

Seasons of the Spirit: Week 4

Autumn: Prayer and Reflection exercises

We are fortunate that this week as we reflect on autumn we are actually in its midst.

- Go for a walk, or look out of the window. What can you see, hear or smell that reveals autumn is upon us? What can you give thanks for at this time of year?



Samuel Palmer, 'The Harvest Moon'

Autumn is a **time of harvest**. Ruth 2 is a well-known story of harvest generosity which you may like to re-read.

- Where in your own life can you act as Boaz does? And where do you need to receive the generosity of others?

In Matthew 13:24 - 30 Jesus tells a parable about harvest.

- Imagine your own life as a field of wheat – and you are the harvester. Which bits do you want to keep, and which would you be happy to see destroyed? Can you offer the good and the bad into God's care, for him to deal with?

Autumn is a **time of fruitfulness**, when the berries of the trees are enjoyed by many creatures getting ready for winter.

- What have you been forming and nurturing, that you are now ready to hold out in offering to others, to spread beyond yourself?



Autumn can also be a **time of loss**. It may be sad to see the trees lose their leaves but it is not a sign of death, rather that the tree is moving on into a new phase of its life cycle. If you are out and about, choose a few autumn leaves to keep for a while and enjoy their beauty. Then return them so they can give back their nutrients to the soil.



- What do you need to let go of at this time, to help you move on?

However hard letting go may be, remember that through all the cycle of the seasons the trunk and branches of the tree – its core and essence - stand firm. From them new growth will come.



- Read John 15: 1 – 10. What does it mean to you, to be grafted into Jesus in each season of the year – during winter dormancy, spring new growth, summer flourishing and autumn fruiting?

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