

Luke 18:1-8

(Lectionary Year C, Pentecost 22)

By Beth Barnett

Reflection on the ways that artists depict God as a lead into a discussion and reading of the passage, focussing on the presence of God near to those who are seeking justice.

You will need:

- Copies of text (either on screen or printed copies)
- Display of image 'Advocates' by Chris Booth
- Other images of God (sample suggestions are included below)

Time required:

5-10 minutes

Connect

People often wonder what God is like. Sometimes, people try to draw a picture of God. Sometimes people try to describe God in words. Sometimes these pictures and descriptions are amazing – and sometimes they are disturbing.

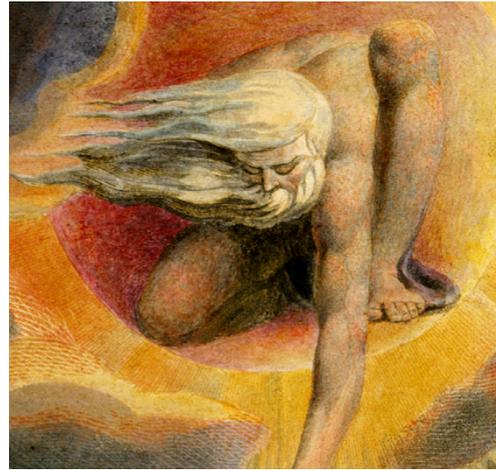
Let's have a look at a few.

(Display a selection of pictures of God from historical and contemporary sources.)

Ask the following questions:

Choose one image to look at very carefully.

- What characteristics of God has the artist tried to show?
- What kind of person does the artist think God is?
- Do you like this God?
- Does this image of God seem to fit the kind of God Jesus spoke of?
- Looking at all of the images together – what do they have in common?
- Do you think God is like any of the images here?



Images accessed from :
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/God_the_Father_in_Western_art

Content

Melbourne Artist, Chris Booth has created a picture of today's Bible reading, which is a story that Jesus told about prayer and justice.
(Display image 'Advocates')

Look carefully at the picture. Does it have anything in common with the pictures of God that we seen?
Do you think God is in this picture?

As we hear the Bible Reading, let's see if we can line up the things in the story with the parts of the image Chris Booth has drawn. If you hear something that you think you can see – stop us from reading and tell us.



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Read text, slowly and expressively...allow plenty of pause time for people to interject. Hopefully the city, the judge the widow, the 'prayer', the annoying should all be easily recognised.

Luke 18:1-8

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?"

Read a second time if necessary

Do you think God is in this Picture?

God is in the story that Jesus told, but where is God in this picture?

(Invite and affirm a range of responses)

Consequence

In this parable picture story God is not here (*pointing to tower*), or here (*pointing to judge*) or here (*pointing to guards*) or even here (*pointing to sky*).

Jesus says God is near to those who pray for justice and will answer quickly. (*point to widow*) In this parable picture story, God is with the widow who seeks justice. God loves Justice. And he wants us to seek it too. God will be with us as we seek Justice.



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