

Trusting the King

Acts 25:1-27

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us," Hebrews 12:1

"Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything." James 1:2-4

"This is my Father's world:
O let me ne'er forget
That though the wrong seems oft so strong,
God is the Ruler yet."

"This is my Father's world:
Why should my heart be sad?
The Lord is King: let the heavens ring!
God reigns; let earth be glad!"

How do we persevere in hope and faith and joy during a season of prolonged injustice or suffering?

I. Trust God's Tenacity - Acts 25:1-4

Evil can be really tenacious against God's people. God is far more tenacious for the good of his people.

Evil rulers are tenacious:

"At the same time, he (Felix) hoped that money would be given him by Paul. So he sent for him often and conversed with him. When two years had elapsed, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus. And desiring to do the Jews a favor, Felix left Paul in prison." Acts 24:26-27

"Now three days after Festus had arrived in the province, he went up to Jerusalem from Caesarea. And the chief priests and the principal men of the Jews laid out their case against

Paul, and they urged him, asking as a favor against Paul that he summon him to Jerusalem – because they were planning an ambush to kill him on the way.” Acts 25:1-3

Changing governors, festering murderers, imprisoned apostles will not impede the promise of Christ to build his church.

“And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” Matthew 16:18

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” Matthew 28:18-20

“The future is as bright as the promises of God.” Adoniram Judson

“Be steadfast and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is in vain.” 1 Corinthians 15:58

II. Trust The Reality of God's Grace - Acts 25:6-12

Festus wants to appear to be a gracious governor. God truly is a gracious God.

The word “grace” is used several times in this passage.

“When two years had elapsed, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus. And desiring to do the Jews **a favor (charita)**, Felix left Paul in prison.” Acts 24:27

“asking as **a favor** (charin) against Paul” Acts 25:3

“But Festus wishing to do the Jews **a favor**, said to Paul, ‘Do you wish to go up to Jerusalem and there be tried on the charges before me?’” Acts 25:9

Real Grace: God was moving Paul out of their reach by putting Paul in a position where he could speak directly to Caesar.

“In the New Testament, grace means God’s love in action toward people who merited the opposite of love. Grace means God moving heaven and earth to save sinners who could not lift a finger to save themselves. Grace means God sending his only Son to the cross to descend into hell so that we guilty ones might be reconciled to God and received into heaven.” J.I. Packer

"I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service, though formerly I was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. " 1 Timothy 1:12-14

"The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost." 1 Timothy 1:15

God is truly gracious in the midst of our suffering because He is moving us in grace toward everlasting grace.

III. Trust The Wisdom of God - Acts 25:13-27

The governor is "at a loss" what to do. God knows exactly what He is doing.

"Being at a loss how to investigate these questions, I asked whether he wanted to go to Jerusalem and be tried there regarding them." Acts 25:20

"Ironically, had it not been for the intervention of Paul's enemies, Paul could have languished in custody in Caesarea much longer. Provincial prisoners were often 'lost' in bureaucratic machinery, spending months or years in custody awaiting discovery." Craig Keener

God knows exactly what He is doing and exactly when to do it. He is using this new appointed governor to advance the gospel of the kingdom to the heart of the Roman Empire.

"Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!" Romans 11:33

"God is God. If He is God, He is worthy of my worship... I will find rest nowhere but in His will."
Elizabeth Elliott

"But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies." 2 Corinthians 4:7-10

We can persevere because we know that God is tenacious towards His people and His purposes. He is gracious in all His ways. He is wise in His all His judgments.

Study Questions:

- 1. In Acts 25, Paul faces prolonged injustice. Where in your life do you feel “stuck” in a situation that seems unfair or unresolved? What makes it difficult to trust God there?**
- 2. The lesson highlights that evil can be persistent—but God is more tenacious. How have you seen opposition or difficulty persist in your life? How does it change your perspective to believe that God is even more persistent for your good?**
- 3. Jesus promises in Matthew 16:18 that His church will not be overcome. How does that promise give you hope when circumstances feel like they’re going the wrong direction?**
- 4. Paul waited over two years in custody. What helps you endure spiritually during long seasons of waiting? What tends to weaken your endurance?**
- 5. In Acts 25, human leaders show “fake grace” (favor for personal gain), while God shows real grace. How can you tell the difference between worldly “favor” and God’s true grace in your own life?**
- 6. Can you think of a time when something difficult or painful later turned out to be an expression of God’s grace? What did you learn from that experience?**
- 7. J.I. Packer describes grace as God moving “heaven and earth” to save sinners. How does remembering the depth of God’s grace toward you personally strengthen you in present trials?**
- 8. Festus admits he is “at a loss,” but God is not. Where are you currently tempted to believe that things are out of control? What would it look like to trust God’s wisdom in that specific situation?**
- 9. Elizabeth Elliot said, “I will find rest nowhere but in His will.” What does it practically look like to rest in God’s will when you don’t understand what He is doing?**
- 10. 2 Corinthians 4 reminds us that we may be afflicted but not crushed. Which phrase from that passage do you most need to hold onto right now—and why?**