

Evangelise!

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[0 : 00] We're going to go to the Word of God, to Romans chapter 1, talking on the theme of evangelism and the words of Paul. Romans 1.15 it says, So as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith, as it is written, the just shall live by faith. I tell you today of the greatest power known to man.

We know about electric power, solar power, wave power, wind power, horsepower, nuclear power, military power. But I speak today of the greatest power. It is the gospel. The gospel.

The gospel has the most powerful ability, God's power, salvation power. The gospel is the power of God that saves the soul. And this wonderful, powerful message is ours to relay.

[1 : 20] Our Lord wants you and me to be the communicators of the gospel, messengers of it. The Bible shows us how. Tales of God's people. Taking God's message to our world.

And Paul believed in the gospel, in gospel preaching. To preach the gospel, preach the gospel means to bring or announce the good news.

It's the good news. Literally, you could transliterate it, preach the gospel as evangelize. That's what it is. To bring glad tidings. To give the gospel news to others.

If the church won't evangelize, it will fossilize. If we, the church, don't give the gospel to our world, then the church will die. Three things here Paul tells about how we are to evangelize.

Firstly, as the Boy Scout motto goes, be prepared. Be prepared. Gospel preparation, if you like.

Romans 1.15, Paul says this, So much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.

[2 : 31] Are you ready? Paul says he was ready. Paul says he was prepared. This word ready, it means he was willing and eager. Paul was here talking about going into Rome. Rome itself, that hostile pagan place.

He was ready, no matter what. How about us? We must be prepared too. To be prepared to evangelize, firstly, of course, we need to be saved.

We know the gospel, what it is. And we believe it for ourselves. So firstly, make sure of that. Be saved.

And then as saved people, let us make God's message known. The message of salvation. Make it known to others. So what is the gospel is a good question to make that clear.

And Paul defines it exactly for us in 1 Corinthians 15. He tells us what the good news is.

[3 : 38] And surely it is good news. The evangel, the gospel. It's good news. For us who believe, Paul tells in 1 Corinthians 15 from verse 1.

He says, Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also you have received, and wherein you stand, by the which also you are saved, if you keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless you have believed in vain.

For I delivered unto you, first of all, that which I also received. How that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures.

And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures. Paul said he preached Christ crucified. This was no pleasant subject to tell of a man nailed.

More than that, Christ died for our sins. For our sins. It was because of our sin. For us.

[4 : 44] That's a very telling truth, isn't it? When we think that includes me, my sin. It was because of our sin. For us. Some people don't like to admit that they're a sinner.

Really, that's the starting point. To know that you're lost, so you can get saved. Some people don't like to admit that simple truth.

I have sinned. To admit they need a saviour. Are we ready? Ready to share the gospel. To share what God has done for our soul.

Paul tells of the battle boots worn by the soldier of the Lord in Ephesians 6. Amongst all the other gospel armour pieces, he tells about some shoes.

He says, put on these, these gospel shoes. He says, have your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. There's that word again. Preparation.

[5 : 44] The soldier's battle boots gave him a sure footing. These battle boots, as pictured here, they were studded with nails or spikes like cleats, as you would wear on a soccer field, to help the soldier keep their footing, to keep the balance in the battle, in the combat.

Strange in a way that the armour of God in this setting of war should speak of peace. And truly the gospel, when received, brings great peace, doesn't it?

The greatest peace possible. We're called to be prepared. To be ready. To have our feet shod with that preparation.

To be prepared. We're called to readiness. To preparation. As Peter likewise urges in 1 Peter 3. He tells us, but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.

Peter says, get your heart right. Your attitude right. You that have that hope, that trust in Christ, be ready to share that. Be ready. Ever ready.

[7 : 00] Always ready. Are you ready? Ready to trust and obey God's word without reservation. Some say that the church should be worldly to reach the world.

They say that's how you evangelize. That churches must give some non-threatening messages. Oh, we won't ever talk about hell. About sin.

Not boldly proclaiming the gospel, God's truth. Some say, let's entertain people. Let's tone it all down. Tone down the truth. But we believe the Bible message.

God's good news. The gospel good news. The Bible that we have. It's inspired. God has given it to us. It's accurate. In fact, it's inerrant.

Without error. It's infallible. True. It's trustworthy. The very word of God. It's authoritative. We must follow it. That's the Bible we believe in.

[8 : 08] Isaiah 40 verse 8 tells us of this eternal word. It says, the grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the word of our God shall stand forever. The gospel is forever true.

It's got God's stamp of authority on it. It's authorised. The authorised version. It's God's authority. The Bible. It's the word of God. The faith comes by hearing the word of God.

It's God's life changing truth forever true. And as we are prepared, as we know what the real gospel is, we can discern the real from the false.

It's important to note that because friends, we're warned in the word of God of false gospels, false gospels. It tells in Galatians 1 verse 8, Paul tells how, though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

So we must be cautious and warned of the truth that there is a real gospel and there is a false gospel. Part of being a communicator of God's truth means standing up for it in a world of lies.

[9 : 17] Are you ready to preach the gospel, to evangelise? Some would think, well, it's just the evangelists who get to evangelise. But no, it's the whole church. We're all called to this.

It's not for some select ones. It's for all believers. There's a phrase I've heard put, every believer evangelism. There's the sense where every believer is called to evangelise.

Every believer. This is, so don't zone out and think, well, he's talking about preachers or he's talking about evangelists that do this. It's for every believer. This is for you. Are you ready to preach the gospel?

There was a survey by Barna that found that the average churchgoer spends more time watching television in one day than he spends in all spiritual pursuits combined for an entire week.

Now, it's probably more social media now than so much television, but there's that preponderance of that consuming of time compared to what little time we really give to the things of God.

[10 : 20] We should be encouraged to take the message of the word of God seriously. And as a church, we want to encourage people to leave the fort, as it were, the fortress, the church building, and get out beyond the walls where the people are.

Someone has said one problem with churches is that they have walls. It can be a problem, can't it? We don't want to be like a cosy little holy club that doesn't care of those who are lost.

We must take the gospel outside the walls and to bring the old message to a new generation. And God's method is still the same method. It's still the same truth that we must preach the gospel. We must evangelize. We must tell the good news, in other words. The gospel, it's that unchanging eternal message from God to man. The message hasn't changed. We want to communicate that to our world.

So we all have that same mission, that same call. We want to communicate to our world. So we're talking about preparation. Let me give you some, if you like, practical pointers, some practical tips, ways to prepare.

[11 : 33] How do I prepare myself to evangelize? What can I do to reach out, to share, to give the gospel? Some practical ways is pray. Pray.

Be prayerful as you prepare your heart. Be prayerfully prepared. Get the right attitude. The right attitude. Now some go out as if they're wanting to Bible bash someone, as it were, to kind of prove themselves, to get in some argument.

But rather have a winsome attitude. I like the word winsome. Winsome. In other words, the word winsome, it means be cheery, pleasant, personable, gracious, engaging.

Because at the end of the day we want to win some, don't we? We want to win some. And so evangelism is not about winning an argument, but winning souls.

We can get off on side tracks and side issues and miss the point. And that's what we can often do is we might face false cults, for example, and get off on some tangent, some side issue.

[12 : 41] But we've got to bring it back to the gospel. Bring it back to that truth. Are you lost or are you saved? Another way to prepare is to know some key Bible verses.

Have some gospel tracks handy. It's good to have some of these in your back pocket, in your shirt pocket, in your car, glove box. When you go out and about, I know some people make a habit of passing them on when they meet people, when they go shopping or different things, different ways you can reach out.

We've got hundreds of hundreds of these. You can take a big pile with you today. We'd love you to do that. There's some on that back table in the foyer there. And we've got the blue tract as well, which is probably more of a church promotional tract, which is probably more for local distribution. But you can send these out all over the state, all over the city of Adelaide. Get these out. These are a way of presenting the gospel. Another way to be prepared is have a Bible.

You see if you can get yourself a New Testament that you can maybe keep handy, as I say, on your person or in your glove box. Have it there so it's at hand, so you can grab it and use it.

[13 : 51] Think about your presentation when you're preaching the gospel, when you're evangelising. Present your best for the Lord. You know, that can mean practical things like keeping your breath smelling sweet and all those practical ways of how you present.

Because you don't want to be in the way of the gospel message getting across. You don't want your personality getting in the way of the message. You want to present it. You want to be prepared. Here's some Bible verses you might want to be mindful of. Maybe write them down and have them in a piece of paper that you can refer to.

Have them in your memory, ideally. They can come to mind when you're wanting to share the gospel. Some key Bible verses, just a handful to get you started.

For example, Romans 3.23. For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. It's helping establish that everyone's a sinner. We're all in the same boat.

[14 : 56] Romans 6.23. It leads on. For the wages of sin is death. But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. We've all sinned.

The wages are dead. I'd like to point out that Christ died for our sins. So Christ actually paid our wages if we will but receive that payment on our part.

And sin is costly. It costs death. Eternal death. The second death. Hell. But the gift of God in contrast is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

What a blessing. What a contrast. Would you rather the wages of sin, death or the gift of God? Eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. It's through Him and Him alone.

Another Bible verse is where Paul and Silas were in jail and the earthquake brought their release by God's power.

[15 : 52] And the jailer came and he said, sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said to him this. They said, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved in thy house.

He said, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. That is the essential, ultimate and only way to be saved. To believe, have faith on the Lord Jesus Christ.

And thou shalt be saved. S-A-V-E-D. Assuredly saved. You can know salvation as you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. And another great one to come to mind as you witness is John 1 verse 12. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God. Children of God. Even to them that believe on His name.

Those who received Him, He gave. Again, that gift given as we receive, as we believe. We become the very sons and daughters of the living God.

[16:56] As we believe on the name of Jesus. And it's good to also use a scripture such as this to show that it's by faith that we are saved.

Not by working of our own. Many would think it's faith plus what I do. But no, it's not. It's only faith that saves.

Faith saves. We should still work, but the works are not part of the saving. We see Ephesians 2 verses 8 through 9. It says, for by grace, God's grace, are you saved through faith.

It's God's grace that He would grant it. It's our faith that receives it. It's not of yourselves. It is the gift of God. God gives us salvation. And it's not of works, lest any man should boast.

Some would think it's about working, deserving, or merit, or righteousness of our own. But it's not of that. It's entirely of His grace received by faith.

[17:54] And then we see another scripture that tells, again, of that contrast of God's judgment and God's saving. John 3, 36. John 3, the whole chapter, really talking about being born again.

And he says, He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life. He has it. Present tense possession. Everlasting life. Has it now. He that believeth. And he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.

Just pointing out the great peril for those outside of Christ. Friends, we're dealing with eternal souls, eternal destinies. And these are eternal things we speak of.

Not things to be trifled with. To be taken lightly. And it's a serious responsibility for you that are a believer here today that you are charged with this. To communicate this.

A telling scripture is this one, 2 Corinthians 5, 11. In part it says, Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord we persuade men. There is a certain terror.

[18:58] There is a certain fear factor here. A certain telling truth of judgment that looms. Of damnation. We must prepare to meet and warn eternal souls of their peril.

If they are outside of Christ. They are in great danger. And this is no thing to be taken lightly. Because the Bible also says that we've got no guarantees of seeing the next day even.

Let alone any future plans we might have. So, point one is be ready. Paul was ready. Ready to preach the gospel. Ready to evangelize.

Be ready to evangelize. To evangelize we must prepare. And secondly we must have passion. Gospel passion. Paul was not ashamed of the gospel. But rather he was the opposite.

He had a passion for the gospel. He did not hold back. And likewise we need this passion. Friends, there is a passion. This is a message we ought to have a passion for.

[20:03] It says, For the love of Christ constraineth us. There is a compelling love. His love. The Saviour's love. The love of the Saviour.

And a love for souls. It should constrain us. It should compel us. It should be a passion. More so, let us put our passion into action. The preacher Moody said to a man on one occasion, Why don't you try to do such and such?

And the man said, I've been aiming to do that for a long time. And Moody was rather blunt with him. He said this, Well brother, it's about time you quit aiming and start firing.

Some people aim to do something for God. Some people aim to witness to a loved one. They aim to spread the gospel, to evangelise. They aim to get right with God.

But they keep on aiming and they don't shoot. They don't press the trigger. They don't shoot. They don't fire. And we need to have a passion that moves us to action. A compassion for the lost.

[21:04] Jude writes about the compassion that we ought to have. He says, He says, Some have compassion, making a difference, and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

I like the analogy here of the rescue worker, if you like. We are the rescue team, if you like, really, aren't we? We're dragging people from a burning building, the sense of eternal hellfire.

Paul was consumed by this eager desire, this passion. He says, I'm not ashamed. He put feet under his faith. And look, naturally, we can all feel a bit of trepidation, a bit of lack of ease, like it's a bit discomfoting to challenge someone, to confront someone.

But Paul was not ashamed to speak up. Paul was not ashamed to stand. Friends, this is desperate work. This is the work of rescue. We are on the front line. We are, as it were, rescue workers. We're like the firemen going into that burning building. There's a desperation. This is desperate work. This is urgent work.

[22 : 23] And so let us put feet under our faith and have that compassion and that fear, that sense of urgency, that sense of the need to act.

Not put it off. Not put it off. A certain man made a great supper. And our Lord tells of the parable of this in Luke 14.

And he tells how this master, this Lord, said unto the servant, go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in. That my house may be filled.

He had the table spread. As it were, the cook was in the kitchen. You know, the onions were sizzling in the pan and everything was ready. But where were the people? And the master said, go out and compel them.

Compel them to come in. The sense of urgency. The meal is ready. The gospel feast is spread. The master sends us out with the invitation.

[23 : 29] He bids us, go. Paul's passion for the Savior and for souls led him to action. To lay his life on the line. Paul was not just making some claim of this.

He was sold out. He was not ashamed. Look at the life of Paul. He was put on the hit list in Damascus. He was stoned and left for dead in Lystra.

He was imprisoned in Philippi. He was chased out of Thessalonica. He was smuggled out of Berea. He was laughed at in Athens. He was opposed at Corinth.

He caused a riot in Ephesus and he was arrested in Jerusalem. They knew Paul all over the place. And what a trouble he was. But he never quit. Everything was against him, but he didn't stop.

He continued to stand boldly as a bold witness for Christ. Because he had passion. Gospel passion. And to evangelise like Paul. We need to have that same passion.

[24 : 30] And also know that it is the same power at work in us. Passion. Now friends, you might say, I want to prepare.

I want to witness. And I'm just not sure how to get started. Look, we have an organised evangelism program. We have an organised, scheduled program.

It's a good discipline to say, 10.30 Saturday. Put an hour in. Put time in. Tag along.

And I know all of us feel a bit sense of trepidation. I'm still a bit wary, knocking on the door. You're going to get a hostile response. Sometimes the dogs are worse than the people.

But sometimes it's the other way around. But, you know, don't be afraid. Don't be ashamed. Step out. You know, it's a great way to learn is to come and tag along.

[25 : 30] And be a part of that. Even if you just tag along and scarcely say anything. Just so you can watch and learn. It's how we learn, isn't it?

And so we see preparation. We see passion. Thirdly, we see power. Paul says, I'm not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. For it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth.

Paul believed in the power of the good news of Christ. Dying for sin and rising again. Friends, truly this is the greatest power known to man. The power of God.

The power of God. How much more, what greater power could there be than the power of God?

And it's unto salvation. This message, the gospel, the good news is the power of God.

This message has power. And what's more, the messenger has power too. Our Lord empowers we that believe that deliver it. It says, as he promised his church.

[26 : 34] He tells of the promise that as we tarry in the city of Jerusalem, we'll be endued with power from on high. Friends, we've got the message of power, the gospel of his salvation.

And he gives us the power to be his witnesses, to tell this gospel message. So the gospel itself has power. Present tense, continual power.

The power of God unto salvation. It's God's power, omnipotent power. There's no greater than that power. And the gospel offers power to transform a life.

There's a big difference between the gospel and false Christianity or false religion. Now religion is man reaching up for God.

Christianity is God reaching down to man. Religion is man-censored. Christianity is God-centered. Religion is human speculations.

[27 : 37] Christianity is divine revelation. Religion whitewashes man's condition. Tries to skirt around sin. But Christianity washes us white in our condition.

He takes our sin. Religion is an outer transformation, an outer reformation. Trying to reform yourself, turn over a new leaf. Christianity is an inner transformation.

It's God's working, changing us from the inside out. And so there's awesome power here today. If you've yet to trust him, then just simply that.

Trust him. Just that. To know his saving. To know that power, God's power unto salvation, is available for everyone that believe it.

And so we that have that, let us not be ashamed to stand. We need the word of God. It tells us how the word of God is implanted in our hearts in James 1. It tells us how this word of God, it governs and guides us.

[28 : 40] It's the sufficiency of scripture. It's complete for us. We don't need to add to it. There are some Christians today that would add some visions or dreams or revelations.

And there are some real cookie ones out there I've seen lately that they want to put these experiences as equal in authority to the Bible. But that's a great error.

The power of God unto salvation is the gospel. We don't need to add some new feelings or revelations or mystical experiences, particularly if these may conflict with Bible truth.

So the power that we need, the power that we must have, is the power of the gospel. It's not our experiences or our opinions. It's the Bible. That is the final authority, the standard by which we test all things.

And God calls on us to use our heart, our mind, along with our will to bring them in surrender to him.

[29 : 45] And to not rely on our feelings, but rely on the revelation of God's word. Our power comes from the gospel, God's word.

And God is our source of truth. Paul says this, I'm not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God, the power of God unto salvation. The wonderful good news is that this is salvation. It's God's work. It's the work of God. It's the power of God. And it's good news, surely. Think of it. Good news. Good news. Maybe for a student, it might be when they get their results in the envelope and they say, Whoa, that's good news.

I passed. Or for a soldier away from home, it would be the war is over. That's good news. For a young married couple, it would be, we're going to have a baby. And for an older person, it might be the doctor said it's not cancer.

Good news. Good news. But there's no greater good news than this good news. Salvation by faith. It's wonderful, glad, good news.

[30 : 53] God's answer to man's sin. That Christ welcomed sinners. That Christ paid it all. That you don't have to spend eternity in hell. You can know his saving grace. You can know heaven as your home.

And it's assured. It's reserved, awaiting you to claim it. At your crossing over. Friends, the gospel. The gospel. It spans across centuries and continents and cultures.

It's true. It's real. It's relevant in our modern world. It's for today's men and women. It's for you and me. It's for you and me. That this book, this gospel, this truth, is real for you.

It can be. You can know it. You can know it yourself. And as a church, we want to take this gospel message. We want to take it and actively seek to win the world for Christ.

Not with a fortress mentality. Shutting people out. Not isolated and inward focused. Not building barriers. But opening the walls, as it were.

[31 : 58] Letting down the drawbridge and draining the moat. To reach beyond these walls. That the destiny, the eternal destiny of ever living souls depends on our communication of it.

Evangelism. If you think about the word evangel, it's got the word angel in there. An angel means a messenger.

But God doesn't send angels. He sends human angels. He sends human messengers like you and me. Simple, average, everyday Aussies just like you and me.

We can be those angels, as it were, with the evangel. We can be those messengers to our world. He's not going to send an angel. He's going to send a human angel, as it were.

A human messenger. To reach people. To confront. To tell of sin. Of salvation. Of good news. How to get right with God.

[33 : 02] Turn from unbelief. Trust in God's work at the cross. Know his saving power. Manifest for you. The Lord Jesus brings what no religion can offer.

What makes Christianity unique? A saviour. Jesus Christ. A saviour. Other religions don't have that. They don't have a saviour. And he was not just some earthly messiah. Messiah. He was without sin. He was God manifest in the flesh.

And he died for us. And now he's alive, risen. Forevermore. And one day he will return. Ready or not. On the cross, Christ carried the penalty.

Our sin. The death penalty. And he's our substitute. He died for us. That's good news. There's no greater news. There's no more important news than you can know and tell.

[34 : 03] It was our sin that he carried. And it's in this gospel that the righteousness of God is revealed. Think of that. The power of God. Not only that, but the righteousness of God.

That such as we. Well, me. Miserable. Worthless. Undeserving. Should be given the righteousness of God. That you can know that today. His righteousness. It's righteousness that God himself provides. It's an amazing thought to get your head around, isn't it?

That the righteousness by which a believer is declared right before God.

It's not due to anything in us. It's not due to anything in me. That I have righteousness. It's because of everything he has done.

It's what he has done for us. And given us. It's the work of Christ on the cross.

[35 : 12] The righteousness is not our own. The only way God gives this righteous status is by faith. It's interesting. He came to call sinners, not the righteous.

So if you think you're righteous, you miss the boat. But if you know you're a sinner, then you can know this savior. You can know this savior. If you know, yes, I am a sinner.

I need God to save me. Then he gives righteousness to you that will receive it. It's his very work on the cross. If we're trusting or claiming our own righteousness, we're missing it.

Because man's righteousness and God's righteousness are two different things. They're not two phases of the same righteousness. There is no righteousness of man that is acceptable to God.

It's kind of mind boggling to think of it. But we can't add our own righteousness. It's got to be his. It's the righteousness of God.

[36 : 14] That is the only righteousness that is acceptable to God. Apart from the standards and merits of men. Romans 4, 5, it says, to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counseled for righteousness.

So faith appropriates Christ his righteousness. Now that's not to say we sit back and don't seek to be righteous.

But we know that our righteousness is imputed. It's granted. It's appropriated. It's received as a gift would be received. And that's the gospel.

It's God's message that brings conviction to the human heart. He deals with sin as the Holy Spirit's work is described in John 16, 8. God's Spirit uses the gospel.

He shows us our sin. When he is coming, he will reprove the world of sin. We're not discounting sin. Sin and all its sinfulness, the exceeding sinfulness of sin. God shows us our sin, our need of the gospel.

[37 : 23] It's nothing that we can do to get rid of our sin. He will reprove the world of sin. And then we see the benefit of the gospel. God's righteousness is extended.

The benefit of the gospel. God's righteousness given to us. And then we see the Holy Spirit also will reprove the world, not only of sin and of righteousness, and of judgment too.

The consequences of rejecting the gospel. We've sinned. We're sinners. All have sinned. Some will get the righteousness. Some will get the judgment. Some will get the righteousness. Some will get the judgment.

The righteousness is granted as a gift as we receive it. As you trust Christ and your part, his righteousness for you, granted to you, given to you. Or judgment for you that reject the gospel.

But the good news, the gospel is this, that Christ provides full payment for the penalty of sin.

Everything was paid at Calvary's cross.

[38 : 34] The power of sin. The presence of sin. The gospel deals with these things. The penalty, the power, and the presence of sin.

The just died for the unjust. And he can be our living saviour. Friends, this is powerful, isn't it? The power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth.

It's a gift given in grace, received in trust. Paul says, I want to evangelise. He had a passion. He says that I might by all means save some.

He had that urging in his heart to win as many as possible. To win the lost at any cost. The power of God is what makes this possible.

Friends, it's not we that can put a notch on our belt, as it were, how many we may have influenced with the gospel, to count the converts and to brag about the numbers, but rather to brag about the power of God that brings a soul to its knees, that brings faith to the human heart, that gives the gift of salvation to the undeserving.

[39 : 54] It's God's power. The power of God unto salvation. And he saves. We are just mere instruments in his hand. The only message that we have is his message.

The only message we can offer that will save, that will bring any eternal good is the gospel. And it's the message of joy and peace. And it comes from the God of hope, who it says will fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost.

There's joy and peace in believing this gospel, in receiving this gracious gift, the grace of God, God's gift, to know God's life, that fulfillment, the one who's designed you, made you in your human form, that the whole purpose is that you might know him, come into relationship with him, and know true fulfillment and freedom in that relationship with God.

And so, as God's people, let's see our mission clearly as this. It's going to take courage. And for our church, really, as someone has said, there's only two choices for a church.

It can be a museum for religious tradition and antiquities, a kind of place you might go and look at some stale old things.

[41 : 19] Or a church can be an emergency room, where the spiritually battered can receive healing that Jesus offers. It's the emergency room.

Even the birthing unit. There's a lot of screaming and pain. And births, new births.

That's what we want, isn't it? That we would be, as it were, the emergency room. That we can be, as it were, those rescue workers, pulling them out of the fire, these ones in danger.

And friends, there's a preparation called for, the preparation of the gospel. Paul says, I'm ready.

Preparation. He said, I'm not ashamed. He had a passion.

Passion that drove him. A passion that consumed him, that compelled him, constrained him. The love of Christ. The love for souls. Passion and a power.

[42 : 19] The power of the very gospel of itself. It is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believe it. The very gospel, the very gospel evangel, the good news, is the very power of God unto salvation to everyone that believe it.

Friends, these are wonderful truths. That we can know these things today. The very gracious gospel message.

And that we can be part of partaking it and communicating it. That God's power can work and change lives even all around us.

Let us pray. Our Lord God, we praise you. Lord, for the wonder that you should so love the world to give your only begotten Son.

That we can know. No longer condemnation. But everlasting life. Lord, we thank you. We pray each one here might personally know that.

[43 : 40] For sure. That they have said, yes, Lord. I do believe. You are my saviour. Take my sin. I trust you. I know your saving.

I know your righteousness even by virtue of your giving it to me. Lord, that I can know, assuredly know, I am saved.

Lord, we pray that each one can have that heart's trust today. Not by virtue of any claim or merit of our own. No working of our own can ever be enough.

Yet, Lord, everything has been done. Lord, the table is spread. The invitation is extended. Lord, we only need to receive and come to that banqueting table, as it were, to come and receive all the benefits and blessings of the gospel truth.

Help us, Lord, to invite others to come to that feast, as it were, that they can, too, share that wonderful blessing. Lord, we pray if there's any yet to trust you here or watching, Lord, for each one to come to know you, to know you.

[44 : 51] Whom to know is life eternal. Lord, that you can affect a change in our thinking, that we can come to ourselves, come to our senses, come to an eternal sense, and to know a gift received that we assuredly have by your promise.

Lord, help us to be communicators of this truth. Give us the grace, Lord. Help us to be prepared, to prepare in every fashion we can to be ready.

Lord, to be compassionate, compassionate with your love in us, through us, for souls. And, Lord, to have the power of your gospel, to not neglect it, to take heart, to heed it, to hide it in our heart.

Lord, to be able to share it more effectively. Lord, give us the courage that will not be ashamed, but will know that power and will know your power, your Holy Spirit power that empowers your church.

You clothe us with your power. You fill us with your power. And all for the purpose that we would tell others of this great gospel good news. We pray, Lord, be glorified in us.

[46 : 13] In Jesus' name. Amen.