

An Unceasing Hope

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[0 : 00] The following message was given at a Sunday celebration at Trinity Grace Church in Athens. For more information about Trinity Grace, please visit us at TrinityGraceAthens.com.

! Trinity Grace, I'm with you, finally! Somebody was saying thank you for coming this morning, and I said, no, no, no, thanks for inviting me. I've been wanting to meet this church for three years, and the only way I can get away from my church is if you invite me to come preach at your church. And so, here we are. But it is a joy to be with you. I brought my 17-year-old daughter, Anna Grace, with me. We have cheered you on and prayed for you for three years since you guys were planted, and it's a joy to finally be here and to meet you face-to-face.

I will admit that there have been some moments for us in Franklin, Tennessee of jealousy. Much like, you know, those of you who have multiple kids, you know, you've got the first kid, and they get all the attention and the love, and then all of a sudden the second kid comes along, and no one ever talks about the first kid, you know, for a few months there.

We feel like the first kid that was planted from Cornerstone Church in Knoxville, and then all of a sudden, you know, everyone dotes on Trinity Grace, and we feel neglected.

[1 : 15] Hey. By the way, I didn't know you were doing pro bono work here at Trinity Grace. Good thing Taylor's here to help. But it is so good to be with you guys.

We have felt loved and cared for by being a part of Sovereign Grace, and the reason why we felt so loved and cared for and have felt so loved and cared for for eight years in Franklin, Tennessee, in large part is due to your lead pastor, Walt Alexander.

Walt has been not only a good late-night friend to hang with, he's been a pastor to me, and he was so helpful for me the year that I was in Knoxville, and he has been a humongous help to me, and a source of a sounding board, but a source of encouragement, admonition at times, and so it's such a privilege to come.

We love this family so much. Kim, thank you for, you've just been such a friend to Mary Beth so consistently for the last nine years, and so it is a joy to be here.

It's been a great week. I saw, where's the yellow sash? Right here. We were at advance at the youth retreat. He's wearing the yellow bandana. This was our clan, which won the Clash of the Clans, in large part because this old, overweight guy was doing a tug-of-war, and I didn't realize we were going to win by 700 points, and I didn't have to do that.

[2 : 43] But nevertheless, it is so fun. As Walt was talking about the partnership and Better Together, it was so fun to be at that retreat and to be with Cornerstone Church at Knoxville, Trinity Grace here in Athens, Sovereign Grace Church of Louisville, and Redeeming Grace Church in Franklin, and just to watch not only the strength and the Lord meeting with these cities through these churches, but seeing the gospel go forward to the next generation through our children.

And so this morning, being with you, preaching God's word to you is the cherry on top of an incredible weekend. So I want to invite you to turn with me to the gospel of Luke this morning. We are in chapter 18. As you're turning there, just looking out, I see so many familiar faces that I have not seen in several years.

It's so good to see you, to be with you, to sing those familiar songs, to see familiar faces, and it feels like we're in the same family because we are.

So this morning, Luke 18, we're going to be in the first eight verses. And as I love to tell my church each and every week before we read the text, this is God's holy, inerrant, and inspired word.

[4 : 00] And he told them a parable to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart. He said, And the Lord said, Hear what the unrighteous judge says.

And will not God give justice to his elect who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily.

Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth? Over the years, I have learned that sometimes you have to simply trust the process, no matter how difficult that process might be.

When I was in ninth grade, I was one of 20 guys who made the ninth grade basketball team in my high school in Colorado Springs, Alabama, for an Alabama boy who had just been translated to Colorado that year, growing up playing nothing but baseball and football.

Basketball was a new sport, but that's all they cared about out there. So I was fortunate to make the team, and I was happy to make the team. But then I realized the guys that didn't make the team were actually the lucky ones, because my ninth grade basketball coach was a man named Pat Gerritsen.

[5 : 52] And Coach Gerritsen modeled himself after a coach named Bobby Knight. Anybody know who Bobby Knight is? He was the basketball coach at Indiana University. He's the one that's famous for throwing a chair onto the floor in the middle of a game because he didn't like a call.

Ultimately, he was fired from his job for choking a player. Fortunately, Coach Gerritsen did not choke us, though he did kick us and hit us a few times. It was the old days when you can get away with that stuff.

But Coach Gerritsen was old school in every way. And Coach Gerritsen told us at the front, he said, my job is to prepare you boys for the fourth quarter, to prepare you for that moment when there's going to be no breath left in your lungs.

And by the way, moving from sea level to 5,000 feet, there was no air left in my lungs. But to prepare you for the fourth quarter when you're tired, when the crowd is against you and you feel like quitting, we are preparing for you for that.

Now, I admit one game his techniques were different. One game he was so mad at us that at halftime, he took a humongous piece of chalk and we thought he was throwing at us.

[7 : 05] He was actually aiming about six inches above our heads and it exploded and chalk just rained down on us. So we came out of the locker room, half of us were covered in white chalk.

That same game I fouled out in the third quarter, not ideal sports fans. He was so upset with me that he would not even let me sit on the bench. He made me go sit with my parents in the stands with the warm-ups on.

He didn't even want to see my number or my jersey. The only problem was my parents didn't come to that game, so I had to go sit with my best friend's parents. And then after the game, a game, by the way, which we had won by 25 points, he was so infuriated with us that he lined us up on the line and had us run suicides.

And I still remembered seeing the fans and the parents from the other team just looking at us like as if the beatdown wasn't enough. Now you're rubbing salt into the wounds by running your boys after the game.

But this was Coach Gerritsen. And as hard as games were, practices were worse. He would yell at us. He would berate us. He would sometimes get physical with us, though nothing that crossed the line in terms of that.

[8 : 14] But the absolute lowest point in every practice was if you messed up, he would take his sixth-grade daughter, Misty, and he would send her into practice to substitute for you and basically show you what you should have been doing.

And so you would come to the sidelines and everybody would go, hey, Misty's pretty good, right? You should get used to being over here with us. It was a tough season. But when the season ended, I found that Coach Gerritsen was one of the kindest, most gentlest, humble, caring men in the entire high school.

He was a constant sense of encouragement to me on and off the court. And in his own unique way, what Coach Gerritsen was doing was preparing young boys to become young men and to face life at its toughest.

And I will admit, as a passive, quiet kid, I was especially grateful for what that season produced in me. And I learned that sometimes you have to trust the process, even when it's hard.

This morning, we have read a text, and we're going to be looking at a text in which Jesus is preparing his disciples for a season and a day and a fourth quarter that is going to be difficult.

[9 : 32] Jesus has just said to his disciples in chapter 17, the days are coming when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it.

See, up to this point in Luke's gospel, Jesus has always been with his disciples, meaning any time anything went wrong, any time there was a difficult situation, Jesus was there to clean it up.

But a day was soon coming when Jesus would depart from his disciples. The days would be difficult. These would be men that would be confronted by hardship, resistance.

Their lives would be threatened. In most of them, their lives would be taken. In these days, they would long for Jesus to return.

And so Jesus is preparing them for that day. And he wants to give them in this text, and then through Dr. Luke, who's prescribing us the same text this morning, Jesus wants to give us a couple of tools that will serve us in the day of trouble.

[10 : 41] Now, if you're here this morning, maybe you feel like you're in the fourth quarter of life. Maybe it feels like life's kicking you in the teeth. You're ready to throw in the towel.

You're ready to call it quits. And you need to know that Jesus is with you, that Jesus sees you, and that Jesus offers help for you.

But for some of you, maybe you're not in the fourth quarter, but I can assure you, just wait for it because it's coming. And if that's you, this morning, I believe Jesus wants to equip you that in that day that you might endure and glorify God in it.

Because when those days come, Jesus does not want you to lose heart. Jesus loves you. Jesus sees you. Jesus, as we've talked about this morning, is in sovereign control of all things, and he has promised that all of those hard things and all of those good things in your life, he is working out for your good.

But you and I must trust his process. This morning, we learned in the pastor's college, you can ask Taylor, we were encouraged to basically be able to sum up your entire message in one sentence in what's called a prop statement.

[11 : 59] And so if I could boil it down for you this morning, I would say it this way. Keep trusting in Jesus until he returns.

Keep trusting, holding, believing, fighting for faith until Jesus comes back for you. And church, I'm here to tell you this morning the good news, he is coming back for you.

And this morning, we want to take from this text, Jesus wants to give us two practical tools that help us to keep trusting in Jesus.

Number one, pray without ceasing. And number two, remain hopeful. So let's begin with our first, pray without ceasing. When the day gets hard, when the trouble comes, when the enemy that Mel was talking about this morning that comes to confront you, when that day comes, Jesus does not want you and I to lose heart.

He does not want us to fall in submission. He doesn't want us to get out of the ring. Jesus wants us to trust him and to pray without ceasing.

[13 : 08] That's how we demonstrate our trust in Jesus is we call out to him. In order to illustrate the fervency by which Jesus wants us to pray, Jesus tells his disciples a parable in which there are two main characters, an unjust judge and a widow who's in need.

Jesus tells us that this judge did not fear God, nor did this judge respect man. In most cases, a judge, even if he did not fear God and have a standard of justice for him, even a judge that doesn't fear God would typically fear man, and their fear of man would then in turn cause them to be persuaded to do what was just in the eyes of people.

But Jesus tells us that this is a man who had no fear of God, nor any fear of man, and therefore would not be persuaded by other people. It's a man who did not care about his reputation.

He did not mind being the unjust judge. In fact, he calls himself that. Enter our second character, a widow who is in need.

This is a woman who is likely facing difficulty financially because of the fact that her husband was recently deceased. We learn from the story that not only was this woman in need, but there was someone who was actively working against her to prevent her from receiving whatever needs that she had in her life.

[14 : 42] It was probably very likely that in this parable, Jesus is describing someone from her spouse's family who was probably overlooking the family estate and not allowing any money to come to this widow.

But Jesus is making it clear that this woman is experiencing great injustice. And to make matters worse, her only source for any hope in justice is to go to a unjust judge.

And this unjust judge continues to deny her request. And this, for this woman, is the fourth quarter. This is her day of trouble.

This is a woman who's dealing with heartache. She's lost her husband, the man who she loved. Then she's, in addition to grieving the loss of her husband, she's dealing with anxiety. Where's provision going to come from? And then on top of that, she's appealing to a judge who was unjust and not ruling in her favor.

[15 : 50] And so she's essentially dealing with grief and injustice on two fronts. This is a woman whose life is in absolute shambles. And no one, if we were confronted with a woman like this, no one in our right mind would blame this woman if her life just fell apart.

Right? This is, you know, we talk about victimhood a lot in our day and age. This woman is a victim. And no one would blame her if she just wanted to call time out and just sit on the sidelines for a little while.

But this woman does not allow her victimhood status to determine where her future was going. This isn't a woman who is looking for sympathy for what has happened to her.

This is a woman who is pursuing justice. She is not deterred in her day of trouble. She continues to believe even in the face of insurmountable obstacles that justice in the end will prevail for her.

So she keeps coming. She just keeps coming. She's relentless day after day after day asking this unjust judge to give her what is rightly hers.

[17 : 05] Now Jesus tells us from this parable that her persistence finally pays off. This judge just basically gets tired of this woman badgering her and says this woman's not going to stop.

Let's give her what is rightly hers. And the reason that Jesus is telling this story to his disciples is because Jesus knows that their day of trouble is coming.

And Jesus is preparing these men for the day of trouble in the fourth quarter that they're about to find themselves in. And when that day comes Jesus does not want these men to bow out of the race.

He does not want them to give up. Jesus wants their lives to model and mimic the life of this persistent widow.

He wants their prayer lives and their pursuit of God to not be deterred by their human circumstances. He wants his disciples to keep praying, to keep petitioning, to keep asking God, and to keep trusting that Jesus is going to come through for them in the end.

[18 : 20] Jesus wants his disciples to be relentless in their pursuit of God no matter how dark and difficult the days become.

And likewise, Dr. Luke has recorded this story in order that Jesus might prescribe for us this morning the exact same thing.

Jesus wants for you this morning that in the difficult days of life, as the difficulty arises, so would your prayer life. Because unceasing prayer is an expression of the way in which you continue to trust Jesus when it's hard.

When your need is great, when you're experiencing the unfairness of life, Jesus wants you to keep coming to him, pursuing him, calling out to him like this persistent widow.

Don't stop. Don't quit. Don't resort to things that will only provide for you temporary relief. Go to Jesus with all you've got.

[19 : 28] Don't stop pursuing him. Keep believing that he is going to come through for you in the end because he will. And if an unrighteous judge provides justice for a widow, how much more will your righteous heavenly father give justice to you when you call out to him?

This is the same rationale you know that Jesus uses in Luke 11 when encouraging his disciples to pray. He says, if you then who are evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him?

And maybe you're here this morning and the day of trouble is not in the distant future. The day of trouble for you is right here right now as you sit in that apparently comfy seat.

And maybe you're here this morning and you're experiencing the absolute and utter brokenness of this world. Maybe your health your health is failing and continuing to fail.

Maybe things in your house are breaking and just keep breaking. Maybe you have financial hardship. Maybe you have a friendship that's faltering that feels like it's on the ropes.

[20 : 48] Maybe somebody has sinned against you. Maybe there are people in your workplace or in your profession who are unethical and getting an upper hand on you.

How do you respond in those moments? What do you do when everyone around you seems to be embracing things that go against every biblical conviction that you have?

What do you do? How do you respond? What do you do when that co-worker just keeps getting raise after raise promotion after promotion and there you go?

What happens in your heart in those moments when unjust circumstances happen to you day after day after day? Do you take to social media and vent?

Do you create a Facebook support group for those who've gone through what you've done so that you can find comfort and solace in others who have been victimized like you?

[21 : 54] I'm not saying these things aren't helpful. I had to go through some old social media posts where I had vented about 12 years ago. I was like, yeah, I should probably delete that. Do you self-medicate?

Do you unburden your heart to family members? Do you vent to your friends? Do you invite your friend to lunch and then just spill your guts the entire time complaining about your circumstances? Or do you just stop caring? Or do you do what Jesus tells you to do? Do you go to him? Do you go to Jesus asking him to act, asking him to bring about justice, asking him consistently and persistently to come and to make things right?

Because Jesus wants you to keep trusting him, to keep trusting the process that even though life is difficult, he is working something in through your story that is beautiful.

Jesus wants you to come to him and complain. He doesn't just allow it, he actually encourages you to do so. Read the Psalms. Jesus wants you to come and cry to him for justice.

[23 : 09] He wants you to pray when you wake up in the morning. He wants you to pray before you go to sleep at night. He wants you to pray throughout your day. He wants you to pray when you're frustrated. He wants you to pray when you're angry.

He wants you to pray when you're afraid. Your prayers don't have to be long. God is not upset. We don't have to all come and pray, what was the name of the guy that came up in wonderful beautiful prayer.

They don't all have to sound and look like that. They can be when you're sitting at the stoplight.

Simple prayer. They can be when you're in the meeting and you're tempted in that moment.

Quick prayer. Lord, help me. He knows what you need. He knows what you're calling for. But what Jesus wants you and I to do is to consistently send and cast our cares upon him.

And to consistently and with unceasing prayer express our trust and dependence upon Jesus.

That's one of the ways that we do so. Second way, second point, is to remain hopeful.

[24 : 14] When you and I remain hopeful, it's an expression of our trust in Jesus Christ in the midst of circumstances. Now, if you look back at verse one, this is one of these dream passages for pastors where the writer just makes it really clear what the main point of this text is, and he kind of gives you the points right here.

Luke gives us the two-fold purpose behind why Jesus shares this parable, that the disciples might be continually in prayer, one, and secondly, that they would not lose heart.

Because the way that you and I respond when life gets hard reveals how much you and I are actually trusting in Jesus or not.

And the truth is, is that Jesus knows that you're either facing adversity or you're about to, and when that comes, Jesus does not want you to lose heart. heart.

Jesus does not want you to become passive. He does not want you to become downcast. There are times for suffering, there are times for lamenting, the Bible encourages us to spend time, but Jesus does not want us to lose heart.

[25 : 26] And faith in Jesus is expressed when you and I remain hopeful in the face of adversity. Look back at verse seven. Jesus says, and will not God give justice to his elect who cried to him day and night?

Will he delay long over them? I tell you he will give justice to them. Strange word here, speedily. Speedily.

So basically Jesus is saying to disciples, if you pray, I will bring justice to you quickly. Now let's consider for a moment that it was 2,000 years ago when Jesus said this to his disciples.

And it might cause us this morning to kind of scratch our heads and wonder, huh, what is the speed in which Jesus is bringing about justice? Because it's 2,000 years and things are not much better than they probably were in the first century.

Many would argue they are worse. I don't know, I wasn't there. But I know there's a lot of injustice in the world that we are confronted with and it doesn't feel like justice has come speedily.

[26 : 34] I mean, sure, maybe Jesus is being metaphorical here. 2,000 years is a drop in the bucket when we think about the infinite time that we're going to spend in eternity. But nevertheless, 2,000 years is a long time in human history.

But the truth is that Jesus did bring about justice in the lives of his disciples. And he has brought about justice speedily to us as well.

You know how the story ends. Jesus, his departure from the disciples, which he's preparing his disciples for, comes about through great injustice.

Jesus was betrayed by one of his own. He was unfairly and unjustly arrested. He was unjustly tried and convicted, sentenced to death on a Roman cross.

But the greatest injustice that took place that day was as Jesus was being nailed to that cross, and he cries out with a loud voice, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

[27 : 41] Why is that the greatest injustice? Because in that moment, the perfect, eternal Son of God was bearing the divine, righteous wrath of God against sins that he had not committed, but that you and I had committed.

and he became the object of God's righteous fury against injustice. It was being poured out on Jesus in that moment.

Jesus was bearing the wrath of God that his disciples deserved. And he was bearing the wrath that you and I deserved.

The cross of Jesus Christ is a demonstration of God's commitment to bring justice in speedy fashion.

Romans 3 26 tells us the cross was to show his righteousness at the present time so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

[28 : 50] So this morning, your circumstances might be difficult, you might be hopeful that justice might come about in a speedy fashion, but if you are here and you're in that circumstance and you don't know Jesus Christ, I'm here to tell you this morning, you can find justice in speedy fashion this morning by simply calling out on Jesus.

He will make things right, things that really matter, things of eternal consequence. For he says, anyone who repents of their sins and trusts in Jesus Christ, your sins, those vile things that you have done, those vile things that you have thought that no one else knows, Jesus says, if you repent of those and you trust in him, he will wash them away.

The blood of Jesus Christ will completely cover them, which means you who deserve to be punished for them can be forgiven.

That's justice coming in speedy fashion. And for all who call on him, you receive not only that, you receive all the incredible promises that God has made.

That Jesus will uphold you in the midst of unjust circumstances in your life. That Jesus is working all things for your good. That Jesus is preparing for you an eternal home.

[30 : 18] And that Jesus is coming back very soon to get you and to take you to it. And on that day, church, Trinity Grace, let me just encourage you.

Every injustice, everything that has been done to you that was wrong, every unpunished abuse that has taken place in your life, on that day when Jesus comes, you know what he's going to do?

He's going to bring about justice against your enemies. He's going to bring about justice against your abusers and oppressors. And on that day, you know what you're going to feel? You're going to feel like justice has come.

You will not stand there and wonder whether that person got what they deserved. Jesus will bring about justice. And because this is who Jesus is and this is what he is committed to do in your life and does do in your life, you can have confidence to go to him and to pray and in the midst of even difficult circumstances, to be hopeful.

What is that? Who's hopeful in the midst of difficult circumstances? Christians are. Tim Keller says it this way. This is why we have confidence when we pray. He says this, we know God will answer us when we call because one terrible day he did not answer Jesus when he called.

[31 : 37] Jesus' prayers were given the rejection that we sinners merit so that our prayers could have the reception that he merits.

Trinity grace, this is why we remain hopeful and pray confidently in our day of need because we already know that Jesus is for us and will answer us.

But what's interesting in this text is in spite of this confidence that comes through Jesus Christ, notice the way that Jesus ends this verse. Notice the last words that Jesus says to his disciples. he says in verse 8, nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth? In other words, Jesus is saying, I'm going to go away and when I come back, when I come back, am I going to find people who have trusted in me when it was difficult?

Will I find people who did not give up? Will I find people who did not throw in the towel, reject their faith, walk away because culture influenced us?

[32 : 51] Jesus knows that many so-called believers will simply cash in their chips and walk away when the days get hard. Jesus knows that.

He knows that people are going to lose heart and give up when it becomes difficult, unpopular, and uncool to follow him. And we know that our life is filled with difficulties and trials, some of which we've rightly come to.

I've spent years and just, my life was a wreck. I didn't get saved until I was in my 20s. I had many things that I just absolutely regret in life.

And some of the circumstances and the consequences of my sin I still bear to this day because of things I did in my past. Some of them I justly deserve. Some of you, you have circumstances and you've made past failures and they will live with you.

But some of you, the circumstances and the difficulty you have in life is because someone else has inflicted them upon you. But rather, whether they're self-inflicted or they're inflicted by others, Jesus wants you to remain hopeful.

[33 : 59] And Jesus wants you to trust and remain hopeful that he is working out his perfect will in your life. As 1 Peter 1, 6 and 7 says, regardless of the trial, in this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials so that the tested genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold that perishes through it, though it is tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Christ, God wants you this morning to remain hopeful in the midst of your adversity because he is at work in your life.

But what happens, church? What happens when you pray? What happens when you get that cancer diagnosis?

You pray for healing. the church prays for healing. And it doesn't go away. What do you do? What happens when everything in your life that was broken and you've prayed and you've asked the Lord to restore it and it's still broken?

What happens when you've asked Jesus, Lord, do something about this work situation. Don't let the crooks win and yet they keep winning. when your prayers go unanswered for a long time, it is so easy to become disheartened, to become discouraged, to complain, to become angry and bitter towards God, to wonder whether Jesus actually sees you, hears you, and even if he does, if he even cares, to want to lose hope and to give up.

[35 : 53] Perhaps you're here this morning and it feels like your hand is perilously slipping off that rope, like you're just losing your grip on Jesus.

You've trusted him for many years and it feels like you're losing your grip. I want to encourage you this morning. If it feels like you're losing your grip on him and you belong to him, I can assure you that Jesus has not lost his grip on you.

He is with you. He sees you and he has promised that he was going to bring you safely home. And you know what?

You're not going to go home battered and bruised. He's going to bring you home whole. Jesus does not want you to lose heart in your pursuit of him.

He wants you to keep trusting him and to remain hopeful. How do we do that? How do we remain hopeful when it's hard? Yes, we pray.

[36 : 53] What else can we do? We have this great tool. This is one of the tools in which we remain hopeful.

We have the word of God. This word that we can meditate upon when we read this book. We don't just read words on a page.

We encounter a God who gave us these words on the page. And the more that we encounter God through his word, the more we encounter the grace of God which comes to us in our time of need. And the more that we are strengthened by the grace of God, the more you and I can remain hopeful and steadfast and persevere when life becomes difficult. Because God's word accompanied by God's spirit will protect you and I from losing heart.

It is a gift of God's grace. grace. He gives us his word. He gives us this church. The testimony this morning was perfect. This is a way in which God helps us to remain hopeful.

[37 : 56] You come here, well not here next Sunday morning, but you come here and you're restored. Your hope is picked up. Your tank is filled up.

I love the way that John Piper describes the effect that God's word has upon us. He writes it this way. This is how God has designed the scriptures to work for human transformation and for the glory of God.

The scriptures reveal God's glory. This glory, God willing, is seen by those who read the Bible. The seeing gives rise by God's grace to savoring God above all things, treasuring him, hoping in him, feeling him as our greatest reward, tasting him as our all satisfying good, and this savoring transforms our lives, freeing us from the slavery of selfishness and overflowing in love to others. This joy sustained, God exalting transformation of love is then seen by others, who by God's grace glorify God because of it.

Trinity grace, Jesus gives you hope through his word, and then in turn that hope that he imparts to you becomes a source and a fountain of hope for others.

[39 : 16] Trinity grace, Jesus loves you. He loves you. He is eternally committed to you. He wants you to pray.

He wants you to remain hopeful in the face of injustice. And Jesus wants to use battered and bruised saints who keep confidently running to their God to be a source of hope and encouragement to the entire city of Athens.

For them to see a people who are unlike any other people they've ever encountered, who do not become bitter, who do not become angry, who do not resort to tactics that their enemies are using, but who continue to trust and hope in their God.

God is not like that unrighteous judge. Yeah, this isn't something I learned. This is something that was imparted to me through faith in Jesus Christ.

God is not like that unrighteous judge. You and I don't have to go and badger God to be for us. He is eager to answer our prayers and to fill you with hope.

[40 : 39] So this morning, let's go to the source of our hope. Let's ask him to fill us again with hope and thank him for his grace.

Let's pray. Jesus, we love you. God, we thank you that you loved us so much that you did not treat us as our sins deserve, but instead came and died in our place.

God, we thank you that we can trust in you. We can trust in your process even when it's difficult. We thank you that you are sending your son back again to come and to get us and to bring us to a place where there will be no more injustice, no more sin, no more death, no more pain, no more tears, where we will enter in to eternal joy and we will see you face to face.

Lord, we long for that day. And until that day returns, Lord, would you impart to us faith, faith, and hope. We pray in Christ's name.

Amen. You've been listening to a message at a Sunday celebration at Trinity Grace Church in Athens. For more information about Trinity Grace, please visit us at trinitygraceathens.com.