin' snake like Magreedy to his word—

MAGREEDY: I object!

JUDGE: But now you're comin' after me. And that's just not fair.

WIDOW: I only want jus—



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