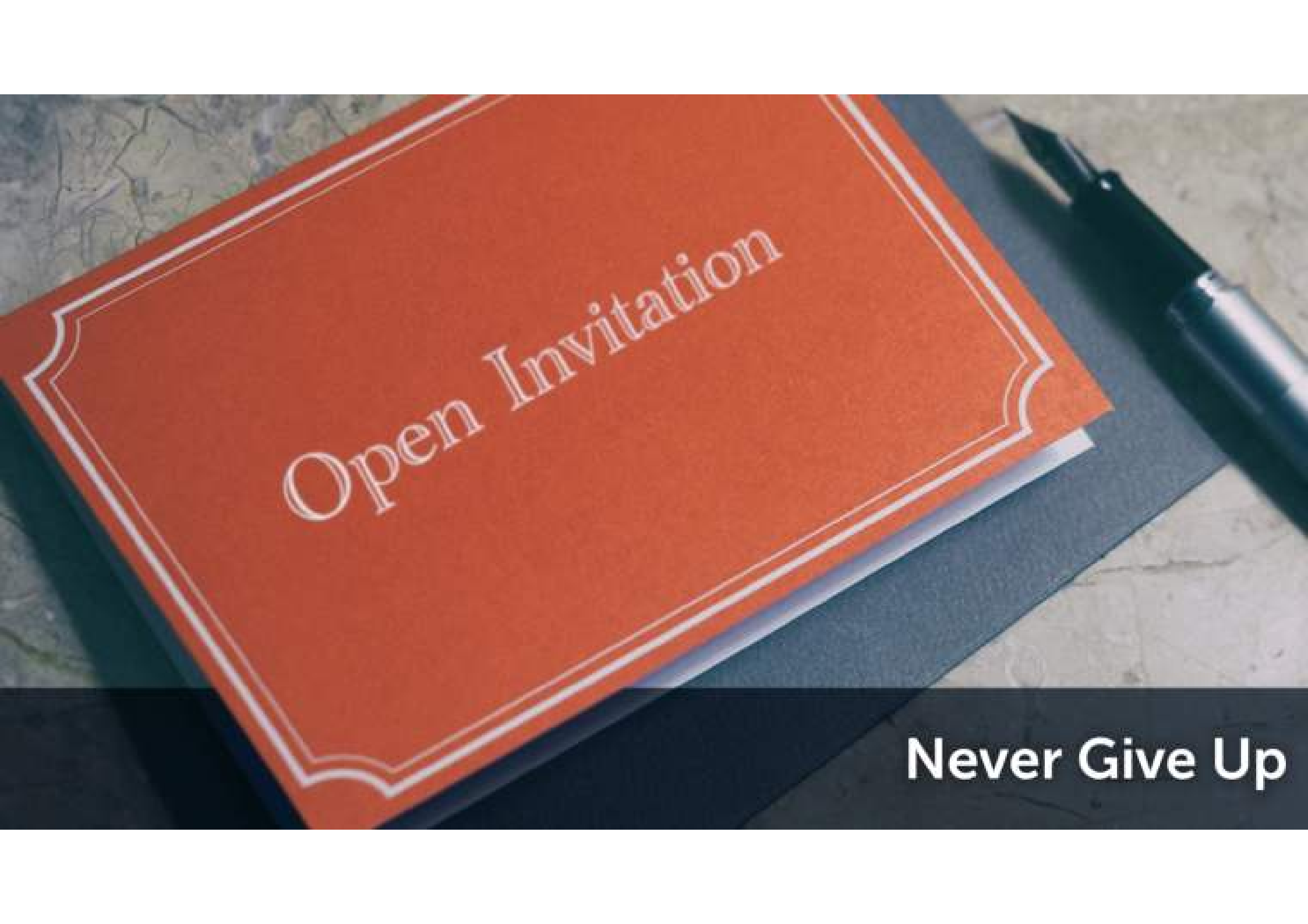




Open Invitation

Never Give Up

Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. ² He said: "In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared what people thought. ³ And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, 'Grant me justice against my adversary.'

⁴ "For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or care what people think, ⁵ yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won't eventually come and attack me!'"

⁶ And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. ⁷ And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? ⁸ I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?"



“Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up.”



“a judge who neither feared God
nor cared what people thought”



the “unscrupulous” judge



the “unscrupulous” judge

having no guiding moral
principles

without ethic beyond his own
interests and whims

lacking concern for what is
understood as right or proper



This judge represents the most dangerous kind of person with power. He believes he is accountable to nothing outside himself—not God, not the rights of other people, not on agreed upon standards of justice.



In Israel a woman's link to the outside community depended largely on a male family member—a father in the case of a daughter, a husband in the case of a wife, a son in the case of a widow.

The fact that this woman finds herself before the magistrate indicates that she has no kinsman to bring her case to court.

“The fact that she must approach the judge continuously suggests that she lacks the economic resources to offer the appropriate bribe necessary for a swift settlement.”

"In the Scriptures of Israel and Jewish tradition, widowhood symbolized the ultimate state of vulnerability, status deprivation, and need; as the object of God's concern, widows were to be cared for within the community of God's people."

(Joel B. Green)

“so that she won’t eventually come and attack me!”

“so that she won’t eventually come and attack me!”

“This widow is beating me black and blue and will be the end of me!”

Open Invitation



"Until you have stood for years knocking at a locked door, your knuckles bleeding, you do not really know what prayer is."

“Prayer is not a parlor exercise, perfunctory and tidy. It is an existential battle, ongoing and ever present.”

(James Edwards)

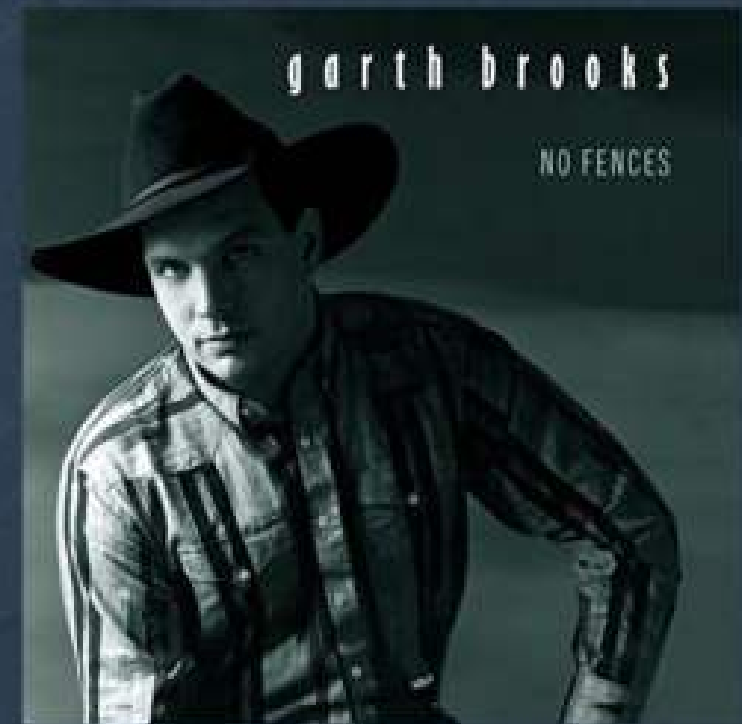
The plea from the widow is not generic or trivial. It is a plea for justice.

“The widow is not pestering the judge about a misdemeanor. The prayer offered in the parable is not prayer for a parking place, or that God would bless everyone in the world. One does not “cry out to God day and night” for such matters. The prayer offered concerns ultimate and existential issues—life, livelihood, honor. These are not elective but inescapable issues, issues about which one prays earnestly.” (James Edwards)

The plea from the widow is not generic or trivial. It is a plea for justice.

God, unlike the unjust judge, “will see that they get justice, and quickly.”

"Sometimes I thank God for unanswered prayers... Remember when you're talking to the man upstairs... That just because He doesn't answer doesn't mean He don't care... Some of God's greatest gifts are unanswered prayers"



Awake, Lord! Why do you sleep? Rouse yourself! Do not reject us forever. Why do you hide your face and forget our misery and oppression?

The crux of the issue is how we read and understand “quickly,” which can also be translated as “certainly” or “surely.”

Two things are true at the same time: God is partial to those suffering injustice, and God is patient with those lost in their sinful ways.

“When the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?”

“When the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?”

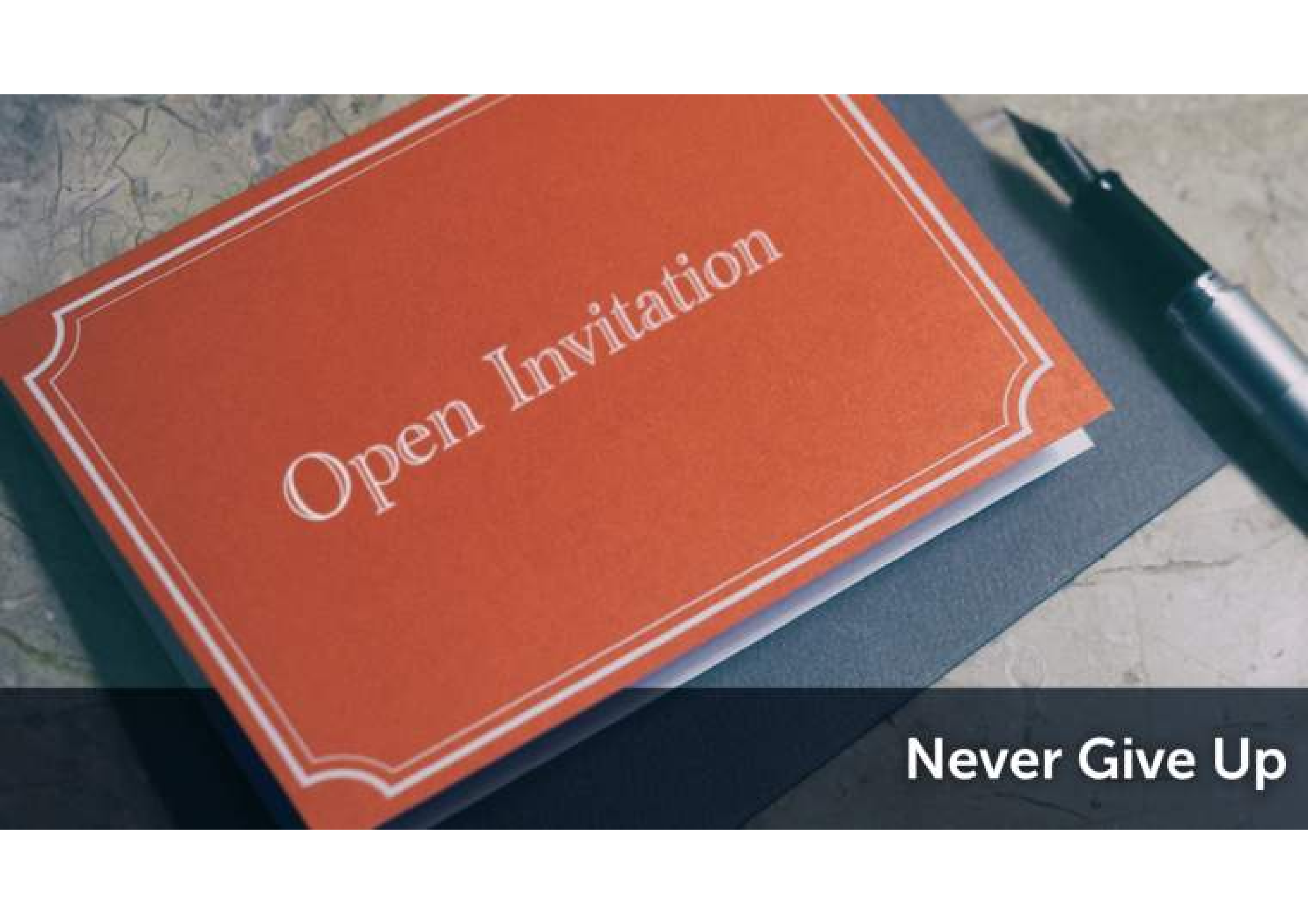
We won't become people who pray persistent prayers if we aren't first people who cling tightly to our trust in the God we speak to when we pray.

Is there a prayer you've quietly stopped praying—not because you found peace with the answer, but because you got tired of asking? Invite the Spirit to meet you, and speak to you, in the midst of that tiredness.

Do you tend to view intercessory or petitionary prayer as a negotiation, or as an act of trust? How would your prayers change if trust in the goodness of God was the bedrock foundation?

Where in your life right now does it feel like justice, or healing, or resolution is taking too long? Bring that honestly to God, without pretending the wait doesn't hurt.

Jesus ends this parable with a question, not a promise: "will he find faith on the earth?" If he asked you that about your own life this week, what would your honest answer be?

An orange envelope with the words "Open Invitation" in a white serif font is the central focus. It is placed on a dark grey or black card. To the right of the envelope, a black fountain pen lies diagonally. In the bottom right corner, the words "Never Give Up" are printed in a bold, white, sans-serif font. The entire scene is set against a light-colored, textured background.

Open Invitation

Never Give Up