

The Test of Faith

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[0 : 0 0] The following message is given by Walt Alexander, lead pastor of Trinity Grace Church in Athens, Tennessee.! For more information about Trinity Grace, please visit us at TrinityGraceAthens.com.

Job chapter 1 beginning in verse 13. Now there was a day when his sons, that is Job's sons and daughters, were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house.

And there came a messenger to Job and said, The oxen were plowing, the donkeys feeding beside them, and the Sabaeans fell on them and took them and struck them down, the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you.

While he was yet speaking, there came another and said, The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants and consumed them, and I alone have escaped to tell you.

While he was yet speaking, there came another and said, The Chaldeans formed three groups and made a rave on the donkeys, and took them and struck them, struck down the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you.

[1 : 1 5] While he was yet speaking, there came another and said, Your sons and your daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, and behold, a great wind came across the wilderness and struck down the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young people, and they are dead.

And I alone have escaped to tell you. Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head and fell on the ground and worshipped. And he said, Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return.

The Lord gave, the Lord has taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord. And all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrong.

Again, there was another day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the Lord. And the Lord said to Satan, From where have you come?

Satan answered the Lord and said, From going to and fro on the earth and walking up and down on it. And the Lord said to Satan, Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man who fears God and turns away from evil?

[2 : 3 7] He still holds fast his integrity, although you incited me against him to destroy him with no reason. Then Satan answered the Lord and said, Skin for skin, all that a man has he will give for his life.

But stretch out your hand and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse you to your face. The Lord said to Satan, Behold, he is in your hands. Only spare his life.

So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord and struck Job with loathsome sores from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. And he took a piece of broken pottery with which to scrape himself while he sat in the ashes.

Then his wife said, Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die. But he said to her, You speak as one of the foolish women who would speak.

Shall we receive good from God? And shall we not receive evil? And all this Job did not sin. This is the word of the Lord.

[3 : 49] Please be seated. At any time, any one of us could receive a phone call that would change life forever.

When I was young, my life was going about as well as one could expect for a young punk. Everything seemed to be in the right place. Friends, family, school, opportunities.

Life was going according to the plan. I was really close to my cousin, John. He was born one month before me. We were cousins, obviously.

Teammates, the best of friends. In the summer of 1993, we were both 13 years old. Younger than my oldest son now. John was riding his bike on the side of a road on the Sunday afternoon of June 19, 1993, when he was suddenly hit by a drunk driver.

His body and his bike careened through the air and killed him immediately upon impact. The very next car behind the car that struck John was a family friend.

[5 : 01] He immediately checked John's pulse to confirm that John was dead. I was away with my family when we received the phone call.

I didn't know who was on the phone, but I watched my parents answer the phone. I will never forget the sight. As they wept, holding one another.

Within a few minutes, they gathered my brothers and myself and told me John was dead. Our town reeled. I was born and raised in Rock Hill, South Carolina.

Our town reeled from the shock of John's death. Teachers, classmates, teammates all over town poured in on my aunt and uncle's house. I remember a letter they received to John's parents, Rock Hill, South Carolina.

That's all it said. And it reached them. Because the state of South Carolina was grieving. It's hard to exaggerate the death of John on my life.

[6 : 07] It broke my heart. It nearly broke my life, I believe. Though I continued to experience many blessings, the rest of my childhood had a deep ache that I tried to silence with alcohol, marijuana, opium, cocaine, mushrooms, acid, anything I could get my hands on.

Perhaps the best way, though, to put it is my innocence was gone. The balloon was popped. The unthinking peace and security of childhood was gone.

I remember feeling like a visitor to my own life. I was never the same again. The rest of life continued to have a dark shadow.

The outset of these verses, Job is living the way I was. Everything is right. The sun is shining. The world is how it should be.

Life's going according to plan. He's a good man. He's enjoying many blessings. That's the way it's supposed to be. Good men are supposed to get good things. But suddenly everything changes.

[7 : 19] The hedge of protection around Job is trampled. The land is trespassed. The house invaded. Job's life is poked and prodded. The same is true of us.

Life goes according to plan until it doesn't. Until your spouse walks out. Until your child gets leukemia. Until a high school class undermines your belief in God. Until you're slandered, losing many friendships.

Until you're injured and can no longer compete in the way you'd hoped. Until your dad dies. Until cancer strikes. Everything changes. Suffering most often brings about, or firstly, brings about a devastating loss of health, freedom, hopes, dreams, plans.

But the loss brings about a test. A test of faith. That's the way it's always been. That's what we talked about last week. Job loses everything in these verses.

But the greatest challenge is not the loss. The greatest challenge is the test. Job doesn't know anything about the conversations going on about him.

[8 : 25] We saw that last week in the heavenly conversation. We saw that again in the middle of our text this morning. Job doesn't know what God thinks about him. He doesn't know what God's opinion of him is.

But we do. Why? Because Job was written for us. God is trying to lead us through the test. To show us how to walk.

To reckon with loss. And to reveal the essence of faith. The main point where we're going is someone loses all they have. All whom they love. And all vigor of life. Can they still worship God?

Someone loses all they have. All whom they love. All the vigor of life. Can they still worship God? That's the test. I'm going to break this out descriptively in two points.

The first one is Job loses all he has and all whom he loves. Job loses all whom he has and all whom he loves.

[9 : 24] The test of faith revealed in these verses is kind of like a prize fight. It's not the thriller in Manila. This is the battle of us.

This is a fight for the ages. Right here. Round one begins immediately when Satan goes out from the presence of the Lord. And the Lord says to him, All that he has, All that Job has, Is in your hand.

You see that in verse 12. All that Job has is in your hand. Satan. And round one goes as Satan takes everything away. We often say when it rains it pours.

Because when we suffer it comes about in a series of blows. The idea is the alternator does not just go out. It goes out the same week tuition is due.

The air conditioning starts acting up. And family is coming into town. Why? Because when it rains it pours. Suffering does not come in a wave.

[10 : 24] It comes in waves. And in this battle the waves almost overwhelm Job. And they take everything he had. Now these verses are terrifying. They're terrifying to read.

But they're carefully crafted to help us see something very important. And feel the agony of Job's suffering. In verses 2 through 3 in chapter 1. They unveil how rich Job is.

With his sons and daughters. His sheep. His camel. His yoke of oxen. His donkeys. And his very many servants. Well Job loses everything he has in reverse order.

The idea is all that showed how rich he was. He gradually loses it all in response. And it all begins on a normal day.

The farm is in order. The oxen are plowing. The donkeys are feeding. The sheep are grazing. And the family is eating and drinking in their houses.

[11 : 23] Perhaps Job is sitting on the porch. Perhaps he's fixing something in the barn. Perhaps he's discussing something with one of his many servants.

Some problem to solve. Something going on. When a desperate messenger runs up and announces a band of robbers have stolen 500 oxen and 500 camels.

It's hard to imagine the sudden shock of bad news like this. Of losing something so valuable to a person.

But it's worse. It's not a heist merely. It's a massacre. The robbers have killed many servants with the edge of the sword.

It's as sudden and destructive and terrifying as a school shooting is for us today. The day began like a normal day. But now it's a bad dream.

[12 : 20] The world that he thought was safe is a killing field. And underlining the awful reality of it all. The messenger says, I alone have escaped to tell you.

But before he can finish speaking, another messenger runs up and interrupts and says, Fire has fallen and burned up the sheep and more of the servants.

The sheep were grazing. Now they're gone. The servants were keeping watch. Now they're gone. It was a fire of God. That's a way of saying what insurance agents say.

An act of God. The idea is it was something that no human being could produce. So whereas the first robbery was something this band of raiders did, this was a divine act.

Something that could not be performed by human hands. It was not arson. Some sort of sudden explosion of lightning that consumed the sheep and the servants in a moment.

[13 : 22] Whereas the disaster before left bodies on the ground. This time it left everything burned. The devastation is total.

The shock, no doubt, turns into panic when he too says, I alone have escaped to tell you. But while the second messenger is still speaking, another messenger runs up.

It says another band of robbers have made an array. This time the Chaldeans. They formed into three groups. They made a plan. The idea is a premeditated attack.

They came. They stole all the camels and many more of the servants. Now the shock and panic has given way to horror. Job is living in a nightmare.

Everywhere around him is devastation, destruction, and death. And the grievous reality of it all is confirmed when he says, I alone have escaped to tell you.

[14 : 23] The idea is Job is now completely bankrupt. In ancient times, wealth was not stacked up in cash, but in flocks and herds.

Job, the greatest of all the people of the East, loses everything. Our culture loves to celebrate rags to riches stories, but quickly pushes them out when they become riches to rags.

But that's what Job has become. A riches to rags story. But the worst is yet to come.

While the third messenger is still speaking, another messenger runs up. What could he announce? What could he announce? What else could Job, what else did Job have to lose?

You can imagine Job screaming when he realizes what this guy is about to say. Say, no! No! No! No! The messenger announces the unthinkable while his children are feasting in the house.

[15 : 31] A great wind, another act of God like a tornado has caused the house to collapse. And before Job can ask any question, he says, I alone has escaped to tell you.

Round one breaks with four disasters that have completely devastated Job.

The idea is the four symbolizes the four cardinal directions. The idea they've come from all sides. The idea is they've taken everything he has. This is devastation and loss at its greatest extremity.

All his livestock. All his servants. All his children. The loss is heightened by the fact that repeated, obviously, the interruption, but also I alone have escaped to tell you.

This is not like a raid like you'd see in a western where they stumble back up to camp and they notice that their camp has been raided. This is a raid that was planned.

[16 : 38] It appears Satan led one away to have an eyewitness to the utter destruction.

This was not chance. This was the test. Job's now completely alone. The four messengers fade from view.

If this was a camera film, we would never see him again. The camera zooms in on Job. What will he say? We've been prepped.

We're poised. What will he say? What will he do now that the hedge of protection is gone? Will he curse God?

What is Job's fate? Does he worship God for God or for the gifts God gives? Does he worship God out of conscience or out of convenience? The story of Job is extreme.

[17 : 46] Intentionally. The literary masterpiece, as we talked about last week. He's genuinely righteous. He's greatly wealthy.

And he suffers severely. At its extremity. But the experience of loss is not uncommon. In one sense, all that Job suffers is all that you will experience.

Life, in one respect, is, as one of my counselors likes to say, a cascade of losses. Tell that to your high school graduate. You're going to lose your job.

You're going to lose your friends. You're going to lose your spouse. At some point, you're going to lose your independence. You're going to lose all your money.

You're going to lose your health. Your ability to care for yourself in the most basic ways. You're going to lose it. And if you live long enough, you're going to lose your mind. That's the rest of your life.

[19 : 01] But each loss brings about a test. That's what's going on here. C.S. Lewis famously said, God whispers in our pleasures and shouts in our pain, but what does he shout in our pain?

What does he shout in our losses? What's he shouting at Job? Tim Keller, I think, sums it up the best I've ever seen. When he says, when times are good, how do you know if you love God or just the things he is giving you or doing for you?

You don't, really. In times of health and prosperity, it's easy to think you have a loving relationship with God. You pray and do your religious duties since it is comforting and seems to be paying off.

But it is only in suffering that we can hear God shouting a set of questions at us. Were things alright between us as long as I waited on you hand and foot?

Did you get into this relationship for me to serve you or for you to serve me? Were you loving me before or only loving the things I was giving you?

[20 : 16] How will you answer when the bell rings? One of the most sobering aspects of parenting as my kids get older is the reality that they have to answer the bell.

I don't get to plan the circumstances. How will you answer? How will Job answer? Job continues and demonstrates what I'm going to call the acceptance of faith when he says, look in verse 20, he arose and tore his robe and shaved his head.

The idea is he mourned publicly. Those are public signs of mourning. He's making it very clear outside of his body or in action what he's feeling in his body.

He's mourning. He's grieving. He's not reciting platitudes to himself. He's grieving and mourning before the face of God. Then it says he fell down on the ground so he arose only to get down and bow before the Lord in worship.

Then he opens his mouth with these spectacular words. He says, naked I came from my mother's womb and naked I shall return. He renounces any claim on anything he's ever had.

[21 : 30] All that he had and all whom he loved were gifts of God. They were not his. What he is saying is remarkable. You know, sometimes we say things similar to this as we swipe the card to get another toy and say, you can't take it with you.

We might sing with George Strait who says, I've never seen a hearse with a luggage rag. You can't take it with you. But Job is not dealing with the reality that he's going to lose everything.

He's reckoning with the reality that he has lost it. The preacher in Ecclesiastes says it's a grievous evil that a man must leave all that he has behind but Job says it was never mine.

And then he affirms God's right to give and take it away since it's God's.

He says, the Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord. Job is saying, if all that I had was never mine and always belonged to the Lord, then it is his right to give and take as he pleases.

[22 : 39] He's saying, you are God and I am not. You're the creator. I'm the creature. All things are yours. Nothing is mine. Do what you please. And he blesses God.

He does not curse him. You know, you see that. I told you, blessing and cursing are at the core of what's going on in this book. He does not curse him. He says, blessed be the name of the Lord.

And so Satan's aim is confounded. And it seems to me Job demonstrates the acceptance of faith more than anything else, more than anywhere else, or anyone else, except one person in Scripture.

Elizabeth Elliot, who faced more than her fair share, said, acceptance, I believe, is the key to peace in this business of suffering.

We're not adrift in chaos. We're held in everlasting arms. And therefore, and this makes a difference, we can be at peace and we can accept.

[23 : 43] We can say, yes, Lord, I take it. And you're not going to find that at Barnes & Noble. I'm not going to fit in with the victimhood literature.

My faith enables me to say, yes, Lord, I don't like what you're doing. I don't understand it. But God, you're in charge. I know the one who is in charge of the universe.

He's got the whole world where? In his hands. And that's where I am. Acceptance. I think that's what's going on. Job bows before the sovereign hand of God and accepts it.

So round one in the battle of us is one for Job and zero for Satan. Point two, Job loses all vigor and vitality of life.

Job loses all vigor and vitality of life. So after round one, we return back to the heavenly courtroom, to the heavenly council. We might think that the test of Job is over.

[24 : 54] Surely it's over. But we've spoken too soon. Now there's not much difference between these verses at the beginning of chapter 2 and chapter 1 verses 6-12 where we're introduced to this heavenly cabinet, this heavenly throne room.

You know, and both of them, the sons of God are there. The Lord is there. Satan is there. Again, the Lord asks Satan, what have you been doing? Where have you been? Again, the Lord says, have you considered my servant Job?

Again, the Lord says, Job is blameless and upright. The idea is the repetition is meant to increase suspense and capture what is going on here. What is going to happen next is what you're meant to be acting.

Who is Satan going to be after next? What is Satan going to do next? But there's one important difference between the two. The Lord emphasizes Job's integrity more forcefully.

Look what he says in the end of verse 3. He says, he still holds fast his integrity. Remember, we used that word last week. What does it mean to be blameless and upright? It's not sinless.

[26 : 04] The idea is what you are on the inside is what you are on the outside. What you are privately is who you are publicly. And so he says, this is the Lord, says, he still holds fast his integrity although you incited me against him to destroy him without reason.

The Lord is saying he passed the test. He's proven himself. But Satan's not satisfied. Satan says, look in verse 4, skin for skin.

All that a man has he'll give for his life. Skin for skin. It's a proverb that it appears no one understands. But the next line clarifies what Satan is thinking.

All that a man has he will give for his life. The idea is there's a distinction between what someone has and what someone is. A distinction between someone's possessions, family and household and themselves.

Satan's basically saying it's hard to lose what you own but it's a whole lot harder to lose your vigor and vitality, to lose your health.

[27 : 25] Satan knows us well. Satan knows it's much more painful when things happen to us than when things happen to those around us because of our innate self-centeredness.

Second great commandment appeals to this as well. Love your neighbor as yourself. The idea is not make sure you watch after yourself. Don't let yourself slip through the cracks.

The idea is there's one person on this planet you will never let slip through the cracks and that's yourself. Me too. Love others like that.

That's what Satan is saying. It's not enough to take what he has. If you want to find out what he's really worth you've got to take his health.

Shockingly the Lord agrees. Look at verse 6. The Lord said to Satan behold he not merely all that he has is in your hand only spare his life.

[28 : 29] And so round 2 in the battle of Uz begins. There appeared to be a break in time in round 1 so you know the Lord said all that he has is in your hand and then we wait a little bit now there was a day but there's no break here.

Immediately Satan goes perhaps he's incited because of the first law but he goes immediately. In round 2 Satan is not mentioned explicitly though we know all that happens to Job is his working but here Satan strikes Job directly.

Look at verse 7 So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord and struck Job with loathsome sores from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. These sores are likely boils in flame blisters with a hard center and filled with pus.

There's nothing more debilitating than chronic pain. You know when we all get to heaven I believe there's going to be an elevator that takes those with chronic pain far further up and further in than the rest of us.

And there is perhaps no chronic pain more irritating than skin diseases and afflictions in which the slightest movement irritates and aggravates and amplifies pain.

[29 : 49] I remember years ago my son when he was 6 or 7 my oldest son he got a terrible case of poison ivy. It was in the middle of July in the hot summer heat it began one day very quickly spread all over his face and much of his body.

It was terrible. Worst case I've ever seen. His whole face his whole head sagged under the weight of the swelling.

and Job is much much worse. He's sitting in the ashes. It appears in the desolation of all that was his.

The only relief he has is scratching his arm with the broken pottery. Perhaps that was an heirloom passed down and now it's giving him the temporary relief like scratching poison ivy does.

This is really the tip of the spear. The greatest part of the test. I think it kind of goes like this. If Job was dealing with all that he had lost all that he had and all whom he loved surely he thought he could bounce back.

[31 : 12] He is Job after all. He could start over. He could climb back up. Perhaps another rags to riches story but now there's no hope. He's in utter agony just sitting there.

The hedge of protection is completely trampled. That's what we're meant to see. Many have said they never feel the same in their house after it's been invaded. Your home doesn't feel like your home anymore.

Someone was in there an unwanted guest was walking around your house in the kitchen scanning the pictures sitting at the table using the restroom.

That's the way Job felt about his whole life. All of it is ripped open from the inside out. The land is trespassed. The livestock is gone. The house invaded.

The children are dead. The only thing they left are sores all over his body. God cannot take anything else away from Job without killing him. So what happens next?

[32 : 14] Before Job says anything his wife speaks up. Now if you're reading this attentively you're like wife? Where did you come from? Surely you should be dead like everybody else.

Tim Hawkins did this little sketch on Job's wife. He said think about Job's wife. She must have been a real piece of work. The devil took everything from Job.

The livestock, his servants, his kids covered him in boils and sores but his wife did not die. Not even hell was a welcome place for his wife.

But in actuality it would be wrong to judge his wife actually. I think. Or judge her too harshly. She defends him.

She says he has integrity. Look at that verse 9. Do you still hold fast your integrity? All his friends miss this.

[33 : 23] She says he's righteous but she does become an unwitting tool of Satan when she says curse God. There's worse things than dying.

Losing your integrity. So Job responds and I think demonstrates the essence of faith. Listen look he rebukes her. Look in verse 10. You speak as one of the foolish women.

I don't know what her love language was but he didn't care. He got straight to the point. He rebukes her. He says you're foolish. It's a fool who says there is no God. It's a fool who says God's not good.

Not the sign of wisdom or help. It's a sign of the enemy. But then he entreats her. Look what he says. Shall we receive good from God and shall we not receive evil?

He doesn't write her off. He appeals to her. He stands with her. He doesn't merely empathize with her. He rebukes her and calls her to turn to the truth. The statement is profound. Job's first response is a worshipful response to God.

[34 : 27] This is a faith-filled confession to his wife. Job's saying if we receive good from God shall we not receive evil from him as well trusting that he knows best.

It's a statement about the providential rule of God. Job's speaking beyond what he knows. And so Job does not conclude by blessing God but he does refuse to curse him.

we see the narrator conclude verse 10 says in all this Job did not sin with his lips. I say this demonstrates the essence of faith more than anything else because what is the nature of faith?

What's the essence of faith? You know often times I think we talk about faith like it's merely against reason like you're believing something that's unreasonable that doesn't make sense sometimes we think about that we talk about Abraham the great man of faith what was he doing when he went up on the hill to sacrifice his only son Isaac what was the Lord calling him to do?

Surely he was calling him to trust him even when it didn't make sense even when there were no good reasons is that what's going on here? Is that what was going on with Abraham?

[35 : 42] Many conclude that that was the crisis of faith for Abraham to believe even when it didn't make sense but I don't think that's it at all Genesis told us way before that that Abraham believed God it was counted to him as righteousness God had already revealed himself to Abraham Abraham knew God he trusted God he knew that whatever the all wise God was bringing into his life it must be for good reasons so the crisis of faith is not learning to trust God without good reasons or rationale the crisis of faith is learning to trust God without sight that's what was going on on the mountain the crisis of faith is not a lack of reasons and rationale the crisis of faith is a lack of sight I think that's what Job models here God never asks you to trust him without good reasons you know his name you know his character you know his resume his track record you know his promises no good thing does he withhold from his beloved but God does ask you to trust him without sight

God does ask you to walk where you can't see and because Job understands that faith is not against reason and rationale but against sight he's able to suspend judgment I want to hang on this for just a second Os Guinness says in his book on doubt so helpful he says in suffering as nowhere else is the supreme challenge to suspend judgment this is so important because if you know that God the test of faith is not about you trusting God without reasons and rationale but about you trusting God in the dark you know he is the one whose darkness is as light then the supreme challenge is to suspend judgment what's that mean to refuse to make conclusions to refuse to write the ending the pressure is so great that's what Job refuses to do that's what you must refuse to do to suspend judgment it's very hard but it's also ridiculous looking that's what

Job's wife captures what are you talking about why are you holding fast integrity it's obvious the game is over God is a fraud God has left you he's forsaken you he's desolated you Job suspends judgment this is going to be a test throughout the rest of this book where is God calling you to trust him in the dark is it your dead end career is it how you've been pigeonholed at work told you're not the best fit seem to be grinding out in a job that doesn't matter is it midlife the weight of griefs and regrets they catch up is that what it is are they piling up on you the emptiness gnawing at you is it the drifting of a family member away from the things of God away from the community away from the things that you agreed on when you began this adventure called life is it your spouse's help help a diagnosis a decline the unknown that is ahead is it your spiritual life you seem to be doing the same things over and over again in your spiritual life saying the same things and nothing seems to change is it as a teenager you just feel locked in this home you don't understand all that's going on around you don't understand what your parents are wanting from you and so you're learning trust him in the dark is it an unknown future is it unanswered prayers that haunt you and call you to trust in the dark is it hopes and longings that are unmet

God is calling you to trust him in the dark if someone loses all they have and all whom they love all vigor of life can they still worship God yes Job did and the extremity is meant to tell you that you can as well but if we left all this here we would think we just need to be a better Job Job trusted God in the dark because he knew about God Job knew God to be great somehow outside the family of Israel he trusted God he saw his power and greatness in creation he saw the glory the theater of glory and the things he had made he gave him the worship he deserved but we know so much more about God we know him as the God of Abraham

Isaac and Jacob who calls the people out of nothing and makes them as numerous as the stars we know him as the God of Hagar and Ishmael who hears the cries of the rejected the unwanted and the unwelcome we know him as the God of Tamar who turns agonizing shame into a promised son we know him as the God of Joseph who does not forsake his people even when they're sold denied slandered and thrown into prison we know him as the God of Moses who delivers his people out of slavery to worship him and serve him we know him as the God of Rahab and Ruth who gives the helpless help and the hopeless hope we know him as the God of David who keeps his promises even when we do not we know him as the God of Joseph and Mary who answered their prayers for their baby boy and keeps them safe from the sword we know him as the God of Legion who delivered him from an army of demons and gave him a hope and a name we know him as the God of Peter and Paul and so many others do I need to say more but I must we know him as the God and Father of our Lord

[41 : 55] Jesus Christ the extremity of Job is meant to remind us of the extremity of another person who was perfectly righteous made like us in every respect yet without sin spotless eyes too pure to look upon evil committing no sin no deceit in his mouth greatly rich the cattle on a thousand hills is his the earth and the fullness of the earth is his all is his all authority is his and yet he suffered unimaginably he became poor he became a man a servant he became a sacrifice he was eternally loved but hated for our sin eternally accepted but rejected as we should have been eternally blessed but endured the wrath of God it should have been poured out on us and so when we walk through the dark we face loss we face it knowing our God is the God and Father of our Lord

Jesus Christ we can trust him Father in heaven we cast ourselves onto you and pray for help to rest in you we come to you sincerely honestly humbly pray that you would do the work of applying these words and this message these truths to our heart help us God we pray in Jesus name Amen You've been listening to a message given by Walt Alexander lead pastor of Trinity Grace Church in Athens, Tennessee for more information about Trinity Grace please visit us at