

Faithful and Free – Luke 17:5–10

When the disciples ask Jesus to “increase our faith,” they’re expressing a very human anxiety that they’re not enough. But Jesus doesn’t give them more faith. Instead, he tells them that even faith the size of a mustard seed is enough. Why? Because faith isn’t about quantity, it’s about trust. It’s not how much faith we have, but who we place our faith in.

Jesus then tells a short parable about a servant doing their duty. At first glance, it sounds harsh. But it’s not about God being a demanding master — it’s about freeing us from the need to earn God’s approval. We don’t serve God to get something back. We serve because we belong to Him. That’s grace.

This passage invites us to live as graced servants, not anxious, not striving, not comparing, but simply faithful. In a world that constantly asks us to prove ourselves, Jesus offers a different way: humble, joyful service rooted in trust.

You don’t need more faith. You need to trust the One who is faithful. And in that trust, you are free...free to serve, free to love, free to live.

The Venerable Andrew Beane
Archdeacon of Exeter



NEXT SUNDAY 12.10.25 Harvest Festival
10.30am in the Church

READINGS: OT Deuteronomy 26: 1-11

NT Philippians 4: 4-9

GOSPEL John 6: 25-35



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St Thomas, Exeter

5th October 2025

Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity

10.30am in the Church

Today

Sung Eucharist

Hymn Numbers

532 We have a gospel to proclaim

120 Father, hear the prayer we offer

133 Firmly, I believe and truly

466 Teach me, my God and King

Wednesday 8th October

10am Holy Communion (BCP)

Thursday 9th October

9.30-11am St Thomas Tots

10.30-12noon Knit & Natter at Jenny
Tuckett's house

Friday 10th October

9.30am Morning Prayer

10am Staff Meeting

Saturday 11th October

9am Men's Breakfast in the Sawyers



Collect

O Lord, we beseech you mercifully to hear the prayers of your people who call upon you; and grant that they may both perceive and know what things they ought to do, and also may have grace and power faithfully to fulfil them; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

Habakkuk 1: 1-4, 2: 1-4

The oracle that the prophet Habakkuk saw.
O LORD, how long shall I cry for help, and you will not listen? Or cry to you 'Violence!' and you will not save? Why do you make me see wrongdoing and look at trouble? Destruction and violence are before me; strife and contention arise. So the law becomes slack and justice never prevails. The wicked surround the righteous—therefore judgement comes forth perverted. I will stand at my watchpost, and station myself on the rampart I will keep watch to see what he will say to me, and what he will answer concerning my complaint. Then the LORD answered me and said: Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so that a runner may read it. For there is still a vision for the appointed time; it speaks of the end, and does not lie. If it seems to tarry, wait for it; it will surely come, it will not delay. Look at the proud! Their spirit is not right in them, but the righteous live by their faith.

2 Timothy 1: 1-14

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, for the sake of the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus, To Timothy, my beloved child: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. I am grateful to God—whom I worship with a clear conscience, as my ancestors did—when I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day. Recalling your tears, I long to see you so that I may be filled with joy. I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that lived first

in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, lives in you. For this reason I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands; for God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline. Do not be ashamed, then, of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel, relying on the power of God, who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace. This grace was given to us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Saviour Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. For this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher, and for this reason I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know the one in whom I have put my trust, and I am sure that he is able to guard until that day what I have entrusted to him. Hold to the standard of sound teaching that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. Guard the good treasure entrusted to you, with the help of the Holy Spirit living in us.

Luke 17: 5-10

The apostles said to the Lord, 'Increase our faith!' The Lord replied, 'If you had faith the size of a mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, "Be uprooted and planted in the sea", and it would obey you. 'Who among you would say to your slave who has just come in from ploughing or tending sheep in the field, "Come here at once and take your place at the table"? Would you not rather say to him, "Prepare supper for me, put on your apron and serve me while I eat and drink; later you may eat and drink"? Do you thank the slave for doing what was commanded? So you also, when you have done all that you were ordered to do, say, "We are worthless slaves; we have done only what we ought to have done!" '

Post Communion

Almighty God, you have taught us through your Son that love is the fulfilling of the law: grant that we may love you with our whole heart and our neighbours as ourselves; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Notices

This Sunday we welcome the Venerable Andrew Beane, the Archdeacon of Exeter, to celebrate and preach at our 10.30 service.

Friday 10th Oct Prof Susannah Cornwall is co-convening a workshop on spirituality, wellbeing, and trans people's experiences of negotiating faith communities. This takes place at Southernhay United Reformed Church Hall from 12.30 - 4.30pm (including lunch). Book free tickets via Eventbrite: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/spirituality-wellbeing-and-trans-identity-tickets-1654787667459> (or speak to Susannah at church)

St Thomas Methodist Church is holding its Autumn Fair on **Saturday 11th** from 10am to 3pm.

Next Sunday (12th Oct) is our **Harvest Festival**. Please bring some (non-perishable) food items to donate to Exeter Foodbank as a recognition of God's abundant provision to us. After the service, please join us for a **bring & share lunch** in the hall. (There is a sign-up sheet for contributions, but you are welcome to come even if you don't contribute anything.)

On Friday 17th October at 6.30pm in St Thomas Methodist Church, Soul of the City Gospel Choir will be giving a concert in aid of Age UK.

Sunday 19th October will be **Revd Sarah Mounoury's** first Sunday with us. Please pray for her as she prepares to lead us, and then come along that Sunday (and following weeks, too!) to welcome her.

On **Sunday 26th October** our church, hall, and churchyard will be hosting a **multi-cultural All Souls Festival** (events in the church itself, talks and a choir, will follow our usual Sunday service). Please support this vibrant event taking place on our doorstep! Volunteers are needed, see Liz for more info. (Our own All Saints and All Souls services will be held on 2nd November.)