

Sermon Notes – October 19, 2025
The Holy Gospel of St. Luke 18: 1-8
Peace Lutheran Church
“The Power of Prayer!”

The most prominent connection across texts this week is of course the portrayal of dogged persistence, exemplified in Jacob's wrestling (Genesis) and what the parable describes as the widow's continual “bothering” (Luke). Also in Luke, and in line with this parable, is the instance of God's own elect crying out (*boao*) to Jesus: the father of a boy with seizures (9: 38), to whom Jesus responds with seeming frustration, almost like the unjust judge, but ultimately relents and grants the father's request to heal his son; and the man with blindness begging on the road (18: 38), to whom Jesus responds with the high praise, “Your faith has saved you” (18: 42). The prayer of the day references Jesus' words, with a cry to God who is “always ready to hear our cries.” The epistle also counsels Timothy to “be persistent whether the time is favorable or unfavorable ...with the utmost patience,” and to “endure suffering ...carry out your ministry fully” (2 Tim. 4: 2, 5).

Besides this major theme of persistence, there are several other connections worth noting across the readings.

The contrast between people of privilege and the vulnerable references is also seen in this week's gospel reading from Luke. This excerpt continues to next week's reading of the tax collector and the Pharisee at prayer in the synagogue (18: 9-14); and then the children whom Jesus welcomes, and the disciples who argue against the presence of the children (18: 15-17); the rich ruler who hangs on to his treasure and doesn't follow Jesus, contrasted with the disciples who give up their homes to follow Him (18: 18-20). In these contrasts, the poor and vulnerable are shown as tenacious - and successful - seekers of God.

A few other legal motifs across the readings stand in contrast to the imagery of the unjust judge. The epistle praises Christ Jesus, “who is to judge the living and the dead” (2 Tim. 4: 1). The connection between the law and the heart may be seen in the (often unflattering and humorous) Luke's use of the interior monologue. It occurs in this week's text (“the judge said to himself,” 18: 4-5), as well as in other parables: the bigger barns (12: 16-21), the prodigal son (15: 11-32), and the dishonest steward (16: 1-8). We shall continue to learn from these passages as they apply to the Christian life.