

# Witnesses To The Ministry Of Jesus Through Paul

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 20 March 2022

Preacher: Pastor Cal Morrison

[ 0 : 00 ] Well, we're continuing our series on Acts, and this morning we're in chapter 20. We're going to be looking at the first 16 verses. And so if you have that, you can turn that there.

So this is just following the uproar that happened in Ephesus that we read about last week.

And Luke writes this. After the uproar ceased, Paul sent for the disciples, and after encouraging them, he said farewell and departed for Macedonia.

When he had gone through those regions and had given them much encouragement, he came to Greece. There he spent three months. And when a plot was made against him by the Jews, as he was about to set sail for Syria, he decided to return through Macedonia.

And he said,

[ 2 : 20 ] And being overcome by sleep, he fell down from the third story and was taken up dead. But Paul went down and bent over him, taking him in his arms, said, Do not be alarmed, for his life is in him.

And when Paul had gone up and had broken bread and eaten, he conversed with them a long while until daybreak, and so departed.

And they took the youth away alive and were not a little comforted. But going ahead to the ship, we set sail for Asos, intending to take Paul aboard there, for so he had arranged, intending himself to go by land.

And when he had met us at Asos, we took him on board and went to... How do you say that?

Mytiletus. Mytiletus. Mytillet. Mytilene. There we go. And sailing from there, we came the following day, opposite Chios.

[ 3 : 34 ] And the next day, we touched at Samos. And the day after, we went to Myletus. For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he might not have to spend time in Asia.

For he was hastening to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on the day of Pentecost. This is the word of the Lord, and we pray that he blesses the reading of it, even when the reader messes it up.

These names, I tell you, you need to say them with confidence, even if it's wrong. So, I had this dream, a few years ago I had this dream.

And, in the dream, my dad, who is very much alive, and we are living in his house just now, he's living somewhere else. In this dream I had, my dad passed away.

He died suddenly. It was sudden, and it was a shock, and it was very unexpected. And I remember vividly in this dream, I was inconsolable.

[ 4 : 45 ] I'm not necessarily immensely close to my dad. I am close to my mum and my dad. But in this dream, I was inconsolable. And one of the things that really upset me in the dream was, because of how sudden and unexpected it was, I never had the chance to tell him that I love him.

I never had the chance to say goodbye or anything like that. It was taken away. Now, many of you have probably had experiences like that. The dream shook me.

Such that when I woke up, it took me a while to realize that it was just a dream and it wasn't a reality. But from that moment on, I made it my goal to be intentional about saying the things that are important to say while someone is still with you.

Now, words are not just for communicating information. Words communicate far more than that. Is it only because words are all we can give to a dying person that that is what we give?

Is it only because, and this has truly been tested, that hearing is one of the last senses to go? Is that why words are the things that we give to a dying person?

[ 6 : 02 ] We give flowers to an injured person, but to a dying person, words are the important thing. Is it simply because that's all we can give or simply because hearing is one of the last things to go?

Or are these things perhaps more significant than we realize? Goodbyes are not nearly as easy or as enjoyable as greetings.

Far easier to say hello than it is to say goodbye. And children, children know this instinctively. That's why a child's face will light up when they see a loved one.

But the same face will be filled with tears when you're saying goodbye. I experience that almost on a daily basis. But if you knew, if you knew there were certain people in your life that you would never see again, I'm guessing you would place a greater priority on words than you usually do.

Do you know what you would say? If there was someone in your life that you knew you were never going to see again, do you know what you would say? Would you say anything?

[ 7 : 16 ] This is something that's going on in this passage. And actually from this moment on with Paul, one of the questions here is, why is a guy like Paul, why does he feel the need to start saying farewells with a certain finality to it?

What business does Paul have to feel the need to do this? I mean, Paul's not necessarily in grave danger of a terminal illness or anything like that.

So why is Paul got it in his head that he needs to say goodbye forever to folks? You see, as we're approaching Easter, we begin to think about these things. We begin to think more and more about Jesus' last days and Jesus' last words.

And from the Gospels, we see that nearing the end of his own present ministry on earth, and indeed nearing the end of his life here, there's a turning from Jesus toward Jerusalem.

There's a turning towards Jerusalem and a growing hostility from the Jews. And this is something that Luke records in his Gospels. In his Gospel.

[ 8 : 29 ] And right at the beginning of Acts, Luke states that in his Gospel, he wrote all that Jesus began to do and teach. And many folks have pointed out that he implies to say that throughout Acts, he's going to record what Jesus continued to do and teach by his Spirit and through his people.

So at the time in Acts, Luke shows how certain people, different points in Acts, Luke shows how certain people begin to resemble Jesus in striking ways.

And the times with the most parallels, we've seen it already in Acts, there's certain times in Acts when there's striking parallels between a person and Jesus. And the times when we see the most parallels is when someone is heading towards death because of the Gospel.

And so, we've seen this already in chapter 6 and 7 of Acts. The biggest parallels to Jesus' trial was the trial of Stephen.

There's so many parallels there between Jesus' trial and Stephen's trial as Stephen is facing death. And then, now we're going to begin to see, again, striking parallels between Jesus and Paul as Paul starts heading towards Jerusalem.

[ 9 : 57 ] You see, it seems there are times when Luke wants to show who is authentic in Acts. He wants to show who are the real Christians, who is authentic, who is the Lord with. And he shows this by drawing parallels between them and Jesus.

You see, this was the question when Stephen was on trial. You're nothing. You're false. And Luke's saying, no, he's... The reason why Stephen's being killed and put on trial is because he's exactly like Jesus, and they did that to Jesus.

This was a big thing when Stephen was being condemned and killed by the nation of Israel. Luke's doing this to show not that Stephen's wrong and the nation of Israel's right, but to show that the nation of Israel are doing this to Stephen because they did the same thing to Jesus.

And so what we're going to begin to see now is when Paul is being condemned to death by the nation of Israel, it is because they did the same thing to Jesus.

Just as Luke drew parallels between Jesus' trial and Stephen's trial, Luke also seems to draw parallels between Jesus' journey toward Jerusalem and death with Paul's journey towards Jerusalem and towards death.

[ 11 : 15 ] Paul's setting his face to Jerusalem just like Jesus set his face to Jerusalem. Paul's thinking about death just as Jesus was. So I want to highlight just a few of those things, particularly in our passage, and we're going to see it more and more ramping up as the passages go.

But in this passage, I want to show you just a few of these parallels, and these parallels will grow stronger and brighter as Paul walks in the footsteps of Jesus towards Jerusalem.

So in our passage today, we see similarities to what we see with Jesus. For instance, in Luke's first book, he records that the Jews were plotting to kill Jesus.

And the timeline, you can go and check this out and look, the timeline, that the Jews were plotting to kill Jesus. And then we see that that happens round about the time of unleavened bread.

And then we see that after that, or round about that time, Jesus gathers with his disciples in an upper room, and we see him talking with finality about being with them.

[ 12 : 22 ] That this is one of the last times he's going to be with them. He talks with a finality when he's gathered with them in the upper room to break bread. And back in Luke chapter 9 as well, we see that Jesus set his face towards Jerusalem.

And if you noticed, if you were keen, if you noticed last week, in Acts chapter 19, we started by noting Paul resolved in the Spirit to go to Jerusalem.

And in our passage today, like with Jesus, the Jews are plotting against Paul to kill him. And we see, look, note that it's around the time of the Feast of the Unleavened Bread.

And then, like Jesus, Paul is in an upper room in Troas. He's gathered with the disciples, and he gives a lengthy farewell speech.

This is like the upper room discourse. And from this point on, we'll begin to see the parallels of Jesus' passion and the ministry of Paul as he travels towards Jerusalem.

[ 13 : 27 ] So I think one of the big points of that, why would Luke do that? What's the point? Why do we need to know that? Why do we need to notice these things? I think one of the big points of that is to show that the ministry of Paul, and this is very important.

Remember, Luke is writing so that Theophilus and his readers have certainty concerning the things they've been taught. And the Jews around this time are going around saying, Paul is false.

Don't listen to Paul. Paul's abandoned Moses. Paul's abandoned the faith. So I think one of the big points is to show that the ministry of Paul is the ministry of Jesus.

Now, I don't know if you remember, there's even been times in our day where people have tried to separate Paul and Jesus. You know, we want the authentic Jesus, but Paul's teachings are not the teachings of Jesus.

Yes, they are. The ministry of Paul is the ministry of Jesus. And what I think that does for us is it shows us what that ministry is, what that ministry looks like, and how the Spirit works that through each one of us in various ways.

[ 14 : 40 ] So what I want to do now is just explore in a few short points what the ministry of the Spirit is by looking at how Jesus ministers through Paul and particularly does so with a focus and priority of a man who thinks death is imminent.

Point number one, this ministry is a ministry of encouragement. After the uproar in Ephesus, when it ceased, you would think maybe the last thing we need is another meeting.

You know, this thing all kicked off because of a meeting of people. Perhaps the last thing we need is a meeting. You might also think for Paul the best thing he could do is just get out of Dodge.

Just go, Paul. You know, things are, trouble's still in here. But no, what Paul does before he leaves is he sends for the disciples so that he can encourage them and say farewell.

He wants to encourage people. He's an encourager. And then he proceeds to go round all the churches. This is his third missionary trip. Round all the churches, giving them, Luke writes, much encouragement.

[ 15 : 50 ] Much encouragement until he stops in, Luke writes, Greece, that's in Corinth. He stops in Corinth for three months which is probably, it's probably winter and that's why he stops.

Now, Paul, Paul was generous with encouragement and in a sense it was his parting gift. That was Paul's parting gift to the church.

You might think a man of his caliber. What would he give? What would his parting gift be? What would your parting gift be if you were leaving?

You think about things like inheritance and things, you know, but people need encouragement. The world needs encouragement and I don't just mean well-wishing and complimenting but people need truth.

People need glorious, encouraging, life-giving truth. Where are you going to find that? You do something this morning that's more significant that you realize.

[ 16 : 52 ] You drag your body out of your bed and out to church on a Sunday morning. I spent 20 years of my life having a nice lie-in on Sunday mornings and I've spent, you know, the next, the number shall remain unknown, amount of time every Sunday dragging myself to church.

where else are you going to find truth being spoken in the world? Where else are you going to be encouraged and built up in truly, truly edifying ways?

Where are you going to get life-giving words? Are you going to get it out there somewhere? I mean, maybe people need encouraging. you remember the proverb that says, life and death are in the power of the tongue.

Life and death and the words that we can say to someone. Now, I don't know about you, but I remember before I was a Christian speaking death to people. You know, you can really tear someone down with your words.

Paul's going about building people up. He's all about building people up. Later on, he writes to Corinth and he says, listen folks, if it's not building someone up, then just be quiet. He says, I'd rather spend five words that build you up than ten thousand words that you don't understand.

[ 18 : 16 ] Building people up with your words. Any one of us can do that. You know, the British are known for being quite grumpy, quite dour.

How much do people need their encouragement? Husband, wife, brother, sister, mother, father, son, daughter, friend, enemy.

I think about the times when I got on the bus first thing in the morning and there's a really, really grumpy bus driver. But I think to myself, I think, what was the culmination of events that led to this?

because someone's made them grumpy. Something's made them grumpy. Do you know you can change someone's day by a gentle and encouraging word? Change their day.

You just don't know what they're on the brink of. Somebody could be on the brink of suicide. Somebody could be depressed. Somebody could be thinking about addiction or, you know, taking drugs or whatever, all manner of things.

[ 19 : 24 ] Somebody could be on the edge of doing something violent to someone else. A word of encouragement can change all of that. A word of truth. A word in season. People need encouragement.

You could probably say that discouragement is the tool of the darkness. It's a tool of darkness. People use that as a tool of darkness. But encouragement is a product of the light.

Encouragement is a product of the light. And the people, the children of the light, people who walk in the light, encourage one another. So you look at Paul's letters and how he tells us to talk to one another and you'll find that it's all about build one another up, encourage one another.

Even in your discipline, you're to encourage one another. So folks, please, don't miss an opportunity to encourage one another.

And like Paul, do as much as you can. You never know when your last farewell will be. Do as much as you can.

[ 20 : 33 ] The world needs encouraging. And believers, believers are going against the flow of this dark world, certainly need encouraging. Encourage one another to keep going.

Encourage one another with the truth when you've been blasted all week with darkness. Secondly, the ministry is a ministry of modelling and entrusting. Look at the list of people that Paul's with.

You've got Sopater, who's from Berea. You've got Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica. You've got Gaius of Derbe.

You've got Timothy of Lystra. You've got Tychicus and Trophimus of Asia. And you've got Luke, who's not mentioned. Luke's probably from Troas. And you'll remember in this list of people who are going with Paul, you've got Aristarchus and Gaius.

They were the two guys that were beat up by the mob in Ephesus. They were the guys that get brought in and get hammered by this mob. And they're still going.

[ 21 : 36 ] I mean, they could have said, no, Paul, we've had enough. Listen, we're just going to leave it. It's too much trouble. We're getting torn to pieces here. No, you've got Aristarchus and Gaius saying we're with you.

We're with you. Continuing in this ministry of modeling and entrusting. And all of these people, Paul is taking these people with him.

Paul could have went round and says, yeah, right, I'm doing my own thing here. In fact, this is something that only I can do. But Paul's taking people. He's shown them how to do it. Paul knows that he's not going to be around forever.

He's shown people how to do it. All of these people, Sopater, Aristarchus, Secundus, Gaius, Timothy, Tychicus, Trophimus, Luke, all of them have been mentored, trained, and entrusted by Paul.

One of the best ways to train someone, if you've ever been in a position to do this, maybe you've worked in a trade or something, one of the best ways to train someone is to take them with you, to show them.

[ 22 : 39 ] Monkey see, monkey do. Children, again, get this, intuitively, don't they? You just need to do something and a child will copy you. You think, why did you do that?

Oh, seen me do it. Why did you say that? Oh, you've seen me say it. One of the best ways to train someone is to model it and to take them with you.

And this is something I remember hearing this and thinking, well, what if you're not, what if you're not in a position where you can take someone with you, you know, we can often think the ministry or think about people who are set apart to do certain things.

And then I heard about this, this dear old woman who used to just visit friends, you know, who used to visit people and encourage them, share a little prayer and a little bit of the word with her friends.

But whenever she went, she would always take someone with her, show them how to do it, take someone with you. That's how you learn. You know, so anything that you do, you can take someone with you, you can show someone because this is about entrusting, entrusting this to the next generation.

[ 23 : 53 ] See, Paul is taking these men with him and he's shown them his way of life. Remember in Hebrews it says, remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God.

Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. Paul likewise says the same thing to Timothy. Doesn't he? He says to Timothy, you have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life.

And not only that, Timothy learned from his mum and his grandmum. At any level, if we want others to do what we do, we must show them and we must entrust them.

Paul had these men join him. Now they were delegates from all the churches and he brought delegates from all the churches to bring the collection, bring the offering to Jerusalem.

They're all going round and they're collecting. This is what Paul talks about in Corinthians, the collection. Sometimes we think he's just talking about something that happens every week in church generally for all time.

[ 24 : 59 ] He's talking about a big offering that they're taking to Jerusalem. And this is one of the things that Paul's doing. He wants the Jerusalem church and the Jews to see that the Gentiles are with them.

They're part of the same family. And so he's going round the churches and he's getting delegates from those churches to take this with him to Jerusalem.

He's not going to be accused of messing with the money and the collection. No. He's above reproach. But he's not only taking them for the offering. He's taking them so that he can model his way of life to them.

He's modeling the ministry of Jesus and he's entrusting them. He's entrusting them with this ministry to lead those churches and to pass it on. And so in 2 Timothy, you'll know if you know your Bible, 2 Timothy is, you know, that's perhaps Paul's last words.

And in 2 Timothy, he says this, chapter 2, verse 2, he says to Timothy, what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

[ 26 : 10 ] He's just covered the next three generations there. It's a ministry of modeling and entrusting. Thirdly, it's a ministry of words. This might seem obvious, but again, it cannot be overstated.

Because while there can be encouragement and example through action, consistently throughout Acts, Luke shows that the Spirit empowers people to speak. Luke shows that the Spirit makes people, compels people, empowers people to speak.

Now, for a little second, imagine this. Play along with me. Imagine Jesus did everything that he did in his life, but he didn't say a thing. Would anyone understand any of it?

If Jesus did all the things that he did, he still did all the things that he did, but he didn't say a word about it, would anyone know? Remember hearing a story about this guy who worked in an office and he was a Christian and he thought, I want to show the gospel through my actions.

And you think about that quote that's wrongly attributed to Francis of Assisi. Preach the gospel always if necessary use words. Now, Francis of Assisi didn't say that.

[ 27 : 30 ] The gospel is words. But anyway, this guy thought that. He thought, I'm going to be a Christian and I'm going to be a witness in my workplace by the things that I do. I want to show the gospel through my actions.

So he would live differently from the others. Time went on, time went on. Eventually it came out that he was a Christian and one of his colleagues says, oh, I just thought you were a vegetarian.

It doesn't work. Imagine Jesus did all that he did but there were no words. Nobody would know anything about it. You see, there's a popular little formula.

You've probably heard it if you haven't. It's helpful. Action plus interpretation equals revelation. Or another way of saying it, action plus explanation equals revelation.

revelation. Now you see this in the Bible. Action plus explanation equals revelation. Revelation isn't one of those things without the other.

[ 28 : 30 ] You see, God revealed himself not just in creation but in explanation. He gave us the word. The acts of God in creation are explained through his word.

Have you ever noticed how Psalm 19, the heavens declare the glory of God? Have you ever noticed how that Psalm moves from the witness of creation to the witness of the law?

Action, explanation, revelation. You see, even in creation, God acts through his word and then the word became flesh and gave us a clearer revelation.

And even then, the divine Son of God becoming human and dwelling among us needs explaining. That needs explaining. That great act of God needs explaining.

Everything that Jesus did needs explaining for us to have the revelation of it. You see, Jesus, the person, his person explains the Old Testament and the New Testament explains his person.

[ 29 : 31 ] someone once said, you can't understand the Old Testament without Jesus and you can't understand Jesus without the Old Testament.

Action plus explanation equals revelation. And so we see that the ministry of the Spirit is a ministry of words. Acts, words.

The book of Acts is filled with acts and words. Acts and speeches. Acts and speeches. Action. Explanation. Revelation.

The truth comes packaged in words. The gospel's a message of words. And like the example of goodbyes, words are more significant than we often realize. How do you know a person?

How do you know a person except through words? So Paul gathers with the church in Troas. He gathers on the first day of the week. I don't know if you know, but this is the first official mention of the day that the church met.

[ 30 : 36 ] On the first day of the week when we were gathered to break bread, Paul talked with them. Now this is, this is not the Sabbath.

The Sabbath was Saturday. The Jewish Sabbath is Saturday. But they gathered on the first day of the week. The Sabbath was the last day of the week. They gathered on Sunday.

Sunday's the equivalent to our Monday. In fact, that letter from Pliny to Trajan that we read a few weeks ago when he says that they gathered on a certain fixed day, that was Sunday.

And when he says they gathered before dawn, now we don't do that. That would be silly. Why? People have posited why he says they gathered before dawn is because it was a work day.

People were gathering before their work, going to work, and then regathering after work for the meal at the end of the night. So, this is the first official mention of that church happens on the Sunday.

[ 31 : 41 ] Why does it happen on Sunday and not the Sabbath? Because it's the Lord's Day, isn't it? It's the day that Jesus rose from the dead. It was on the first day of the week. And Paul spends a lot of time giving words as his part and gift.

He prolonged his speech until midnight. Now, it's not, I know people have a laugh at that about preachers. When are they going to end?

It's their final point, really, their final point. But this is no ordinary meeting. Paul's saying goodbye. This is a hard, a hard thing.

You know, we give Paul a hard time. It's like, it's like we look at this passage and we think, this is a big sacrifice for the heroes. Imagine having to stay at midnight hearing this long sermon. What a sacrifice having to listen to this for ages.

The opposite is true. Paul is pouring himself out. Paul's supposed to be traveling the next day. He should be resting. He should be preparing.

[ 32 : 48 ] He's just wanting to spend time with these people. Think about Paul's care. You know, he's amping up the encouragement. He's giving himself over to these people.

It was probably them goading him on. Please tell us more. Stay. Don't go. Now, this is simply the case, isn't it? If you knew that you were saying goodbye to someone, you would spend as much time as you could.

As much time as you could. I was talking to a dear sister in the Lord who said that she was with a family member. I think it was 13 hours or something.

Just at the end of her life, you know. Give your time and your words because that matters. Those things are really the things that are important. And so, it's a ministry of words.

And there are times when we give more words than we usually would. Folks, there are times when it's important to be silent, but there are times when we really should speak up.

[ 33 : 57 ] And the words that we give should be words of truth, words of encouragement, words that build up, words of life. And so, that takes us to our next point.

This is a ministry of life. It's a ministry of life. Now, we see this passage that there's a young guy and what happens to this young guy, Eutychus.



This is a real picture of the outcome of Paul's ministry. This is a picture and a foretaste of the outcome of Jesus' ministry. All of Paul's hard work, all the sacrifices, all the hardships and rejections and heartaches.

It was all so that others could receive grace and life in Jesus. In 2 Corinthians, he spends time defending his ministry because others begin to circulate around these churches that he's pouring himself out for.

And where Paul brought encouragement, they brought discouragement. Where Paul brings the spirit, they bring the law. And where Paul brings life, they bring death. 2 Corinthians 3, a ministry of death versus a ministry of the spirit that brings life.

[ 35 : 11 ] This is a ministry of life. And this poor lad, Eutychus, he's just a youth, he's just a young guy, and he's happily perched up at the windowsill, and yet there are many lamps.

It's a late night, and the prolonged speech makes him sleepy. I remember once driving in the motorway and seeing the big digital signs that are above it.

I remember seeing it say, tiredness can kill. And I remember turning to my dad and saying, I'm afraid to go to sleep tonight. Tiredness can kill.

We see that with Eutychus. Don't fall asleep on the windowsill of an open window on the third story. Tiredness can kill. And the ironic thing, if you don't already know, is Eutychus, the name, means lucky.

He wasn't very lucky. But with Paul around, things change. As silly as this account seems, it seems silly to us. It's really tragic, very tragic.

[ 36 : 20 ] Death is very sobering. And the death of a young boy is really tragic indeed. Death is not a laughing matter. But this is the very reason.

This is the very reason for Paul's self-sacrificing ministry of life to spread the gospel. Because death is tragic and death is an enemy of God.

You see, Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 15 that death is the last enemy. We must see the tragedy of this as something that's an enemy to God.

You see, the world would look at God and blame Him and ask why at these such tragedies. Children dying is not a good thing and it's not a thing that God takes lightly.

But it's something we need to remember. Death is an enemy to God. Whenever somebody asks why, death is an enemy to God. It's the first thing we must say.

[ 37 : 22 ] This isn't God's plan. Death is an enemy to God. But, we see in Paul's response, Paul's response with Eutychus is a foretaste of what this whole thing is all about.

Because in 1 Corinthians 15, death is not only an enemy to God, death is a defeated enemy in Christ. So, Jesus, alive and well, ministers through Paul to give life.

We see that in Christ, with Eutychus, death is defeated. This is a ministry of life. And this is a foretaste of what all ministry and all life in Jesus is.

Jesus is all about giving life. And he is the one who defeated death. This is a ministry of life.

These words are words of life. Finally, last point, a promise. This is a ministry that goes. Throughout this short account, we see many places Paul and many others traveled.

[ 38 : 30 ] Many places I can't even pronounce clearly. And they don't go around these places for sightseeing or for their own gain or for their own fame. But they go around often self-sacrificing.

They go around with persecution along the way. Why would you want to go? Why would you want to do this kind of thing? Well, first of all, because if it weren't for someone going for you, you would never know.

If it wasn't for someone going before you, you would never know life in Christ. You would never have the hope of death defeated.

You would never know the hope and good news of encouragement about Easter. You would never know the revelation of God. But also, like Isaiah and like Paul, when your own guilt is taken away, you see that picture in Isaiah chapter 6.

Before God, before the Lord says, who will I send? Who shall go? Isaiah's guilt is taken away. His guilt is taken away. Forgiveness.

[ 39 : 41 ] He has forgiveness in life. And so when the question comes, who will go? He says, I will go. I will go. I will bring this to other people. When you come to know the one true God, you're compelled to share that with others.

When you see the impact and joy of others coming alive in Christ, it spurs you on. When you have brothers and sisters across the globe who will stand with you, it spurs you on.

But most importantly, most importantly, the grace that brought us forgiveness in the first place is the same grace that transforms us and is the same grace through the Holy Spirit that empowers us to go anywhere and offer life in Christ to the world.

This is a ministry that goes and it's not a ministry that goes where people go on their own power or their own strength or for their own reasons. It's a ministry where the Spirit empowers us to go, empowers us to speak, empowers us to encourage and entrust, and empowers us to share life with a world of darkness.

And so this is the ministry of Jesus that we see in the ministry of Paul and that this Spirit empowers us to do the very same ministry today.

[ 41 : 02 ] Let me pray. God, our Heavenly Father, we thank you so much for your Son, Jesus, who came to earth for us.

we thank you for the encouragement that we have in Christ. We thank you for the life that we have in Christ. We thank you that you have entrusted us jars of clay that we are with this treasure of life within us in Christ.

And we have this treasure in jars of clay that it may be poured out for others to receive also. And so we thank you for the faithful men and women throughout the generations who have self-sacrificed that others may know life in Christ.

Christ, we thank you that your sacrifice is the greatest example to us and that because of your sacrifice we can know you and we can have life in your name and we can have your spirit that empowers us to share that with others.

Lord, I thank you for the encouragement that this went from 120 people to billions of people, even to us here in Bells Hill that we might have eternal life.

[ 42 : 35 ] We might have our guilt cleared and be forgiven and know life and hope in Christ. And so God, would you encourage us, would you strengthen us, would you build us up, would you empower us that we might share this life with other people.

For Jesus' name and his sake. Amen. Amen. Amen.