

Introduction:

Good morning, Church! If you have your Bibles, please meet me in [Acts 12](#). A lot has taken place leading up to [Acts 12](#). Luke begins Acts by picking up where his gospel ended. Jesus has risen from the grave. Jesus spent his final moments with his disciples. He told them that “you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” And then, Jesus ascended and the Holy Spirit was poured out on the disciples in the upper room. This one scene, the Ascension of Christ and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, is the background to everything that follows in the book of Acts, especially the birth and growth of the Church. Yet, just as we read of the Church’s advancement, we see that it will not go forth without facing opposition. Many are facing persecution, and it seems like the world, their world, is falling apart before their eyes, and it seems as though God is nowhere to be found. Maybe this is what you are feeling right now, and you’re trying your best to figure out how to keep going. If that’s you, then this passage is for you.

[Acts 12:1–25](#)

On October 30, 1974, Muhammad Ali faced George Foreman in the legendary “Rumble in the Jungle.” George Foreman was entering the fight as the undefeated heavyweight champion. Foreman was known for his devastating punching power and a relentless aggression. Ali, on the other hand, was the underdog. He had been stripped of his title for refusing to fight in the Vietnam War and had just come off a 3.5-year ban. Many didn’t believe Ali could win, but Ali had a strategy. It was in this fight that he introduced the “Rope-a-Dope.”

Most people thought Ali would try to overwhelm Foreman with speed and movement. Instead, Ali rested against the ropes and endured devastating punches. Ali seemed helpless. Those in attendance thought it was only a matter of time before Foreman completely overwhelmed Ali. But Ali didn’t panic. His resolve remained intact. Although it looked like he wouldn’t be able to withstand the punishing blows, Ali trusted himself to his strategy. By round 7, Foreman began to tire. In Round 8, the tables had completely turned. Ali had endured the heavy punches and began to inflict his own damage. Eventually, Ali—who seemed helpless, weak, and at Foreman’s mercy—prevailed and won by knockout in the 8th round.

The “Rope-a-Dope” isn’t just a story about boxing, but it’s a picture of the Church throughout history. Throughout history, the church has taken devastating blows, persecution, heresies, corruption, and at times the Church has seemed outmatched by our opponent. We see this in our passage. The Church is in a vulnerable state. Key leaders have been taken away. They’re facing political pressure. The Church is on the ropes. But right when things seem to be falling apart, and it seems like the kingdom of darkness is winning, the tables turn. And we learn in our text that despite how things may seem, despite how many blows to the body the Church may take, the Church of Jesus Christ will prevail. Therefore, we must trust our ascended Lord. Our passage gives us three items we must entrust to our ascended

Lord. First, we must trust Him with our prayers. Second, we must trust him with the outcome. Lastly, we must trust him with our longings.

Main Point 1- We Must Trust Him With Our Prayers (vv.1-5; 12)

EXPLANATION

At the beginning of Acts, the gospel has been spreading, and the Church has been growing. The gospel has even begun to be preached to the Gentiles. Jesus' command to make disciples is being fulfilled. Then we reach chapter 12. Luke says, about that time, Herod the king laid violent hands on some who belonged to the church. James, one of the leaders of the church, a member of the inner three, was killed. Peter, the rock, was arrested and imprisoned. Not only is he imprisoned, but four squads of four soldiers were assigned to guard him. In other words, the odds of escaping were slim. The reason he hadn't met the same fate as James, we are told, is because it was the days of Unleavened bread during which all trials and sentencing were put on hold.

The Church has just gone from experiencing revival that was marked by thousands of souls being won, miraculous healings, excitement, and momentum to one of its key leaders being killed, the government aggressively coming against it, and another key leader being placed on death row with no hope of escape. It cannot get much worse. If there were ever a time for the church to panic, it was now. But, instead of panic we get verse 5: "but earnest prayer for him (Peter) was made to God by the church." ἐκτενω̄ς, or earnestly, as it is translated here, means fervently, eagerly, continuously, and with force. They saw the situation for what it was: impossible. And they responded by continuously pleading with God for him to do the impossible. They entrusted their prayers to him.

ILLUSTRATION

George Muller was a minister in England in 17th century. While living in England, the Lord broke his heart for the abandoned children in the streets. And so, he and his wife established an orphanage in Bristol that would go on to care for 10,000 children. As amazing as this sounds, the thing that George is most known for is prayer. George Muller never directly asked for money for the orphanage. He raised upwards of \$100 million all through prayer.

One morning, the orphanage ran out of food. 300 kids would go hunger if nothing was done. George told the housemother to seat the children as they normally would. George prayed a prayer of thanksgiving and sat down, convinced that the Lord would provide as he has done before. Within minutes, the baker and milk man were at his door with the exact amount of provisions needed for that day.

APPLICATION

Now, that is an incredible story, but they are not limited to George Muller. The Lord desires to do the same thing in your life. Not necessarily the same miracle but rather being the one to whom you entrust your neediness to. This is what prayer is, it's trusting God to meet your neediness and dependence with His goodness. So the question we must ask ourselves, brothers and sisters, is how earnest are our prayers? If you prayers lack earnestness, it might

just be that your prayers are too small. Notice what they are praying for in our passage: the impossible. What was George Muller praying for? The impossible. We all have impossibilities in our life (that one friend or family member who is lost, a sickness, a struggle, etc.). But are we entrusting those things to the Lord, and earnestly praying for him to do what only he can?

But here's the good news is, brothers and sisters, that even when our prayers are not earnest, in Christ, our prayers are being made perfect.

[Hebrews 7:24-25](#) says, "but he holds his priesthood permanently because he continues forever. Consequently, he can save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them." Christ ascended as our high priest who is making earnest intercession on our behalf. Because of this, we can trust him with our prayers.

2. Main Point #2- **We Must Trust Him With the Outcome (vv. 6-17)**

EXPLANATION

Time had come for Peter to be brought out. It was nearing the time for Peter to be tried and executed. Peter, is in between two soldiers, bound with two chains, with two sentries at the front door. Yet, Luke says, Peter isn't up *worrying*. He's *sleeping*. In fact, he's sound asleep. We know this because when the angel stood next to him and a light shone in the cell, Peter didn't wake up. The angel had to strike Peter and tell him to get up quickly. Peter was so out of it, he thought he was in a dream. Then he says, "Now I am sure that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from the hand of Herod and from all that the Jewish people were expecting."

Once Peter is freed, he then goes to Mary's house, the mother of John Mark, where again we find them praying. Now, we aren't told what they are praying about, but it seems fair to assume that they were praying for Peter. Yet, when Rhoda goes to answer, absolutely no one believes her when she says, "Peter is at the gate!"

Based on everyone's reactions, it seems that although Peter and the church both wanted his freedom, they didn't know what the outcome would be. Is this a lack of faith? I don't believe so, for their earnest prayers were evidence of their faith. How do we understand their reaction?

I think we understand it once we understand how Peter was able to be sound asleep in his cell. And how Jesus could, in the midst of the storm, be sound asleep in the belly of the ship. How can I experience that peace in my own life?

ILLUSTRATION

In [Daniel 3](#), King Nebuchadnezzar made an image of gold. At the sound of the trumpet everyone was to bow down in worship of the image or be cast into the fiery furnace. Everyone bowed down except for three Jewish men: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. When King Nebuchadnezzar confronted them, he said to bow down, "for who is the god who

will deliver you out of my hands?” Now, this is the moment to panic. You either worship the image, or you die. Do they respond in fear or panic? This was their response. “O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. If this be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.” If preserving your life was your top priority, this is likely not the tone you would choose. But that wasn’t their greatest priority. Did they want to live? Of course. But they did not fear for their lives, and they stood in confidence, because they trusted God with the outcome.

APPLICATION

What do you do after making earnest prayer, and trusting God with your neediness? You trust him with the outcome.

For some of us, trusting God with the outcome is your current reality. Your spouse just received a bad diagnosis. Your child is sick, and there doesn’t seem to be an answer in sight. You’ve gotten older and your health has declined, and you’re having to face your own mortality. Someone telling you, “don’t worry, just trust Jesus,” doesn’t feel that helpful. That’s why, I want to explain *why* you can trust Jesus—because of the ascension.

How does the ascension give me peace when facing death? Scripture tells us that Jesus experienced a bodily crucifixion, a bodily resurrection, and a bodily ascension. On the bodily ascension of Christ rests our future hope. Our true outcome. Because Christ was resurrected in the flesh, and ascended in the flesh, we can be confident in the hope of the resurrection. This is why Peter could sleep at night, and why you can sleep too, because Christ has ascended and the fear of death is no more.

So yes, brothers and sisters, even when we are uncertain of how things will turn out, we can have peace. Because our trust is in the ascended Lord, who has guaranteed outcome of our future.

3. Main Point #3- We Must Trust Him With Our Longings (vv.18-25)

Lastly, we see that because the Church will prevail, we must trust him with our longings. We’ve reached the conclusion of this narrative. In the first scene, it seems as though the kingdom of darkness is prevailing against the church. James is killed, and Peter is imprisoned awaiting his execution. Scene two provides a shift. God intervenes in an impossible situation and delivers Peter. It would be considered a good story if it ended there. Peter is reunited with the church and goes on to live happily ever after. But it doesn’t end there, does it? Everyone involved, from the officers to Herod himself, were killed. What started off as a story about the persecution of the church concluded as a story of the Church prevailing. Herod and the soldiers were judged and brought to an end, while the Word of God increased and multiplied.

If you were Peter or a member of the Church, what would you have been longing for? For Peter’s release? Of course. But what else? Would you have been content with just the release of Peter? I believe that what they would have been longing for is what we all long for—

justice. We all long for it. You see it in the movies we watch and the books that we read. The bad guy rarely ever escapes. It's the reason why Super Man, Bat Man, and Spider Man were created. Because, deep in our hearts we all long for a world in which all evil, all wickedness, all injustice is met with complete and perfect justice.

ILLUSTRATION

In High School Musical, Zack Efron plays Zack Efron. He's the stereotypical all-American. All the girls love him, and all the guys want to be like him. He's the starting point guard and star player of his high school basketball team. He's at the top of the food chain in his high school ecosystem. He's friends with all the right people. If he just sticks to the status quo, he would have a high school experience most people could only dream of. The only problem is that he has a longing in his heart. He longs to sing and be a part of the musical. No one knows it, not even his closest friends. It isn't until he meets Gabriella that he opens up to share his longing. Why did he open up to Gabriella? Because in Gabriella, he found someone he could trust.

APPLICATION

When we are sinned against, we naturally have a longing for justice. Some of you know exactly what this longing for justice feels like. You've been sinned against by people in authority and with more power than you, and although it didn't destroy you, you still have a longing for God's justice. You can trust God with that longing. And you can trust him with this longing, because of the ascension of Christ.

When Christ ascended, he ascended as our great high priest. In the OT, the Day of Atonement was the one day of the year that the high priest could enter the Holy of Holies. The High Priest would enter the Holy of Holies as the representative of the people. He would unite himself to the people by the vestments he wore. Once he left the Holy of Holies, he would then take two goats. The one, he would sacrifice, making propitiation for the sins of the people. The other he would lay his hand on, transferring the sins of the people unto the goat and sending it away, never to return. The high priest would repeat this ritual year after year.

But Jesus is the Great High Priest. When he ascended, he entered the Holy of Holies representing us, not with vestments, but with his physical body, having become like us in every way. As the Great High Priest, he offered, not goats but himself, as the sin offering, the perfect sacrifice once and for all. The ascension of Christ means that justice has been served, at the expense of Jesus, on our behalf. You see, all sin must be accounted for by blood. And Paul says, [Romans 3:22–26](#) “the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.” You see, friends, Jesus has delivered justice to you and for you. Jesus was so committed to justice, that he was willing to shed his own blood to justify you. It

is because of this, that we can trust Jesus with all of our longings for justice. And if we can trust him with our longings for justice, we can be sure that he can be trusted with our longings for rest, companionship, salvation, restoration, children, or friends, or whatever else you are longing for. He has proven himself trustworthy.

CONCLUSION

When the world seems to be falling apart, and it seems like the kingdom of darkness is winning, what keeps God's people from panic? It's the fact that the Church will prevail. And because the Church will prevail, we must trust him with our prayers, we must trust him with the outcome, and we must trust him with our longings.

Last September, I had a week off for study leave. As my wife and I were trying to figure out where we would spend the week, a family friend, out of generosity, offered for us to stay at their family home in Colorado in the mountains. Me and Bri had never been to Colorado, and with both of us having grown up in west TN, we hadn't spent much time in the mountains either. All that to say, we were excited to go. Once we got there, the first thing we noticed was the incredible view from our bedroom windows. In our bedroom, in front of our bed, we had giant windows that gave an incredible view of the mountains and gave a clear view of the sky. And so, the first night I was excited to wake up early to see the sunrise. When I woke, though, I didn't see the sun. I saw the evidence of the sunrise. The orange mixed with blue sky. The sound of nature waking up. The absence of darkness. But I couldn't see the sun. I thought, "Maybe I just need to wake up earlier." Still, I couldn't see the sun. Eventually, I realized, that although the sun was rising, and although it felt like I was close enough to the sky to touch it, I couldn't see it because the mountain blocked my view. If I wanted to see the sunrise, I would have to adjust my viewpoint. But if I wanted to see the sunset, all I needed to do was be patient, because just as the sun rose, it would surely set.

Our world may be falling apart. Your world may be falling apart. The kingdom of darkness may be like that giant mountain, preventing you from fully seeing the beauty of the ascended Son. When that is our reality, we don't have to worry or panic. Because just as the Son ascended, he will descend again in all His glory, and that future hope will become reality. Until then, his Church will continue to prevail. We need only to trust in Him.

引言：

早安，教會！如果你們有聖經，請翻到《使徒行傳》第 12 章。在第 12 章之前已經發生了許多事情。路加在《使徒行傳》的開頭延續了他福音書的結尾。耶穌已經從死裡復活，並在最後的時刻與門徒同在。他告訴他們：「你們要在耶路撒冷、猶太全地和撒馬利亞，直到地極，作我的見證。」隨後，耶穌升天，聖靈在樓房中澆灌在門徒身上。這一幕——基督的升天與聖靈的澆灌——成為《使徒行傳》中一切後續發展的背景，特別是教會的誕生與成長。

然而，當我們看到教會的擴展時，也同時看見它並非在沒有對抗的情況下前行。許多人正面臨逼迫，他們的世界似乎正在眼前崩塌，也好像神無處可尋。也許你現在正有這樣的感受，並且正努力想知道如何繼續走下去。如果這是你的光景，那麼這段經文正是為你而寫的。

《使徒行傳》12:1–25

1974 年 10 月 30 日，穆罕默德·阿里 (Muhammad Ali) 與喬治·福爾曼 (George Foreman) 在傳奇之戰「叢林之戰」中對決。福爾曼以不敗的重量級拳王身份進入這場比賽，他以毀滅性的拳擊力量與持續不斷的攻勢聞名。相對地，阿里是弱勢的一方。他因拒絕參與越戰而被剝奪冠軍頭銜，並剛結束長達三年半的禁賽。許多人不相信他能贏，但阿里有一個策略——他在這場比賽中首次運用了「靠繩戰術 (Rope-a-Dope)」。

多數人以為阿里會用速度與移動壓制福爾曼，但他反而靠在繩索上，承受猛烈的重拳，看起來毫無招架之力。觀眾認為他很快就會被擊倒。但阿里沒有驚慌，他的決心沒有動搖。雖然看起來無法承受這些攻擊，他仍然信任自己的策略。到了第七回合，福爾曼開始疲憊；第八回合局勢完全逆轉。阿里開始反擊，最終在第八回把對手打倒並獲勝。

「靠繩戰術」不僅是一個拳擊故事，更是歷史中教會的寫照。教會歷經沉重打擊、逼迫、異端與腐敗，有時甚至顯得無法與敵人抗衡。在我們的經文中也看到這一點：教會處於脆弱狀態，主要的領袖被帶走，面臨政治壓力，彷彿已被逼到繩邊。然而，就在一切似乎要崩潰、黑暗權勢看似得勝之時，局勢翻轉了。經文告訴我們：無論情況看起來如何，無論教會承受多少打擊，耶穌基督的教會終必得勝。

因此，我們必須信靠那位已升天的主。本段經文給我們三個要交託給祂的事：第一，我們的禱告；第二，事情的結果；第三，我們的渴望。

重點一：我們必須以禱告交託給祂 (1–5 節；12 節)

解釋：

在《使徒行傳》剛開始之時，福音迅速被傳開，教會持續增長，甚至已經傳到外邦人

當中。耶穌使萬民作門徒的命令正在實現。然而到了第 12 章，局勢急轉直下。路加說，那時希律王下手苦害教會中的一些人。教會領袖之一雅各被殺，彼得被捕入獄，不僅如此，還有四班兵丁看守他，他幾乎不可能逃脫。彼得之所以尚未被處決，是因為正值無酵節期間，所有審判暫停。

教會從復興（數千人得救、神蹟醫治、充滿動力）瞬間轉為危機（領袖被殺、政府逼迫、另一位領袖面臨死刑）。這正是引起恐驚的時候，但第 5 節卻說：「**教會卻為他(彼得)切切地禱告神。**」這裡的「切切」意味著熱切、持續、迫切地祈求。他們看見局勢的不可能，於是不斷向神呼求，以禱告交託給祂。

例證：

喬治·慕勒 (George Muller) 是 17 世紀英國的一位牧師，他為街頭孤兒建立孤兒院，一生照顧超過一萬名兒童。他最著名的是禱告。他從不直接募款，卻透過禱告籌得超過一億美元。

有一天早晨，孤兒院完全沒有食物，300 個孩子將挨餓。他仍讓孩子照常坐下用餐，並感謝神供應。不久後，麵包師和送奶工帶來正好足夠當天所需的食物。

應用：

這樣的故事不只屬於喬治·慕勒。神也願意在你生命中動工。禱告就是把我們的需要與依靠交託給神，信靠祂的良善。問題是：我們的禱告有多迫切？若缺乏迫切，也許是因為我們禱告得太小。經文中他們求的是「不可能的事」。你是否也把生命中的不可能（迷失的親人、疾病、掙扎）交託給神，並迫切求祂動工？

好消息是：即使我們的禱告不完全，在基督裡也被成全。祂作我們的大祭司，持續為我們代求，因此我們可以信靠祂。

希伯來書 7:24-25 說：**這位既是永遠常存的，他祭司的職任就長久不更換。凡靠著他進到神面前的人，他都能拯救到底；因為他是長遠活著，替他們祈求。**基督已升天，成為我們的大祭司，正為我們切切地代求。因此，我們可以將我們的禱告交託給祂。

重點二：我們必須把結果交託給祂（6-17 節）

解釋：

彼得即將受審並被處決。他被鎖鏈捆綁，夾在兩個士兵之間，門口還有守衛。然而他卻沉睡，甚至天使來時還需要拍醒他。他以為自己在作夢。彼得醒悟過來，自言自語說：「**我現在真知道主差遣他的使者，救我脫離希律的手和猶太百姓一切所盼望的。**」

彼得獲釋之後，就到了馬利亞的家，就是約翰馬可的母親那裡；在那裡，我們再次看見他們正在禱告。我們不曉得他們禱告的內容，但合理推測，他們是在為彼得禱告。然而，當羅大去應門，說「彼得站在門外！」時，竟然沒有一個人相信她。

從眾人的反應來看，似乎彼得和教會都渴望他得釋放，但他們並不知道結果會如何。這是缺乏信心嗎？我認為不是，因為他們迫切的禱告本身就是信心的表現。那我們該如何理解他們的反應呢？

我想，當我們明白彼得為何能在監牢中安然熟睡，也明白耶穌如何能在風暴中於船底安睡時，我們就能理解了。那麼，我們又該如何在自己的生命中經歷這樣的平安呢？

例證：

在《但以理書》第 3 章中，尼布甲尼撒王立了一個金像。當號角響起時，所有人都必須俯伏敬拜這個像，否則就要被扔進烈火的窯中。所有人都下拜了，唯獨三個猶太人沒有：沙得拉、米煞和亞伯尼歌。當尼布甲尼撒王質問他們時，他命令他們下拜，並說：「有哪一位神能救你們脫離我的手呢？」這正是該驚慌的時刻——要麼敬拜這個像，要麼就死。他們是以恐懼或慌亂來回應嗎？這是他們的回答：「尼布甲尼撒啊，這件事我們不必回答你；即便如此，我們所事奉的神能將我們從烈火的窯中救出來，也必救我們脫離你的手，王啊；即或不然，王啊，你當知道，我們決不事奉你的神，也不敬拜你所立的金像。」

如果保全性命是你最優先的考量，你大概不會用這樣的語氣回應。但那並不是他們最重要的優先事項。他們想活嗎？當然想。但他們並不為自己的生命懼怕，反而站立得穩、充滿信心，因為他們將結果交託給神。

應用：

在你迫切禱告、並將自己的需要交託給神之後，你該做什麼？你要把結果交託給祂。

對我們當中的一些人來說，把結果交託給神正是你現在的處境。你的配偶剛被診斷出嚴重的疾病；你的孩子生病了，卻看不見任何解決的希望；你年紀漸長，健康每況愈下，不得不面對自己的死亡。這時候，有人對你說：「別擔心，只要信靠耶穌」，可能並不讓人感到安慰。因此，我想說明你為什麼可以信靠耶穌——因為祂的升天。

耶穌的升天如何在面對死亡時帶給我平安？聖經告訴我們，耶穌經歷了身體的釘十字架、身體的復活，以及身體的升天。基督身體的升天，成為我們將來盼望的根基，也就是我們真正的結局。因為基督是在肉身中復活、並在肉身中升天，我們就可以確信復活的盼望。這就是為什麼彼得能在夜裡安然入睡，你也可以如此，因為基督已經升天，死亡的恐懼已經不再存在了。

所以，是的，弟兄姊妹們，即使我們不確定事情將如何發展，我們仍然可以有平安。因為我們所信靠的是那位已經升天的主，祂已經為我們的將來保證了最終的結局。

重點三：我們必須將渴望交託給祂（18–25 節）

最後，我們看見，因著教會必得勝，我們必須將自己的渴望交託給祂。我們已經來到這段敘事的結尾。在第一幕中，看起來黑暗的國度正在勝過教會：雅各被殺，彼得被

囚，等待處決。第二幕帶來轉折，神介入一個不可能的處境，拯救了彼得。如果故事停在這裡，已經可以算是一個美好的結局——彼得與教會重聚，從此過著幸福快樂的生活。

但故事並沒有在此結束，不是嗎？所有相關的人，從守衛到希律王本人，都遭到了審判並被除滅。原本是一個關於教會受逼迫的故事，最終卻成為教會得勝的見證。希律和士兵被審判、被終結，而神的道卻日漸興旺、越發廣傳。

如果你是彼得或教會中的一員，你會渴望什麼？彼得得釋放嗎？當然。但還有呢？你會只滿足於彼得的獲釋嗎？我相信，他們所渴望的，正是我們每一個人都渴望的——公義。我們都渴望公義。你可以在我們所看的電影、所讀的書中看見這一點：壞人很少真正逃脫。這也是為什麼會有超人、蝙蝠俠和蜘蛛人這些角色的誕生。因為在我們內心深處，我們都渴望一個世界，在那裡，一切邪惡、一切敗壞、一切不公，都會得到完全而公正的審判。

例證：

在《歌舞青春》中，柴克·艾弗隆 (Zack Efron) 飾演特洛伊·波頓 (Zack Efron)。他是典型的「全美型」高中生：所有女生都喜歡他，所有男生都想成為他。他是籃球校隊的控球後衛，也是明星球員，在學校裡是個名星。他懂得如何搞好人際關係。如果他只是維持現狀，他將擁有一段多數人夢寐以求的高中生活。唯一的問題是，他心中有一個渴望——他渴望唱歌，渴望參與音樂劇。沒有人知道這件事，甚至連他最親近的朋友也不知道。直到他遇見蓋比瑞拉 (Gabriella)，他才敞開心扉，分享自己的渴望。為什麼他會向蓋比瑞拉敞開呢？因為在她身上，他找到了一個可以信任的人。

應用：

當我們被人冒犯時，我們自然會渴望公義。你們當中有些人非常清楚這種對公義的渴望是什麼感受——你曾被有權勢、地位高於你的人傷害；雖然這沒有把你打倒，但你內心仍然渴望神的公義。你可以把這樣的渴望交託給神。而你之所以能這樣信靠祂，是因為基督的升天。

當基督升天時，祂是以我們的大祭司的身分升天。在舊約中，贖罪日是一年當中唯一一天，大祭司可以進入至聖所。大祭司代表百姓進入至聖所，藉著他所穿的袍子與百姓認同。當他離開至聖所後，會取兩隻山羊：一隻被獻為祭，為百姓的罪成就贖罪；另一隻則接手在其上，把百姓的罪歸在牠身上，然後把牠送走，使其永不再回來。這個儀式年復一年地重複。

但耶穌是那位偉大的大祭司。當祂升天時，祂不是穿著袍子進入至聖所，而是以祂自己的身體進去，因為祂在各方面都與我們認同。作為大祭司，祂所獻上的不是山羊，而是祂自己，作為贖罪祭，一次且永遠完全的獻祭。基督的升天意味著：公義已經得以成就，而代價是由耶穌為我們付上。

你看，所有的罪都必須以流血來償還。正如保羅在《羅馬書》3:22–26 所說：「就是神的義，因信耶穌基督加給一切相信的人，並沒有分別。因為世人都犯了罪，虧缺了神的榮耀；如今卻蒙神的恩典，因基督耶穌的救贖，就白白的稱義。神設立耶穌作挽回祭，是憑著耶穌的血，藉著人的信，要顯明神的義；因為他用忍耐的心寬容人先時所犯的罪，好在今時顯明他的義，使人知道他自己為義，也稱信耶穌的人為義。」

所以，親愛的朋友們，耶穌已經把公義帶給你，也為你成就了公義。祂對公義的堅持是如此徹底，以至於祂願意流出自己的血來使你稱義。正因如此，我們可以把一切對公義的渴望交託給祂。而如果我們可以在公義這件事上信靠祂，我們也可以確信，祂同樣值得我們信靠——無論是對安息、陪伴、救恩、更新、兒女、朋友，或任何你心中所渴望的事。祂已經證明自己是可信的。

結論：

當世界似乎崩塌、黑暗的權勢似乎得勝時，是什麼使神的子民不至驚慌？是因為教會必得勝。因此，我們要把禱告、結果與渴望都交託給祂。

去年九月，我有一週的時間作為進修休假。當我和妻子在思考要去哪裡度過這一週時，一位家庭朋友出於慷慨，邀請我們住在他們位於科羅拉多山區的家中。我和太太都從未去過科羅拉多，而且我們兩人都在田納西州西部長大，也幾乎沒有在山區生活的經驗。總之，我們對這趟旅程非常期待。

當我們抵達時，第一個注意到的就是臥室窗外那令人驚嘆的景色。在我們的臥室裡，床前有一整面巨大的落地窗，可以清楚地看見群山與天空。因此，第一晚我就很期待隔天一早起來看日出。然而，當我醒來時，我並沒有看到太陽本身。我看到的是日出的證據——橙色與藍色交織的天空、大自然甦醒的聲音、黑暗的消散。但我就是看不到太陽。我心想：「也許我需要更早起來。」但即使如此，我仍然看不到太陽。

最後我才明白，雖然太陽確實正在升起，雖然我感覺自己離天空近得彷彿可以觸碰，但我之所以看不見，是因為有一座山擋住了我的視線。如果我想看見日出，我就需要調整我的角度。但如果我想看日落，我只需要耐心等待，因為既然太陽升起了，它也必定會落下。

我們的世界也許正在崩塌，你的世界也許也正在崩塌。黑暗的國度就像那座巨大的山，阻擋你完全看見那位已升天之子的榮美。當這成為我們的現實時，我們不需要憂慮或驚慌。因為正如祂已經升天，祂也必再來，帶著一切榮耀降臨，而那將來的盼望必成為現實。在那之前，祂的教會仍將持續得勝。我們所需要做的，就是信靠祂。