

First Church Plant, Guest Speaker Mike Plewniak

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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.

What a joy to be with you. I want you to know we constantly pray for you.

We constantly thank God for you. We constantly miss you. Hearing of your joy, your work, all that God's doing here doesn't take away from missing you, but it shows why we sent you out, because we wanted to see the gospel go forth.

And so just seeing this morning, the whole church at Cornerstone is probably, yeah, Walt's preaching right now. Before he came up, they watched the one-year anniversary video you guys had, so the whole church got to see that, rejoice with you, celebrate with you.

So it is a joy to see that all the Lord is doing. So we're going to be in Acts chapter 11, verse 19 this morning, down through verse 30, continuing as you're walking through this book of Acts.

[1 : 24] So this is Acts chapter 11, verse 19. This is what God's Word says to us this morning.

Now those who were scattered, because of the persecution that arose over Stephen, traveled as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except Jews.

But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who on coming to Antioch, spoke to the Hellenists also, preaching the Lord Jesus.

And the hand of the Lord was with them. And a great number who believed turned to the Lord. The report of this came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem.

And they sent Barnabas to Antioch. When he came and saw the grace of God, he was glad and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose.

[2 : 37] For he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord. So Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul.

And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. For a whole year they met with the church and taught a great many people. And in Antioch, the disciples were first called Christians.

Now in these days, prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. And one of them, named Agabus, stood up and foretold by the Spirit that there would be a great famine over all the world.

This took place in the days of Claudius. So the disciples determined everyone, according to his ability, to send relief to the brothers living in Judea. And they did so, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul.

This is God's holy and errant word. May he write it on our hearts today. Only 20 short years ago, James Montgomery Boyce alarmingly wrote that evangelical Christians and churches are in the process of abandoning the gospel.

[4 : 00] At the same time, David Wells, in his book *No Place for Truth*, wrote that the church is not just ill or languishing, though that would be bad enough, but that it was already dead or dying.

And the reason, he writes, is because today's evangelical church no longer understands the gospel it claims to uphold. And if it no longer understands the gospel, it certainly no longer proclaims it to an unbelieving world.

Not 20 years later, we have seen an amazing gospel resurgence. We have gospel-centered books and gospel-centered study Bibles, gospel-centered prayer guides and gospel-centered church planting.

Why is this? Why? When 20 years ago, all these theologians were warning that the church is losing the gospel. Now, 20 years later, it seems like we have gospel music and gospel churches and gospel books.

Some would say it's because of these men warning us of falling away from the gospel. And while that may certainly be a part of it, I believe it's because it is God's gospel.

[5 : 09] And God is going to keep his gospel spreading throughout the whole world until Jesus Christ returns. And what's amazing, if you read church history, is that it seems, it appears like the church is fumbling the gospel hundreds of times.

I mean, they're running, they have it, and it just seems like over and over in church history, oh, they're losing the gospel, they're losing the gospel, they're fumbling the gospel, they're smuggling in works, they're trying to earn their salvation, and yet always, time and time again, the gospel comes back stronger.

It's what we see in the book of Acts, isn't it? In the face of persecution and opposition and enemies inside and enemies outside, in light of sin, we see in the early chapters of Acts 5, in light of controversy, in light of accusations, all of these things we see in Acts, and yet the word of God is victorious, and it keeps prevailing mightily because God's gospel is unstoppable.

God's gospel has been and it will be victorious no matter what the opposition that comes our way. And just to be clear, if you're new here, the gospel is the New Testament word for good news.

It's what it means. It's good news. It's the good news of the Lord Jesus Christ, that he was born of a virgin, that he entered into God, entered into our humanity to represent us as the new Adam, that he lived a righteous life, never sinning, always obeying the Father, that he died a sinner's death on the cross for our sins, bearing the wrath of God that we sang about, that we deserved.

[6 : 50] He rose again on the third day and he did all of this for our salvation. That's the good news of the gospel. And this good news has been spreading around the world since Jesus did it because it's God's gospel.

And you'll see this throughout Acts. You guys have been studying this. You'll see these summary statements like we have in our text in verse 21, where it says, you know, a great number who believe turned to the Lord.

We see this over and over in Acts 6, verse 7. And the word of God continued to increase and the number of disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem.

Acts 12, 24. But the word of God increased and multiplied. Acts 13, 49. And the word of the Lord was spreading throughout the whole region. Acts 19, 20.

So the word of the Lord continued to increase and prevail mightily. The gospel keeps going and spreading. And what's amazing about our text this morning is how God does this.

[7 : 54] It is surprising. It is shocking. It is, you wouldn't expect it. You don't think it's going to happen this way. This should give us confidence and hope, not in ourselves, but in a powerful, sovereign God whose purposes cannot be stopped.

And so I hope we leave this text this morning with an unshakable confidence in an unstoppable gospel. No matter what the opposition, no matter what comes our way, no matter what the culture is doing, we should have an unshakable confidence in an unstoppable gospel.

And I'm going to walk through this text verse by verse and show how God's unstoppable gospel prevails. So the first thing we see in our text is that the gospel spreads in the face of opposition.

The gospel spreads in the face of opposition. Look back at verse 19, the first verse in our text. It says, Now those who were scattered because of the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch speaking the word to no one except Jews.

Luke is picking up the story from chapter 8 verse 1 after the stoning of Stephen. Chapter 8 verse 1 says, And Saul approved of his execution Stephen, and there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem.

[9 : 30] And they were scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria. And then Luke, in his story of Acts, gives us a series of individual conversions, but very important ones.

So we see Philip in Samaria, and then sharing with the Ethiopian eunuch, we see the incredible conversion of Saul, the one attacking the church. And then Peter has this vision and goes into Cornelius' house, a Gentile, and we see the Holy Spirit falling on the Gentiles.

And now we see, in chapter 11, Luke is bringing us back to what happened to those who were scattered because of this persecution caused by Saul, and how they went as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, and the gospel is going to the ends of the earth, which is what God had promised, Jesus had promised in Acts 1.8 when he said, you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth.

And now, we see this gospel doing exactly what Jesus said it would do. And what's surprising, this is what Luke wants us to see, is this great persecution that happened when Stephen was martyred, was God's providential way to accomplish his purpose in taking the gospel to all people.

Opposition cannot stop the gospel. In fact, God can use it to advance the gospel. When we're opposed, when we see, when we're concerned and we look around and we think, man, there's opposition, we're concerned about what's going on, God can use that to advance the gospel.

[11 : 10] That's what's happening here. Because of this persecution, they are scattered. And the word scattered is generally used referring to seeds, a scattering of seeds.

And so what appears like Christians fleeing for their lives, running for their lives, is actually seeds falling from a tree. And everywhere they run, they're running, they're fleeing, they're running from Saul, they're running from this great persecution, and everywhere they go is like a seed falling from a tree.

And it lands in the soil, and this new tree, this new church, is popping up wherever they go. And those who scattered didn't bring a lot with them of possessions. They didn't have established relationships in the community.

They didn't have jobs or homes, but they brought with them one thing, the word of God and the gospel of Jesus Christ. They preached the Lord Jesus, is what verse 20 says.

And everywhere the seed fell, these new churches, these new trees, are growing everywhere. And so we see that Saul's goal is to crush the church, but God is using that crushing to actually be the means by which the church spreads.

[12 : 26] Which means, God was using the apostle Paul to spread the gospel before he was even saved. Paul just thought he was crushing it, and it was actually through that means that the gospel was going forth.

I mean, think about the sovereignty of God. Using Paul to spread the gospel when Paul thought he was stopping the gospel. That's the kind of God we serve, who's sovereign and mighty.

His sovereign plan prevails. A gospel has always had opponents. Today, there is gospel opposition, isn't there? There is an opposition to the word of God.

And what I've seen, and I remember people telling me this as a young Christian, because I would get fearful and afraid, and I thought, you know, it seems to be going away from the gospel. And people telling me, you know, the more they oppose us, the more it strengthens our resolve and our message.

It just shows what we stand for and what we love and the joy we have in Christ. And that's what we see here. The more they're opposed, the more the gospel spreads. Second thing we see.

[13 : 27] So we see that the gospel spreads in the face of opposition. The gospel spreads through ordinary people empowered by an extraordinary spirit.

The gospel spreads by ordinary people empowered by an extraordinary spirit. Look at verses 20 and 21. It says, But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who on coming to Antioch, spoke to the Hellenists, also preaching the Lord Jesus.

And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number who believed turned to the Lord. You'll notice in verse 20 that these men are anonymous. We're going to see that their evangelism is going to begin one of the most influential churches in the New Testament.

Antioch is going to become a church planting hub, but we don't even know who started it. These are anonymous men. The gospel does not go forth with just celebrity evangelists.

It goes forth with men and women, empowered by the Spirit of God, witness and preach the Lord Jesus Christ. One of my favorite conversion stories is the story of how Charles Spurgeon came to Christ.

[14 : 43] You may have heard this story before. I never get old reading about it or thinking about it. Charles Spurgeon was a pastor in London in the 19th century, probably one of the most famous pastors in the history of the world.

His sermons have been translated into hundreds of languages. They've continued to be printed for 150 years. You hear of conversions from his sermons all over the world.

And yet the man who led Charles Spurgeon to Christ is anonymous. We don't know who he is. As Spurgeon tells it, he was going to church one snowy Sunday morning and he couldn't make his way to his normal church because of the snow.

So he dropped into this little primitive Methodist chapel. He said the pastor couldn't make it because of the snow. And so a member of the congregation filled the pulpit.

So he wasn't planning on preaching. Just a guy in the church. Pastor couldn't make it. Just imagine standing up having to fill the pulpit. And he read the text for the day. Isaiah 45, 22.

[15:47] Turn to me and be saved all the ends of the earth. And then Spurgeon says upon having no second act he read the text over and over and over and over with different inflections for ten straight minutes.

Turn to me and be saved. Turn to me and be saved. And he just read it over and over. And finally noticing a new face in the tiny crowd he looked at Spurgeon and said young man you look miserable.

I might be miserable too in a message like that. He says you look miserable. Look to Jesus Christ. Look. Look. And Spurgeon says and so I looked and the Lord saved me that day.

I love that because the gospel spreads through ordinary people. And it shows. I think God loves doing that because it shows it's all of God.

It's all for his glory. It's by the power of his spirit. It's not based on us. If you feel like man I'm not very good at this. I'm not very worthy. I'm not very winsome. I'm kind of you know I have a hard time getting into a gospel conversation.

[16:59] God loves using you. That's what he wants. He doesn't want you to feel like I've got this and man I'm impressive. That's not who God uses. He loves using ordinary people who are just dependent on him and we're just saying Lord we need your spirit.

We need your help. We just want to preach the Lord Jesus because we love those around us. And we want them to have the joy we have in Christ and so we pray for them and with trembling and fear we go and try to tell them about the joy that we have.

God loves using you to lead others to Jesus Christ and spread the gospel of Jesus Christ. He loves using ordinary people by the power of his extraordinary spirit.

Third thing we see in our text is the gospel spreads to a surprising group of people. When you start as we dive into this when you start realizing who these people are in this church this is very surprising.

These unnamed men begin preaching to Hellenists which are Greeks. Okay? From the context it appears that these Greeks are not Jewish but they are Gentiles.

[18:08] So so far in Acts the gospel has been preached to Jews in Acts chapter 10 when the gospel was preached at Caesarea Cornelius who was a Gentile was at least described as a God-fearer.

Okay? In Antioch we find Christians preaching not to Jews not to those who are part Jewish and part Gentile not even to those who are God-fearers but they are utter pagans.

This is surprising. So what we have going on in Acts chapter 11 is we have Jewish men from North Africa who it appears got saved in Jerusalem traveling to Antioch and preaching the Lord Jesus to Greek pagans and God is blessing it and they are believing in the Lord Jesus Christ.

And I can tell you right now nobody in the early church had this plan of how they were going to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ. They were not thinking let's get men from North Africa Jews let's get them saved in Jerusalem and send them to these Greeks to lead them to Jesus Christ.

This plan did not originate with the leaders in Jerusalem. It wasn't a church planting strategy. Antioch wasn't on their church planting list. These Hellenists were not on their unreached people groups prayer list that they were praying for.

[19:33] This category surprised them because it wasn't their plan it was God's plan the whole time. Five years ago if you would have told me that I'd be walking with Walt as he was leading a church plant in Athens, Tennessee I would be very surprised.

I would have thought what are you talking about? You know? 20 years ago as I was meeting Walt if you would have told me Walt was leading a church plant I'd been really surprised.

I mean my goal when I met Walt was to get him to comb his hair and come to church. That was like my goal in meeting Walt. Eventually I gave up on combing hair. I was like I'll just take coming to church man don't even comb your hair just come with us.

If you would have told me 20 years ago what the Lord has done I wouldn't have believed you. I really thought no way this guy come on come on be serious not Walt you know?

And just to see the Lord's faithfulness over 20 years it's surprising. I think they were more surprised than I could have been as they heard what was happening in Antioch.

[20 : 44] So if you think about it how surprised I would have been think about five years from now 20 years from now what God can do with ordinary people in Athens, Tennessee filled with an extraordinary spirit how he can use you to spread the gospel.

I think right now if God said here's the plan I have for you you would be so surprised. You would say no there's no way there's no way we can do that. I'm sure that's what they were thinking.

This is surprising that this is happening and it's all a work of the risen Savior through God the Holy Spirit to fulfill God the Father's plan and here's Luke's point it can't be stopped.

It's surprising because it's his work and it can't be stopped and it surprises them. Look at verses 22 through 24. So this is happening in Antioch these men and these men and women are getting saved they're coming to the Lord and it says the report of this came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem and they sent Barnabas to Antioch and when he came and saw the grace of God he was glad and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose for he was a good man full of the Holy Spirit and of faith and a great many people were added to the Lord.

There's a reason they sent Barnabas the reason the apostle sent him he is Barnabas means the son of encouragement and you just look at his response here he is an encourager.

[22 : 19] The first thing he notices is this is the grace of God it says he saw the grace of God he saw the grace of God when I think of the grace of God I think we probably most of us think of it as this intangible quality right?

like try to define the grace of God undeserved favor for those who only deserve God's wrath we know the grace of God we sense the grace of God we experience the grace of God Barnabas saw the grace of God that's an encourager right now if you look around this room look to your left to your right look behind you you will see the grace of God it's the grace of God he saw the grace of God he was he was an encourager he observed God's at work here it's an ability to see grace at work is a wonderful gift in Barnabas you may remember Barnabas in Acts chapter 9 who takes Saul to the apostles they were all afraid of Saul because he had persecuted the church they didn't believe he was a follower of Christ they thought Saul was trying to trick them you know which is just surprising you think about all they've experienced I mean after being with Jesus and Jesus telling them the gospel is going to go to the ends of the earth after being baptized in the Holy Spirit in Acts 2 tongues of fire falling on each one of them after seeing healing and miraculous conversions of priests and officials the church is born with thousands upon thousands getting saved and coming to Christ alone but that this persecutor

Saul can be saved they don't believe that you know they're surprised by that but Barnabas Barnabas he believes and he brings Saul to them and when Barnabas comes to Antioch he recognizes God's grace is on display and it says and he was glad don't take that little phrase for granted there he was glad that might seem like a small detail but there were many who would not have been glad about what was happening in Antioch because these Gentiles were coming to Christ but they were not following the Jewish law they were not being circumcised they were not going kosher they were not becoming Jews and so the circumcision party would not have been excited about what would be happening in Antioch they would have come in and said well this is great you want to be a part of us but there's many more things that you have to do and they would have laid a burden on the people of God but Barnabas comes in and he encourages them and he is filled with gladness and joy you know he's rejoicing in what God is doing in Antioch and that's that's how we should respond when we see God at work in others lives when we see God working in other areas other cities through other churches we should be glad we should rejoice one of my favorite things if you don't get this right now is

I get this email from Sovereign Grace called the Emerging Nations Newsletter it's a missions newsletter in Sovereign Grace where it just highlights here's things going on all around the world and so last month like it's the only it's the only email I think I get that I read like from beginning to end every month I just can't wait to get this email because you hear about these churches being planted in Mexico and all these pastors coming saying help us help us help us they're so overwhelmed with so many pastors coming to them they're not sure what to do with them and then you read about exploratory trips to Hong Kong and the gospel going forth in China and Australia and I read that and I think man like God's doing all these things and kind of you know sitting here drinking coffee reading a newsletter on my computer about it you know and sometimes we think I

want to be a part of something different than just the faithful ordinary life but man God is at work 10,000 ways all around us we may be aware of a few of them but we should rejoice when we see God at work we should be glad we should be excited that's the way

Barnabas is when he sees what's happening in Antioch and instead of questioning them or discouraging them Barnabas is full of the spirit and he preaches and encourages them even more to come to Christ and what we have happening here is a Gentile revival so in Acts chapter 2 we have the Jewish Pentecost where the Holy Spirit falls on the Jews and then we have a Jewish revival you know where thousands of them are coming to Christ and then in Acts chapter 10 with Cornelius we see what theologians call a Gentile Pentecost so the Holy Spirit falls on a Gentile in Acts 10, 45 the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles and now in Acts chapter 11 we have a Gentile revival happening this is surprising it's new they're not sure what to do with this and Barnabas is glad and rejoices and he's overwhelmed so Barnabas you know needs help and so we see in verses 25 through 26 that Barnabas as he thinks about who can help me pastor and lead these Gentiles he remembers

[27 : 42] Saul and so Barnabas in verse 25 travels to Tarsus to look for Saul and when he found him verse 26 he brought them to Antioch and for a whole year they met with the church and taught a great many people so when Barnabas goes to find Saul it's been 7 to 8 years since the last time we've seen him in the book of Acts so you know we read a few chapters and you can read about it in about 5 minutes but there's 7 to 8 years between the last time we saw Saul until now in chapter 9 he's in Jerusalem and the Greek speaking Jews are trying to kill him and so they send him off to Tarsus and so for almost a decade of Paul's Christian life which we know we know next to nothing about what was happening there 10 years since Jesus appeared to Paul and said that he was going to be a chosen instrument to carry the gospel to the Gentiles for 10 years Saul is waiting the Lord Jesus has spoke to him and said here's what you're going to do 10 years he's waiting commissioned by the Lord Jesus born again by the Spirit waiting waiting waiting out of nowhere one day there's a knock on his door it's Barnabas his friend who took him to see the apostles and Barnabas says

Saul in Antioch about 100 miles down the road there are Gentiles getting saved by the hundreds and I want you to come with me and be with them and when you think about this for a minute just think about what's happening here this is amazing how the unstoppable gospel goes forth and how the church is built these people in Antioch who are becoming Christians are being led to the Lord by those scattered and persecuted by Paul in verse 19 are now being pastored by Paul in verse 26 and what I would love to see is I would love to see the first time Barnabas introduced Paul to the church there in Antioch you know I just wonder how Barnabas did this as he brought Paul in hey everybody our guest speaker today tried to kill many of you several years ago you know you fled here because you were running for your life from this man ladies and gentlemen he's back again today

Paul you know people are running for the doors just imagine this you read this and you have to be amazed by grace the one who tried to kill them is now pastoring them I mean we serve an amazing God this is surprising you know and I just you have to imagine every time Paul got up on a Sunday morning and began to preach to them you just imagine them sitting in the congregation just being amazed being surprised I think every time I heard him I would just think this is the guy who tried to kill me and he's pastoring me right now he's shepherding my soul this is so surprising and for a year Paul and Barnabas build the church teaching and Antioch becomes a church planting hub this is a very surprising group of people

Antioch would later become Paul's base of his ministry the church that he helped create by his persecution of Christians is now the church that will support him in proclaiming the gospel around the world it's amazing how God works the church in Antioch is surprising it's supernatural it's the work of God and it displays the unstoppable gospel and I just when I read this text it makes me pause and it makes me just remember Lord how did I get here and I think back about my testimony and I think about how the Lord saved me how he directed my path and he is a good God he is a sovereign God he's a providential God he is orchestrating all these things that his gospel might go forth that his church may grow that his church might be planted around the world and so just pause and I want to ask you are you surprised are you surprised you're here this morning there's this isn't a coincidence you're not here by accident there's no chance

I don't believe in those things you are here by the sovereign hand of God he drew you here and when I think about it it surprises me man God is so good he's so sovereign he's so gracious it is surprising how he works when I study the church in Antioch I think it's a surprising group of people surprising how the gospel went there it's surprising how God used this opposition to lead these people to become a church planting hub for the New Testament it's surprising that the one who tried to kill them is now their pastor this is surprising that this church exists in this place and finally what we see in our text the good news is this gospel is for everyone that's what we see here the gospel is for everyone it's for everyone look at the second half of verse 26 where we stopped reading there it says and in Antioch the disciples were first called

[33 : 33] Christians why? why is this the first place they were called Christians? it seems clear from the text that this was not a designation for themselves it seems clear that others started calling them this the people of Antioch started calling them Christians why?

well I think the reason they were first called Christians is because it was such a diverse group of people they didn't know what else to call them they had nothing else in common in Antioch what we have here is we have Jews and Greeks and Syrians and Phoenicians and Arabs and Persians and Cyprians and Cyrenians this was not just a Gentile phenomenon this is a Jewish Gentile church this has never existed before on the face of the planet this was a phenomenon the gospel had transcended the deepest divide in these people and so as the people of Antioch were looking at these hundreds of people gathered together being pastored by this Jewish man Paul and Barnabas and they're people from North Africa and they're Gentiles and Greek pagans and they're all coming together worshipping the Lord Jesus Christ together the people of Antioch are going what do these people have in common absolutely nothing at all the only thing they have in common is they all seem to worship the same God

Jesus Christ and so let's call them followers of Christ let's call them Christ ones because that's all they had in common was Jesus Christ that's what united them together that's why they were known as being followers of Christ Christians that was their identity that's how they were known it's what they had in common it's all they had in common and it surprised the people of Antioch they looked at them just imagine being there and seeing man these people hate each other Jews and Gentiles hate each other and it's been that way for thousands of years and now they're singing together they're singing loudly they're laughing together they're eating together they're going into each other's homes and fellowshiping they're working together and going and visiting one another this was very surprising they are Christians they're Christ ones pause and don't miss the privilege it is to be known as a

Christian a follower of Christ to be known and labeled as a follower of Christ what a privilege and an honor sometimes because of the fear of man we can be afraid you know that people will find out this is what I believe and it's not very popular today but what a privilege to be known as a disciple of Jesus Christ this gospel is for everyone it was for the Gentiles it was for the Jews for the Phoenicians for the Arabs you know all everyone the gospel is for everyone it's an unstoppable gospel why why is it for everyone this is what James Boyce says this is where we'll land this morning he says because it is the power of God and God is no respecter of person if the gospel were of human power only it would be limited by human interest and abilities it would be for some and not for others it would be for the strong but not for the weak or the weak but not the strong it would be for the intelligent but not the foolish or the foolish but not the wise it would be for the noble or the well-bred or the sensitive or the poor or the rich or whatever to the exclusion of those who do not fit the categories but that is not the way it is the gospel is for everyone how can one be ashamed of a gospel which offers hope to the vilest most desperate of men as well to the most respectable person how can we be ashamed of anything so gloriously universal it's the good news of the gospel acts is about the victory of the gospel god's gospel is unstoppable god's gospel transcends all barriers god's gospel spreads in the face of opposition it spreads through ordinary people empowered by an extraordinary spirit it spreads to surprising people whoever you're thinking of right now that you think i don't know about this person i don't think this person can that person can be saved by the gospel it spreads for everyone the gospel is for everyone and as we think about the church in antioch as we think about their pastor who used to persecute them as we think about the spread of the gospel i hope you leave this text this morning with an unshakable confidence in an unstoppable gospel amen amen let's pray father father thank you i thank you for every person here this morning by your sovereign hand and i pray this morning lord my prayer as i

drove here is that you would build their faith in your gospel that they would not look to themselves and be aware of their weakness or be aware of their insufficiency or how inadequate they are lord but they would lift their eyes to how gracious and sovereign and mighty you are and how you can use them lord to spread the gospel of jesus christ because you will empower them by your holy spirit so i thank you for trinity grace church i thank you for these folks here this morning lord fill them with your spirit god fill them with power build this church i pray for the people of athens that many of them would come to see the joy in this place they would come to hear the good news of jesus christ and you would save them god save them for your glory for your fame for your honor so that you may be glorified through all eternity lord we pray in jesus 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