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SPEAKER

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Finding Peace

PART

5

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Finding Peace In The Moment Of Judgement

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 25:31-26:2



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Well, it is great once again to see you Providence family, even if it's through a screen. And all who are guests with us, I want to also welcome you. We are really glad that you have joined us. And I pray that this time will be just really encouraging to everyone. I will be honest with you up front that the subject matter is a little bit intense. In fact, it's not just a little intense, it's just intense. And yet there's amazing news that we find within the Bible that actually gives us peace even in the midst of what is in front of us, the greatest storm of all. And so I want to ask you to look with me to Matthew chapter 25. So if you have a Bible, Matthew chapter 25 starting in verse 31. We're in a series, this is the last Sunday in our series called Finding Peace.

And over the last four weeks, we've looked at just really significant parts of life that can be very difficult and how we find peace in the midst of those storms. Many of us are fearful of many things, I imagine that there's many who are afraid of snakes or spiders or maybe even doing what I'm doing right now, to stand up and to speak in public. These sorts of things cause us fear in this world. And yet what is in front of us is something that actually is perhaps the most terrifying of all. And that is that laying in front of every human being is the reality that one day we will die and then we will stand in judgment before almighty God who has already confessed to us in his word that he is offended by our sin.

Now, sometimes when we think about these words like judgment and wrath and heaven and hell, we don't want to really think about them. In fact, there's many people who only can look at those realities and those worlds. And we can only imagine them from our perspective. And from our perspective, those are not positive things. From our perspective, those are things that make us even repellent towards God that we don't want to be near somebody who would do that, someone who would feel that way, someone who had sentenced people to such a horrible place. And yet, it's so important for us anytime we don't understand something of the Lord to not only trust his word but also to just imagine for a moment if you can, just imagine the turmoil in God's heart when he looks down from heaven upon the earth, the creator of all things, the creator of human beings, the embodiment of wisdom and love and truth.

And he looks down upon the earth and the Bible says that what he finds is one image bearer mistreating another, one image bearer of God instead of holding fast to the truth deceiving one another, and even deceiving ourselves. We see within the scriptures that God is love and grace, and mercy, and faithful. And he looks down upon the earth and he sees injustice and unfairness and abuse and wickedness and adultery and idolatry. And so sometimes it's healthy for us to imagine what life would be like if we were the one who was all loving, who created a world for our pleasure, who created people in our image to have a relationship with us and to imagine the heartache that we would feel if we looked down upon the people that we created to be in relationship with us and they wanted nothing to do with us.

And so when the Bible says in Hebrews chapter nine that it is appointed for men to die, once and after this comes judgment. Whether we find that appealing or not, if it is true, we need to do something with it. The fact is what we try to do with these kinds of ideas is distract ourselves or intoxicate ourselves, or numb ourselves from those realities. And we will seek to distract ourselves with any manner of things, any number of things,

everything from working to money management, to building wealth, to karaoke, to beaches, to friendships, anything but thinking about that day we'll do. And yet the Bible says that we can't run away from it. And the reason is because it's within us. You see, the Bible says in Romans two that God wrote his law upon our heart. And part of that law is justice, part of that law is beauty, part of it is truth. This is why people can look at something that is beautiful, that is like a sunset. And people who were never in the same school, they can all conclude together because of what's written upon our hearts. That is beautiful.

And part that law includes justice. You see, each and every one of us, we can't run away from it. Innately, we do this every single day. You see, what happens is we see wrong taking place in the world. And when we see wrong, we innately say, "Hey, where's the justice?" And if it seems that the wrong that's being done is not met with quick and fair justice, then we even make posters, and we rally and we gather people together to make sure that attention is drawn to the injustice that is being done. It is written upon our hearts, and yet then we move away from those moments where we look at other people's wrongdoing and we want justice. And then suddenly we would look into the mirror and we see that we have done wrong. And innately, we then say, is justice coming? We all wonder about that day, that day when we die and we stand before God in judgment.

But I have good news today. And that is that not only, on the basis of what he says, not only can we find peace today as we wait for that day, but we can experience peace on that day. So let me pray for us, father in heaven, as we open your word, we pray that you would open up your word and your truth to our heart. Surely only the arrogant can speak of these things or listen to these things and come away unscathed. God, I pray that you would help us to see that what we're going to talk about for these next few moments is critically important not only to this life but to the next. And God, I pray for those who know you as savior and Lord that you have helped them to see that on the basis of the Gospel that they have believed that there is real and lasting abiding peace that is available and that you intend for us to experience even now and on that day.

And I pray for those who have yet to trust you as savior and Lord, who are simply looking into these things. I pray that today would be the day of their salvation when they trust Jesus Christ and avert the wrath that is to come. And so we ask you for grace and humility and patience as we open your word, open our hearts. We pray in Jesus name, Amen. So Matthew chapter 25 starting in verse 31 is actually the very end of a sermon that Jesus gave. In fact, I want to just get a good running start so that you feel the context of his entire sermon. And so if you look back at chapter 24 verse three, it says, "And as he sat on the Mount of Olives, his disciples came to him privately."

So this is not a big gathering, this is just his disciples. And they said to him, "Tell us, when will these things be and what will be the sign of your coming and of the age to come?" In other words, they said, "We hear you talking about things in the future, when is that going to take place?" And suddenly Jesus begins articulating the signs of the times that will take place before his second coming. And he begins to talk about things like in those days before the son of man returns again in order to judge the world, you can expect that there will be wars and rumors of wars and famines and earthquakes. And there will be persecution for believers in Jesus

Christ. There will be false prophets who will teach and who will rise to lead many astray.

In verse 14, it says that the gospel of the kingdom, that the gospel of Jesus Christ will be preached in all people groups before this takes place. And then he goes on and he begins talking about days called the tribulation that are so intense that it says that if they were not cut short by the mercy of God not a single human being would survive. He says, “And then,” verse 30, “will appear in heaven the sign of the son of man, and all the tribes of the earth will mourn. And they will see the son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.” Friends, Jesus Christ is coming again. And so it’s only natural for us to ask the question, when? When is this going to take place?

And there’s a lot of people who love to spend a tremendous amount of time talking about when he might come back. And so Jesus goes out of his way in this sermon to his disciples to say, you’re not going to know the day or the hour. You see in verse 36 concerning the day and hour, no one knows. Verse 42, therefore stay awake for you do not know on what day the Lord your God is coming. Verse 44, therefore you also must be ready for the son of man is coming at an hour you do not expect. And so Jesus is not calling us as his people to spend our time guessing when he’s going to come back, but being prepared when he does.

And so then Jesus does what he normally did, he tells parables. And he speaks three different parables before our text. The first he says that there’s an owner, there’s somebody who’s the master of the house. And he is about to go on a journey. And so he entrusts responsibility to a chief servant over the other servants. And we’re told that he actually mistreats the other servants when he’s away not knowing that he’s going to come back and surprise him with his arrival. And it says at the end of that parable in the end of chapter 24, it says, “In that place, there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

And then he tells a second parable about 10 virgins, 10 women who are waiting for the bridegroom to come. And it says that their job when he comes is to light a lamp. And so they all have a lamp and they’re all waiting, anticipation for him to come. And yet five of them have no oil within the lamp. Five of them do not have what it requires to actually do the very thing that’s required when he comes back. And so the bridegroom comes, five are ready and five are not ready. And it says that the five who were not ready, they run out to secure what is impossible, and that is faith after he comes back, salvation after he returns. And it says that the door is closed.

And then he tells a third parable. He says that there’s somebody who owns a tremendous amount of land and money. He goes on a journey and he entrusts everything to three of his servants according to their ability. And it says that two of them, they stewarded those resources exceptionally well, one of them did not. The owner returns to settle accounts. And it says to two of them, he says, “Well done, good and faithful servant.” And to the third, it says in verse 30 of chapter 25, “Cast that worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place, there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” It’s in this context after talking about the fact that he is coming back, that we don’t know when, and yet it is really serious how we live our life before he comes back

to be prepared that Jesus says this.

Verse 31, “When the son of man comes in his glory and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will place the sheep on his right but the goats on the left. And the king will say to those on his right, “Come you who are blessed by my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, and I was thirsty and you gave me drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me in, I was naked and you clothed me. I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.” Then the righteous will answer him saying, “Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and welcome you or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?””

“And the king will answer them, “Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.” Then he will say to those on the left, “Depart from me you’re cursed into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink. I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me. Sick and in prison and you did not visit me.” Then they also will answer saying, “Lord, did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison and did not minister to you?” And then he will answer them saying, “Truly I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.” And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.””

Now my aim this morning is not to cause fear or to exploit fear, it’s to remove fear as it relates to that day. That is what Jesus is all about, that’s what he’s doing. In fact, if you continue to read, which is probably on your screen and I’ve failed to keep reading in chapter 26 verses one and two, it says, “When Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said to his disciples, “You know that after two days the Passover is coming and the son of man will be delivered up to be crucified.”” In other words, not only has Jesus given us fore warning of what’s going to take place, he went to a cross in order to give us peace when it does take place. And so let me give you a few truths before sharing just a few applications with us.

The first thing I want you to see is this is that Jesus will judge all people, he will judge all people. It says in verse 31, “When the son of man,” that is Jesus Christ, the title given to him in the book of Daniel, the son of man was the son of God. He’s all God, deity, and yet he’s all human able to mediate between God and man, sympathetic with us. It says, “When the son of man comes in his glory and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. And before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.” You see, friends, God’s justice requires this day, and yet God’s kindness tells us in advance about the day. You see, there’s a lot of people who, when you hear these things immediately say, “Oh, he’s fear-mongering, he’s narrow-minded.”

I want you to think about this though. Let's just say that you're on a mountain road and you're traveling and you're just enjoying your time. And without knowing, the bridge is out just ahead. In fact, it's just over a bin so that you cannot see it. And so somebody, because of some motive within their heart, they chose to put up a sign. A sign like this that simply says caution, hazard ahead. Now, you have to make a determination about the motive of that person. Is that sign an indicator that somebody is narrow-minded, is that sign a indicator that that person is fear-mongering? Well, if there is a bridge, if there is no risk whatsoever, then we could say yes. But if indeed there is a great chasm that leads to death if we continue on and somebody knows and doesn't tell us, it's not love.

But the person that steaks out and says, "You know what, there really is danger. I should let people know," and they put a caution sign. The motive of their heart is all driven by love. And this is exactly what Jesus is saying, his heart is driven by love, he knows this day is coming. He will be the judge of the day. And yet he loves us so much that he prepares us. You see, Acts 17:31 says that he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world." And the final courtroom is described in vivid, colorful detail in Revelation chapter 20.

I want to read a few of these verses to you starting at verse 11. It says, "And then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. I saw the dead great and small standing before the throne. And books were opened, then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books according to what they had done. If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire."

See, on this day, God, it says is going to open the books. Now, notice there's the books, and then there's the book. The books contain all the deeds that you and I have ever done. It's the record of how we lived our life, how we lived, how we loved, how we lead, how we cared for people, how we didn't care for people, how he spoke, how we thought, the motives of our heart. The books are a complete unbiased account of our deeds. But then God opens up the book of life, and the book of life contains names of every single person who has believed in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sin.

In other words, the books contain the record of our deeds and the book of life contains names of people who have believed in Jesus deeds, in his death, in his resurrection. I want you to know that on this day there'll be no appeal. There's no higher court, there's no defense. In fact, Romans chapter three, it says, "On that day, every single mouth will be stopped." His verdict will be just, and he will send believers whose names are written in the book of life to heaven and every believer to hell."

Now, there's a lot of people who study their Bible, many of you study the Bibl. And maybe some of you who are really intrigued about timing and judgment and the end times, you've studied this a lot, which is a great thing to study. I'm just going to go ahead and say this that there's, we say this a lot at Providence. I say that there's certain issues that even within the issue, there's some of those issues that are open hand and some are closed hand. There are some people on the basis of what we find within the scriptures that is sometimes

difficult to interpret different ideas of what judgment will be like. Some people believe that there's literally one day, one judgment for all.

Some people believe that the great white throne is different than the judgment seat of Christ, that the great white throne is making a distinction between believers and unbelievers whereas the judgment seat of Christ is actually where the believers, their life is actually rewarded for what they did in the flesh. These things are what I consider to be open-hand issues. But let me tell you what's the closed hand issue. The closed hand issue that I want to address here is the day of reckoning will come, and we need to be prepared for that.

I could spend all the rest of my time talking about the different views of the end times and to talk about how this particular judgment may actually come just before something called the thousand year reign after a tribulation. The fact is those things are open-hand issues. What is absolutely a closed hand issue is this, is that there is a God, and he created you. He created me, and we sinned against him. And he loves us. And in his love, he sent his son. And those who trust him, their names are added to a book of life and heaven and hell is at stake.

And Jesus is the dividing line for all humanity. And so we see that Jesus will judge all people. You say, "Well, Brian, this is not good news yet." This is good news. You ready? Number two, Jesus made a way to find peace on that day. In chapter 26, verse one and two, it says when he finished all these things, he says, "Guys, this is what's happening in two days is the Passover. And then the son of man is going to be delivered up, he's going to be crucified for sin." And he goes on and he talks about how he's going to be buried And he's going to rise from the dead. You see, Jesus Christ is the son of man who was crucified. In other words, it is Jesus himself who's preparing us for this day so that we can prepare for this day, we can be prepared for this day and we can experience this day with peace.

You see, First John chapter four tells us some amazing things. Verse 10, it says this, in this is love, not that we have loved God. You know what that means? It means that if you want a definition of what it looks like to genuinely love, then we should not look at how humanity has responded to the holiness and the love of God. He goes, "That's not the definition of love." He goes, in this is love, you ready? Not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins. By this is love perfected. Notice these next words, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear.

You see, the perfect love of God sent his only son Jesus Christ to be the propitiation. That means the substitutionary sacrifice for our sins. One of my favorite pictures is because it's so vivid and terrifying at first, but then your eyes see what Jesus actually did for us. If you say, what is propitiation? In Psalm chapter seven, it actually says that God in his holiness looks down upon humanity and feels an indignation within his heart every single day as he looks upon our sin. And it says as a result of that, it says that he actually has his bow, like a bow and arrow drawn and pointed directly at us. And this is the portrait of God and humanity

apart from a savior. And then Jesus comes, and Jesus is the propitiation, he's the substitute.

Jesus doesn't come and stand next to us and simply appeal on the basis of God's mercy, "Hey, let's just forgive this one." No, Jesus Christ literally stands in front of us and he says, "Go ahead and let go, release the arrow. All the anger, all the wrath, all the justice, even my own anger and justice, go ahead and release it upon myself." You see, this is propitiation. This is infinite love. And this is what God almighty has done for us. And how we respond to this is we trust him.

Now, many of us have been to some kind of camp or work experience where they say, "Hey, we should do some exercises to build our trust in one another." And so we invented this beautiful thing called the trust fall, not Providence, but humanity. Humanity invented this beautiful thing called a trust fall, which is the height of discomfort in every way for everybody. Somebody gets up on some ledge somewhere and all of a sudden they do this number and everybody is supposed to be trustworthy, they're supposed to lock their arms. And all of a sudden you trust them enough and you fall back.

This is what it means to trust Christ is to recognize the death and judgment, hell, wrath, everything is behind us. And Jesus Christ is the only one, and he's standing behind and he says, "Just fall upon me. Trust me, trust in my righteousness, my righteous life for you, my death for you, my burial for you, the fact that I absorbed the wrath for you, my resurrection for you. Go ahead, go ahead and trust me, I will catch you." The Bible says for every single person who trusts in Jesus Christ, by believing in him, he forgives us of all of our sin. And then he gives us miraculously. He doesn't just leave us as an empty bucket, he actually fills the bucket of our heart with his own righteousness. This amazing substitute where God looks at us and we had this huge platter of sin and he has a huge platter on his shoulder of righteousness.

And he comes to us and he says, "I'll tell you what, let's switch. Let me prepare you for the day when you will stand before me." And all who trusted him will be wrapped in his own righteousness for when we stand before him in judgment. And this is the only way to have peace today and on that day. Everybody who trusts in him, notice the word that he says, look at verse 34 and contrast it to verse 41, instead of depart for me, you're cursed into the eternal fire. He says, "Come you who are blessed by my father." Think about that. That God the father is not tolerating you. Once you trust Jesus Christ, he loves you and has blessings that are stored up for you. And then he says inherit the kingdom that is prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

You see, we need not fear wrath for Jesus has absorbed it. Romans 8:1 says, "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." And you see that word now, I always just love that word, that little tiny word. We just read over, we don't think too much about it. But let me just expound just a little bit about that little word now, there is therefore now no condemnation. Why is that so important? Well, we use the word now in two different contexts or directions. First of all, there is finally now. So let's just say that you have a little son, it's about to be his birthday and his uncle or aunt sends a gift in the mail to his birthday but it's three days early. And for whatever reason

because you're a parent like me, you find great joy in making your child wait for the birthday to open up the gift.

And every day the child comes and says, "Can I open it now? Can I open it now?" "No, you have to wait." "Can I open it now?" "No, you have to wait." But then finally on their birthday, you say, "Finally, now you can open it." Humanity has been looking at God and thinking that we needed to earn something before him to be with him. And every single person in the world is saying, "God, have I done enough now? Am I right with you now?" And when he says there is now no condemnation, what Jesus himself is saying, finally now you are right with God, finally now you can have peace. But there's another now that we use, and it's the already now. So let's just say that you're a little bit older. You're still really healthy, but you want to give your inheritance to your adult children even though you're not about to die, or you don't know you're about to die. And they come to you and they say, "Wait, already? You already want to give this to us? Now? Shouldn't you wait a little bit."

You say, "But I want you to be able to enjoy, and I want to be able to see you enjoy the inheritance that I want to be able to give to you." And you're like, "Wow, already now?" And this is what God does. God says, "I already want you to enjoy the peace you will feel after I judge you on that day. I want you to go ahead and know it now." That's why Jesus, when he was on the cross next to a thief who looks at him and he says, "would you remember me?" Jesus could have saved him and not given him the hope of eternal life, but what did he say? He said, "Today, you will be with me in paradise." That's the already now, you can already feel peace in your heart while you are strapped and nailed to this cross, you will be with me in heaven at the end of this day.

You see, we can have this kind of peace because absolutely nothing, including our own imperfection can separate us from the love of God and Jesus Christ. And so we can have peace because of Jesus. The third thing I want you to see is that Jesus will examine how we lived and how we loved, he will examine. Salvation exempts every single believer from condemnation, but not from Christ evaluation. I want you to notice that in each of the parables, these four parables, Jesus Christ. Let me say it this way, each of the parables ends with people going to heaven or hell. And in each parable, Jesus goes out of his way to indicate that lifestyle, how people were living their life, how they were treating the servants, how they were preparing to shine, light, how they were managing, how they were treating the least among them, how they were visiting sick people, how they were caring for hungry people and thirsty people. He goes out of his way to show that the lifestyle reflects the division between heaven and hell.

Now, this is really important that we understand this very clearly. I want you to look at this picture. You see this amazing picture. This is London, and there's an amazing reflection. Now, if you, for whatever reason, somebody put a piece of paper up right at the line between water and air. And you could only see the reflection, but you could not see any of the reality. You may be disappointed to reach out and think that you're about to touch a building, but actually you're only touching water. And it only creates ripples to where you can't quite see everything the way that you once did. But isn't it true that if you look at the reflection,

if you look at what's underneath, it gives you a portrait. It's a reflection of what actually is of what buildings are actually there.

And this is the same thing of what's happening here. We should make sure that we get this very, very clear. Nobody is saved by how we visit people in prison. Who are we saved? Romans 10:9 says, "If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead. You will be saved." We are saved by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ, but Jesus examines our love for the least of these as evidence for that faith. That's why it matters how we live our life. That's why it matters as Christians, as we have trusted in Jesus Christ that we go on yielding to Jesus Christ. Why? Because God's word says in Second Corinthians five, we make it our aim to please him for we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in his body, whether good or evil.

I want you to know that on that day for those of us who are in Jesus Christ, all of our sins will have been forgiven by the grace of Jesus Christ and all of our good works, all of our love for one another that is motivated by a saved heart, that is evidence of a saved heart will be possible because of the grace of Jesus Christ. What that means is we will have no cause for boasting. Instead whatever reward we receive, we will gladly exchange and place before the feet of Jesus and say, it is all for your glory.

There's only one who deserves honor and praise in heaven, and it is Jesus Christ. So what do we do with this? Let me encourage, first of all, those who have yet to trust Christ, would you right now trust Jesus Christ and be made ready for that day? You do not have to dread that day. When you look at the imperfection and the faults of your own heart and you wonder if judgment is coming, you have this inkling within your heart that I wonder if justice will be served and the greatest mistakes of my life that bring me so much guilt, I want you to know there will be justice. But if you will trust in Jesus Christ and place all of your faith and weight upon him and his works and his accomplishments, then all of his righteousness will be given to you and all of your sins will be taken away. And how do you do this? Is you admit, you believe, and you confess.

You could pray to him right now. You can say, "God almighty, I see that judgment awaits me, and it waits me justly. I deserve it. You're the Holy one, and I'm not. I confess my sin and I confess that I cannot save myself. But I believe in your son, I believe that he came to this earth and lived a righteous life. I believe that he died on a cross, was buried, and I believe he rose from the dead. Would you forgive me? Would you fill me? Would you give me your righteousness? The Bible says he will. If you will trust in him. Would you do that right now? If you want to talk to somebody today about that, you can send a text to PBC 1, and send it to 313131. And we will reach out to you by the end of today to talk to you about trust in Christ. I appeal to you.

Why would you wait? How can you resist this kind of love? This kind of love not only makes that day tolerable, it makes life worth living. And so I urge you to trust him today. And then we go on trusting him. And this is the second application is let's immerse our fears in God's truth. You see, we learned from First John that love drives out fear, but because we get so quickly distracted, we still feel these moments of fear

in our life. And when we do, what do we need to do? Well, we need to remember the vast love of God almighty for us. We need to remember the life of Jesus. It says for our sake, he was made to be sin who knew no sin so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. Immerse your mind in thinking about the righteousness of God given to you.

We need to think about his death. Isaiah 53 says, "Upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace. And with his wounds, we are healed." Immerse your mind in thinking about his suffering in your place. And we should begin to remember Jesus' resurrection. First Peter says these words. He says, "He has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading kept in heaven for you who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." And so I urge you to fix your heart upon the truth of God and the love of God for you.

And that leads to the last, and that's let's tell others of this truth. We have to tell others of this truth. You see, there are people all around the world who have yet to trust or hear about Jesus Christ. Do you know why we go? I know right now we can't get on airplanes, but do you know why as a church we're so committed to going. Psalms 67:4 is a whole Psalm about taking the message of the Gospel to the ends of the earth so that the nations can be glad. And notice what verse four says, it says, "Let the nations be glad and sing for joy," Why? "For you judge the people with equity and guide the nations upon the earth

Think about this, Providence, we get to sing today about God's judgment because we know on that day he's going to justify us. That's why we sing things like it is well with my soul, that ends with, and Lord haste the day when my faith shall be [inaudible 00:39:43] and the clouds be rolled back as a scroll, the trump shall resound and the Lord shall descend. Even so, it is well with my soul. But today, people around the world who don't know anything about Christ, they do not sing about this day, they tremble about this day. They wonder if they've done enough, and they haven't, but Jesus has.

And so driven by love, we go. Driven by his love, we love, we visit people in the hospital, we visit people in prison, we feed the hungry, we give water to the thirsty. We do so that we can tell them about one who came for us, to rescue us when we were in absolute dire need. And so I encourage us Providence family, there's people around us right now, right where we're at who need to hear about Christ. One day we'll be able to get on airplanes. And when we do, I appeal to you, get on an airplane and go tell somebody who's never heard about Christ. But there are people in your neighborhood who do not know.

And so begin praying for them, look for ways to bless him. Look for ways to tell them about Jesus Christ. So we're going to conclude this series here. I want you to know next week we're going to begin a new series in Ecclesiastes. These series is called Meaningless. I know that for many of us, the vanity of life leads many people to conclude that life is meaningless and that God, if he's real at all is really distant from the workings of the world. If you have ever felt this way or if you know somebody, a friend who's ever felt this way,

this is a series that you want to be at and listen to. And you may want to be able to share it with a friend. You see, because buried in the pages of one of the strangest books in the Bible called the Ecclesiastes, there's not only sympathy for our struggle, but it's also a tremendous direction for how to find meaning in this life.

So I hope that you can join us. So let's pray together. Father in heaven, we love you, we thank you that you love us. And we call upon your name and ask that you would give us grace as we look to you. I pray for those who are listening right now, who are still considering whether or not to trust Jesus as savior and Lord, I pray right now that you would impress upon their heart God to trust you, would you cause them to be born again to a living hope? I pray father for those of us who know Christ, I pray that you would use these words and this passage to create within our hearts a peace and an anchor of hope for our soul that not only do we not have to fear that day, we can sing about that day. And on that day, we will sing of your mercy and your kindness and your love.

It's no doubt that we'll sing of your grace on that day and every day until that day. And so I pray now God as we sing to you about your amazing and trawling, sacrificial grace, that you would receive all of what we have to give, everything that we have is an offering. God, our whole life, we want to be able to give to you, our time, our energy, our resources, and even our worship. And so I pray that you would receive now the meek gifts that we give to you in response to your grace. And we pray this in Jesus name, Amen.



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