

EXPLORING THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

AUTUMN

EXPLORING NEXT SUNDAY'S THEME

Introducing the Gospel

The unjust judge (Luke 18: 1-8)

As Jesus continues to draw closer to Jerusalem, Luke presents teaching about the last days and hope for the future. This teaching includes two parables about prayer that appear only in Luke's Gospel. The first parable about the widow and the unjust judge affirms that God listens to the people of God who pray day and night. We should not lose heart simply because there seems to be no immediate signs of answer to prayer. In this sense Christians are exhorted to go on praying and trusting for God's will to be done.

The image to stimulate reflection on Luke's teaching about not losing heart in God's promises is *Autumn*. While in Autumn things appear to be dying, there are already signs of new life, ready and waiting for the Spring.

Core extract from the Gospel (Luke 18: 1, 7-8; for reflection throughout the week)

Jesus told his disciples a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart.

He said, 'Will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night?
Will he delay long in helping them?
I tell you, he will quickly grant justice to them.'

Gospel prayer (for use throughout the week)

Lord Jesus Christ,
your promises can be truly trusted.
Open our eyes to the promises
of your reign all around us,
that we may place
our full trust and confidence in you;
now and always.
Amen.

READING NEXT SUNDAY'S GOSPEL

Luke 18: 1-8

The Parable of the Widow and the Unjust Judge

Then Jesus told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart. He said, 'In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for people. In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying, "Grant me justice against my opponent." For a while he refused; but later he said to himself, "Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming." ' And the Lord said, 'Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long in helping them? I tell you, he will quickly grant justice to them. And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?'

ENGAGING WITH THE THEME

Dwelling with the text (Luke 18: 1-8)

Begin to explore Luke's teaching about not losing heart, but rather trusting God's promises by employing the SIFT approach of Sensing, Intuition, Feeling, and Thinking. You may find that one of these approaches comes easier to you than the others. But it is worth trying all four.

- What details in the passage catch your attention (Sensing)?
- What big ideas in the passage spark in your mind (Intuition)?
- What most touches your heart in the passage (Feeling)?
- What most stretches your mind and makes you think in the passage (Thinking)?

Thinking and talking

Identify topics within the passage that can get you thinking and talking. Here are some ideas to get you started.

- What do you make of Jesus' teaching about not losing heart?
- What do you make of the widow's behaviour?
- What is your understanding of the unjust judge?
- What does this narrative say for us today?

Using your Bible

Explore another passage, only in Luke, with a common theme.

- Luke 11: 5-9

Compare teaching in the Epistles on prayer.

- Romans 12: 12
- Ephesians 6: 18
- Colossians 4: 2
- 1 Thessalonians 5: 16-18

Explore teaching on seed time and harvest.

- Genesis 8: 22
- Psalm 65: 9-13

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY (YEAR C) Sunday 19 October 2025

Exploring online

Widen your exploration of Luke's teaching about not losing heart, but rather trusting God's promises by looking up some of the following themes and others of your own choosing.

- the unjust judge
- steadfast in prayer
- looking for life in Autumn

Drawing on experience

The image to stimulate reflection on Luke's teaching about not losing heart, but rather trusting God's promises is *Autumn*. Draw on your own experience of Autumn. For example:

- What are your experiences of Autumn?
- How does Autumn make you feel?
- What signs of hope do you see in Autumn?

What have you learned about Autumn?

Creating and making

This section offers pointers to some creative activities that may be inspired by Luke's teaching about not losing heart, but rather trusting God's promises or by the image of Autumn.

- Make a collage of images of Autumn.
- Make a display of leaves, nuts, berries, and fruits gathered in Autumn.
- Make a poster about the widow and the unjust judge.
- Create a reflection, poem, or prayer on the theme of Luke's teaching about not losing heart, or the image of Autumn.



EXPLORING THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

Each week we are inviting people in their homes to look forward to those Sunday services that follow the Revised Common Lectionary Gospel readings. We employ the SIFT approach (Sensing, Intuition, Feeling, and Thinking) to encourage reflection on the Sunday Gospel. We are suggesting a variety of ways in which people of all ages, and households working together, may engage with the Gospel reading and celebrate that engagement with shared activities.

These materials have been developed by the Canon Theologian of Liverpool Cathedral working in collaboration with the staff team here at the Cathedral, and with sponsorship and support from the St Mary's Centre in Wales.



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