

Acts 22:30-23:11

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[0 : 00] Take out your Bibles and turn to Acts chapter 22. So now that you know, I've been preaching longer than Nathan! I've been doing this a long time, and I'm really, really good at it.

No pressure to hit a home run this morning, right? So just adjust your expectations accordingly. We have no professionals here. We are only just trying to be faithful.

And just join me in a word of prayer. Father, we do come before you this morning to worship you through singing, through listening, and being obedient to your Word.

And I pray that you would give us eyes to see, ears to hear, hearts to obey, and minds to comprehend. And during this time, just work by your Holy Spirit through your Word.

And may it have its desired effect on us today. In Christ's name, amen. So in preparation for this, I don't know how long we've been going through Acts, but it's been a very long time, and it's been awesome.

[1 : 20] But as you, if you're teaching or preaching through Acts, what you're going to pick up on quickly is there are many repetitive themes and topics just to go back over and back over and back over.

And, you know, things like, themes like persecution, preaching the Holy Spirit, persecution, or be like Paul or be like Peter, persecution.

There's a lot of that just in Acts. So I commend a good book to you today. A book appeared in a book called Gospel Worship by Jeremiah Burroughs.

And in that, he basically talks about just how the church comes together to worship Christ. And a lot of it is directed towards listening to the Word of God and listening and being attentive to the Word of God.

And a lot of the warnings they issue are things like, don't shut your mind off and don't close your heart out if you hear something that you've already heard before. They issue very strong warnings against that.

[2 : 25] And some of the things that he mentions, what could God be doing if you're being drawn to the same themes and topics every single week? Well, a lot of the times it's to examine your heart to see if you actually do believe those things.

Or if you just merely have an academic knowledge of those things, but you're not being obedient and living out those things in your life. God has many reasons to draw you back to the same themes and topics.

And so if we're not careful, I really believe it can be like the Athenians that we studied earlier in Acts 17.21, where it just says that they spent their time doing nothing except telling or hearing something new.

Don't be like that. Ask God to soften your heart. And of course, I've prayed and I've worked this week to be able to think of some fresh things to say, but not all that fresh if you're around here often.

And we need to examine our lives and examine our hearts. The worst damage we can do is just become a bunch of intellects that don't really have a heartfelt desire for the things that we claim to believe.

[3 : 42] And that only enables us to be prideful and go around and to argue with other people when we're not. When really the effect should be humility towards God, gratitude, love, and then mission, following that, the right respect to God's Word.

So listen with fresh ears today and examine your lives. So I'm going to rewind a little bit because this is all one continuous story. But today, let's kind of jump back up in chapter 22 to verse 22.

And we'll start there. But just to kind of fill you in, Paul is in Jerusalem now. And he was warned that by God that if he went there, he would be severely persecuted.

And he went out of a desire for his kinsmen to know the gospel. So he's been in Jerusalem. And they found out he was there, some people who opposed him, and they basically attacked him and mobbed him in the temple.

And all of a sudden, like Rome's concerned, right? Many times this has happened before. Rome hadn't done anything. But they send soldiers to kind of break up the hysteria.

[5 : 04] And they pull Paul aside, the Roman tribune. And Paul asked, can I address the crowd? Will you allow me just to like talk to them and explain who I am and what I'm about?

And he's like, sure, give it a go. And he did. And then finally, you see, they did not respond well. They were angry.

They were furious. And so then the tribune kind of pulls him back again. And they're kind of back to the drawing board. And he goes, okay, well, who is this guy?

Because the mob just seems to think he's an outlaw. So a typical, you know, protocol was to flog someone until they told you what the real deal was.

Great idea, right? So that's kind of where I'll pick up. This is his next thing. This is something Nathan taught over, so I'm not going to get into this. But just for the sake of the narrative, we're going to read all the way through verse 22.

[6 : 11] Excuse me, not 22. Back up a little bit. I've been studying both of these together, so they just run together in my head. Sorry. So, you know, the real scripture doesn't have all the breaks and stuff. That's just how we organize it, which is okay.

But verse 22 to verse 11 in chapter 23. Up to this word, they listened to him. Then they raised their voices and said, Away with such a fellow from the earth, for he should not be allowed to live.

And as they were shouting and throwing off their cloaks and fleeing dust into the air, the tribune ordered him to be brought into the barracks, saying that he should be examined by flogging.

To find out why they were shouting against him like this. But when they had stretched him out for the whips, I can just imagine this. Paul's like, before you do that, you should know that, this is what he says, Paul said to the centurion, he was standing by him, Is it lawful for you to flog a man who is a Roman citizen and uncondemned?

Rhetorical question. When the centurion heard this, he messed his pants. So he went to the tribune and said to him, What are you about to do?

[7 : 26] For this man is a Roman citizen. So the tribune came and said to him, Tell me, are you a Roman citizen? And he said, Yes. The tribune answered, I bought this citizenship for a large sum.

But Paul said, But I am a citizen by birth. So those who were about to examine him withdrew from him immediately. No kidding.

And the tribune also was afraid, for he realized that Paul was a Roman citizen and that he had bound him. So he could get in big trouble for this, basically.

Serious trouble. So moving into verse 30, it says, On the next day, desiring to know the real reason while he was being accused by the Jews, he unbound him and commanded the chief priests and all the council to meet.

And he brought Paul down and set him before them. And looking intently at the council, Paul said, Brothers, I have lived my life before God and all good conscience up to this day.

[8 : 31] And the high priest, Annias, commanded those who stood by him to strike him on the mouth. Then Paul said to him, God is going to strike you, you whitewashed wall.

Are you sitting to judge me according to the law? And yet contrary to the law, you order me to be struck? Those who stood by said, Would you revile God's high priest?

And Paul said, I did not know, brothers, that he was the high priest. For it is written, You shall not speak evil of a ruler of your people. Now, when Paul perceived that one part were the Sadducees and the other the Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Brothers, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees.

It is with respect to the hope and the resurrection of the dead that I am on trial. And when he had said this, A dissension arose between the Pharisees and the Sadducees, And the assembly was divided.

For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, nor angel, nor spirit. But the Pharisees acknowledged them all. Then a great clamor arose, And some of those scribes of the Pharisees'

party stood up and contended sharply.

[9 : 53] We find nothing wrong in this man. What if a spirit or an angel spoke to him? And when the dissension became violent, The tribune, afraid that Paul would be torn to pieces by them, Commanded the soldiers to go down and take him away from among them by force, And to bring him into the barracks.

The following night, the Lord stood by him and said, Take courage, For as you have testified to the facts about me in Jerusalem, So you must testify also in Rome.

So where do we find ourselves today? So we're going to just sort of bust the narrative up into three little points, And then get into some application at the end of this. But simply put, You see in verses 22, 30, Through 23, 1 through 6, Point number one, Paul examined before the council.

Paul's examined before the council. So thus far, The Roman tribune, Whose name we actually know, Because in chapter 23, Verse 26, It names him as Claudius Laius.

So very Roman name. And I'm not going to nerd out on you about Roman history. Maybe a little bit next week, So prepare yourself. But this guy was definitely a lower ranking tribune.

[11 : 20] He wasn't really high up in the social status. There was no legion stationed in Judea at this time. The closest one was probably up in Syria. But this man was, In fact, Control of all the soldiers in Judea.

So powerful though he was, He wasn't extremely powerful. So he recognizes that he cannot figure out who Paul is. Like, First of all, The mob, He's not going to find out from the mob, Because they just want to kill him.

And then he thought, I'll just let Paul talk to them. And then that didn't work. And then he thought he'd get them flogged, And that didn't turn out so good. And now he's like, Okay, Maybe if I just get the really sophisticated, Civilized, Jewish religious leaders together, They can figure out what's going on here.

And that failed. So now he's just sort of, Again, Just back to the drawing board. And he's, That's where we kind of pick up. He's examined before the council.

So, Their immediate reaction is, It says, Paul looked intently at the council. He gazed at them with great confidence. Can you picture yourself being in front of something like this?

[12 : 32] Like, Just barely struggling to get your words out, And really nervous, Trying to hold firm, Praying the whole time you're standing there, Like, God help me, God help me. Oddly enough, Paul looks at them with confidence, And this is just what he says, Right?

He's like, Look, I've lived my life, Up to this day, In good conscience before the Lord. He's basically saying in the original language, I've been a great citizen. I've been a good citizen.

I don't desire to disturb the peace, Here in Jerusalem. I'm a law-abiding, Good, Everyday citizen.

And I can say that, With a clear conscience before God. So, I continue listening, For a second.

And then, The high priest, Ananias, He orders them, To be struck. Alright? So this isn't like a little, Like, Like, Sissy slap.

It's used of like a severe blow, Or beating. The same words used for how Jesus was beaten, Before the authorities. So, I mean like, Just smash, Like, Knocks him down, Almost.

[13 : 39] Kind of hit. So, Paul's like, Man, What did I say? So, He kind of gets back up. After that, And, Basically just gives him this response, You know, God is going to strike you dead, You, Whitewashed wall.

So, We may be like, Ooh, In our time, But, He could not have said something more offensive, To the high priest. Could not have. And, This was a very, Very, Wicked high priest.

Josephus, Writes about him, Outside of the Bible, And says he was one of the most corrupted, Licentious, High priest, Ever, In Israel's history. He was very, Very pro-Roman, And carried out Roman policies, Without hesitation.

And then, Later on, In the Jewish revolt, 47, A.D. or so, To 59, He was killed by, The Jews, They hated him.

So, They attacked him, And killed him, And then, The Roman onslaught, Came after that, Where the temple was destroyed, And, And all of that, But he, He whacked him, Pretty hard, And knocked him down, And Paul basically, Stands back up, And says, You whitewashed, Wall.

[14 : 53] So, For a self-righteous, Arrogant, Religious leader, This could not be a more, Serious, You know, Cut down, Talking trash, Kind of language. He used this metaphor, Of a whitewashed, Wall, For hypocrisy, The same way, Jesus used it, Of the Pharisees, That you look great, And you

look clean, And bright, On the outside, But like, Inwardly, You are dead.

That's what Paul is saying, You're a hypocrite, You are inwardly dead, And corrupt. So, One who claims to know God, And honor him, Is a true love for God, And seeks God's glory, That's not how it is, On the inside of us, At all.

And so, He calls them out on that, God is going to strike you dead, Which is pretty prophetic, Because he was killed, Right? A few years later, After all of this. And, Then he kind of, Goes for the slam dunk, On that rhetorical question, Are you sitting, To judge me according to the law, And yet contrary to the law, You order me to be struck?

So basically, Like, How dare you, Seek to judge me according to the law, That you yourself, Just broke. And, You can see the, The entourage around him, Going, How dare you, Speak against God's high priest, This way.

And Paul, It's kind of funny, But, He's like, Whoops, Like, I had no idea, This was the high priest. So, There's probably, Four explanations, I think two of them, Are more, Reasonable, But, Some, Some people say, That, This is due to, Paul's poor eyesight, Supposedly, He just didn't know, The high priest, Maybe, Um, Another explanation is, He had been gone from Jerusalem, So long, That he had no idea, This was the new high priest, And then, Thirdly, He could have just been like, So angry, So furious, He just like, Blacked out, And forgot, Who he was, For a second, And then, Fourthly, Which is probably my favorite, But, Probably not the case, Uh, He was being sarcastic, Like, Oh, You're the high priest, Really?

[17:08] I would have never have guessed that, By the way, You just broke the law, Whacked me in the face, So, That's kind of like, What I, I think would have been funny, Because Paul did have some sarcasm, Like, Believe it or not, Throughout Acts, So, But, But I love how, It's probably a combination, Of the second, And third explanations, But, I love how he kind of, Brought himself, Back onto the authority, Of the Bible, Of the scripture, Right after that, And he's like, Look guys, I know the verse, I got it, I got it, You know, Exodus 22, 28, Don't speak evil, Of your rulers, And they're like, Oh, Chapter and verse, So, He backs off, And he keeps his passions, In check, So, Then he goes on, And he sort of like, Discerns his audience, He's like, Well he probably can see again, Right after being whacked so hard, He's like, These are the Pharisees, And these are the Sadducees, I'm a Pharisee, I was brought up, I can relate, To this group, Very very well, And he basically said,

Look guys, I'm on trial here, Because of the resurrection, Basically is sort of, What he says, And, Perhaps unintentional, But maybe not, He kind of like, Opened up a serious can of worms, And just passed it to him, And, It took the attention off of him, Completely, I don't think he, I don't think he meant that though, But he just kind of went, Resurrection, And then, Boom, Between the two sides, So, The second point, Is the council's response to Paul, See that in verses 7 through 10, But, Just as, With our Lord's teachings, Paul causes great dissension, And this, This picture, This is a picture, This word, Dissension, Of two sides, Standing up against one another, So, Just picture, You know, Congress, Or the Senate, Or parliament, Standing up and just yelling, Back and forth, At each other, That's what goes on here,

Because the Pharisees, Unlike the Sadducees, Did believe, In spirits, Angels, And they did believe, In the future resurrection, Of the dead, Except they didn't, Accept Jesus' claim, To the resurrection, So, They probably really didn't believe it, But, Nonetheless, Consistent with their convictions, The Pharisees, Sit up, And they, Kind of started defending Paul, But I don't think they would have, If they had heard the rest, Of what Paul had to say, But they, They were already, At the throats of the Sadducees, And they got really, Really, Violent, A mob, Again, Of the religious leaders, So, Claudius, The centurion, He, He said, He was afraid, That Paul would be torn to pieces, Picture like animals, Just ripping something to shreds, That's like what, He thought was going to happen, So, I've got to get my, Fellow Roman citizen, Out of here, Quick, And it says that they, They had to take him out by force, So,

You know, Just picture that, They had to rip him away, And then like, Take him out, Like Paul's got some, You know, High level security, And takes him back, To the barracks, And once again, Like, Proverbs 29, 10, Bloodthirsty men, Hate, One who is blameless, And seek the life, Of the upright, So they, Smoothly, Get him out of there, They take him back, To the barracks, Kind of, Get him, You know, Calm down, Whatever, So, This goes into our third, Point, Which is, God's, Sovereign, Encouragement, To Paul, Verse 11, Where it says, Verse 11, The following night, The Lord, Stood by him, And said, Take courage, For you have testified, To the facts, About me in Jerusalem, So

you must testify also,

In Rome, So, No doubt, You guys, I'm going to talk about this a lot more, But look, Paul was a man, He was a man, A man, A sinful man, He was broken, He had all the issues, That you and I have, Don't make him to be a superhero, I, I, Really am convinced, You can see it throughout, Read his letters, Especially, Second Timothy, How down, Cast he is, So, He needs, Encouragement, And after this, He's like, Man, This Jerusalem thing, Is, Is killing me, My heart's broken, For my own people here, And then, He needs, The Lord, So this is, Definitely, Christ, Saying to him, Take courage, It's the same words, Same language used, That Jesus used to his disciples, In John 16, 33, Where he said, I have told you these things, That in me, You may have peace, In this world, [22 : 18] You will have trouble, But take heart, I have overcome the world, It's the same phrase, Take heart, Be of good cheer, Be confident in me, So he's like, You're going to go to Rome, And so Paul, Can honestly say, I'm going to, It doesn't feel like it, But I'm going to live, At least long enough, To make it to, The imperial city, On the Tiber river, I'm going to make it there, And that, That strengthened, Paul, So, That's just a walk through, Some explaining of our text, So what do we apply here, And I, I think, Here are three things, Three truths, In regard to mission, And evangelism, Sharing Christ, With the world around us, That we can learn from, Our text, Alright, These are phrases, So I'll read them twice, Number one, God delights,

In using the weak, Foolish, And ordinary, To accomplish, His saving purpose, In the world, God delights, In using the weak, Foolish, And ordinary, To accomplish, His saving purpose, In the world, Look guys, Many of you, Many of you, If you're really honest, With yourself, You don't truly believe, That you, Can impact the world, For Christ, In a significant way, Every day, You just kind of go about, Your normal, Drudge, You don't, Really believe, That if you yield, To the father, He can use you, For impact, In your, Community, In your own home, And in the world, We, And even in the back, Of your mind, You may say, Even though, You know, That if you had, A theology test, You would pass, This question, Because you know, The right answer, But your life, May reveal, Otherwise, That it's really, For, For the professional, Elites, It's for the pastors, The missionaries, The church staff, Etc., And your life, May be a picture, Of that, But I mean, If I could just yell it, No, It's not, Even throughout, Our study of Acts, We're often tempted, To look at Peter, And Paul, And they, Who were, Right?

Examples of faithfulness, And obedience to God, And fall into the temptation, Of saying like, Well that was Paul, That was the apostle Paul, Or that was, That was Peter, And, The message, I mean, You've already checked out, I get it, I get it, Be like Paul, Or, He's our example, I get it, He's the perfect Christian, Be like Paul, Be like Peter, Don't do that, Stop, You guys need to understand, That Paul was a weak man, He was often proud, And often pathetic, Alright?

But nonetheless, God chose him, To be, His, Witness, To, The Gentiles, Right? And God, Everything good in Paul, Was empowered by, The risen Lord, Everything.

[25 : 40] Let me just read, Our run over, Just three, Three instances, Paul tries so hard, To communicate this, To us, He tries, In 1st Timothy, He's like, I am the foremost sinner, I am the chief, Top, Wicked sinner, And during the Reformation times, In the English Reformation, I remember, Even the story of, Thomas Blimey, Who, Who was under the teaching, That, Paul was perfect, It was, It was Jesus, The Virgin Mary, And then Paul, Right under that, Right?

And, He got a copy of, 1st Timothy, In the original language, And he was reading it, In secret, On the Cambridge campus, In the 1500's, And he read, Where Paul called himself, The chief of sinners, And it made him weep, Like, Really?

This man, Needs Jesus? And convicted him, Of his own sin, Paul later on, In 1st, Corinthians 15, 9 through 10, He said, He was the least, Of the apostles, Unworthy, To be called, An apostle, Because he persecuted, The church, But, By the grace of God, Only, He was what he was, Okay? So stop, Don't look at Paul, Don't look at Paul, And in Romans 7, He mentions a lot of things, In Romans 7, But he says, I know, I know, I'm convinced, That nothing good, Dwells in me, That is my flesh, And later on, Wretched man that I am, Who would deliver me, From this body of death, Thanks be to God, Through Jesus Christ our Lord, So stop, You know, Placing these, Bible characters, People that we know, From church history, And even in our own church, As these invincible, Elected the elect, Team that are going to go out, And play for us, And we're going to watch, This isn't, God's intention at all, He has always, Throughout the entire history, Of the scripture, And today, He delights in using the foolish, Weak and ordinary things, To accomplish his will, Alright,

So, Turn to 1 Corinthians, We're going to look at, Several things, In 1 Corinthians, Just to kind of, Go off this point, But he delights, In using broken people, To accomplish, His mission, Not that he just likes to, He delights to, Like he loves it, He loves taking, The weak and broken, To accomplish, His saving purpose, In the world, So, Jump down to verse, 26 of chapter 1, In 1 Corinthians, Chapter 1, Verse 26, Very familiar, But, But eat these words, And, And, Chew on them in your soul, This is Paul, He says, For consider your calling, Brothers, Not many of you, Were wise, According to worldly standards, Nor many were powerful, Not many were of noble birth, [29 : 01] But God chose, What is foolish in the world, The shame, The wise, God chose, What is weak in the world, The shame, The strong, God chose, What is low and despised in the world, Even the things that are not, To bring to nothing, The things that are, And here's why, Why?

So that, No human being, Might boast in the presence of God, And because of him, You are in Christ Jesus, Who became to us, Wisdom from God, Righteousness, And sanctification, And redemption, So that, As it is written, Let the one who boasts, Boast in the Lord, Just eat on those words, Like, Take them out of your soul, That's what we think, We need to get the wise people, The strong people, And then like the really, People who have really high social status, And they're going to make a huge impact, In the world, For Jesus, Just no, There's debate on this, I kind of personally believe this, And I can show you why later, But, I don't really think that Paul, Is all that great of like a public speaker, I don't, I'm not convinced, I think that he could sit down in a circle, And he could explain, And clarify, And debate you, But he wasn't like the most, Awesome, Eloquent guy, But God,

Again, Delighted to use him, But this is the story of scripture, God used a man who stuttered, And he was a coward, Moses, To lead God's people, Out of Israel, He said, Who has made man's mouth, Right?

Who has made the deaf, The mute, The seeing, Or the blind? I did, I can do this, Through you, He used a, Young shepherd boy, To become, The greatest king, In Israel's history, He used Amos, Who was another shepherd, From Toccoa, Not Toccoa, Georgia, To go and, Be the prophet, To the northern kingdom, Of Israel, He used a young, Peasant girl named Mary, To, Be the mother, Of the son of God, And he used, Humble, Poor fishermen, To carry his gospel, To the ends of the earth, Don't, Underestimate, What God can do, In your life, This is number two, Number two, Power to reach the lost, Is not ultimately, In our ability, To be relevant, Popular, Or professional, But in the gospel alone, Power to reach the lost,

Is not ultimately, In our ability, To be relevant, Popular, Or professional, But in the gospel alone, Alright, So, You need to understand, That you're, You're thinking, About, Man's fallen state, And you're thinking, About God, They're not separate categories, You need to understand, If your real understanding, Of those things, Will affect, How you, Share the gospel with people, They will affect, How you do evangelism, Alright, They're not in a separate category, So, You need to understand, That the lost state, Of sinful man, Is not, A moral, Or not, Not just a guy, Who needs just a moral teacher, To help him, Some therapy, Some, Some Dr. Phil action, Like that's not what he needs, Self help, He's not even a sick man, Okay, Like man's, Lost state is not even sick, Where he just needs a doctor, To give him some medicine,

[32 : 42] Man's lost state, Is a dead, Rotting corpse, Spiritually, Dead, Rotting corpse, Says in Ephesians, Right, We were dead, In our trespasses, In our sins, And, For that, You need a miracle worker, You need a miracle, Not just, Some stuff, On the outside, You need the son of God, To call him, To come alive, From the dead, So look, On in chapter 1, 1 Corinthians, Look at verse 18, Listen to what Paul says, The word of the cross, The gospel, Right, Is folly, To those who are perishing, But to us, Who are being saved, It is the power of God, Jump down to, Chapter 2, Look at verse 14, Listen to this, The natural person, The unbeliever, Right, The one without God, The natural person, Does not accept, The things of the spirit of God, For they are folly to him,

He is not able, To understand them, Because they are spiritually, Discerned, Is that not mind blowing, Only a miracle, Only God working, Through the gospel, Can bring man, From death to life, Only, Right, So, I am going to preface this, But not, Not go on at long, Because Nathan did a really good job, With this, A couple weeks ago, I think, But, There is, Don't hear me say, Don't try to relate, To the person, You are trying to love, And share Christ with, All right, Serve them in any way you can, Try to relate to them, Try to speak in a language, They can understand, Become all things to all men, Right, But at the same time, You just need to understand, That is not the power, To save someone, I have been as relevant, As relevant can be, To some people, I have tried to share Christ

with, And, They didn't believe, Told me to get lost, Right, I am going to, Give you an example, Many years ago, We, I was at a camp, With a bunch of other, Baseball players, And, They had this, College player come in, Who was a Christian, And he basically, Shared his testimony, And you would have thought, Like, Wow, This is a college guy, They are going to look up to him, They are going to think, Oh man, This guy, I am, He knows Jesus, So, I want to know Jesus, No, Not really one person, There, Really came to faith, In the grand scheme, In that time, As far as I know, Never, But, We have this idea, That we have to, We have to relate, We have to be, Just like them, Or they won't hear us, And that's not true, It's that professional mentality, Let's get a, Professional, You know, Football player, To come talk, To the FCA, And then everybody, Will believe, Because I want to be like, That guy, That's not it, Let's just use Paul, Like, Okay, Let's make a great example, Of Paul here, If you could pick, One guy, One guy, To go talk to, A bunch of hot, Zealous, Jewish people, Who would you pick? Paul, They shut him down, Time and time again, He was as Jewish, As Jewish could be, He was like, I'm a Pharisee, I was a, I was taught, By the best teacher, Of the time, I was taught by Gamaliel, He says, You know, In our text in Acts, He addressed him, In the Hebrew language, He spoke it, Perfectly, And what did they do, The first mention of the Gentiles, They wanted to cut his head off, It's not in the power, To be relevant, It's not in the power, To be popular, Or professional, And this one I could harp on forever, But, The church has got a bad disease, Of professionalism, Professionalism doesn't save anybody, You know, It doesn't change anything, We're not called to be professionals, We're called just to be followers of Christ, All right, So, If you, The church, In America, In a long way,

I mean, If you ever venture outside here, And go to some other places, There are definitely great, Awesome, Gospel centered churches out there, But you're also going to run into a ton of them, Even mainline, In the west, They're like, Look at us, They're trying to tell the world, Look at us, We're cool too, We are just like you, Jesus can help you, With your family, Your finances, Can help you earn good money, And make you live the comfortable American dream, Come hear our teaching, And some of them are well, Well intentioned, There's plenty of them that aren't, But there are some, Let's just focus on them, Even some reformed churches are like this, I've seen them, And they market, And they, They use all their entrepreneurial abilities, To get people, To believe the gospel, And it's failing, We think, Jesus shows up, And he's not attractive enough, So we need to dress him in the best clothes, Put him in the best, Smelling cologne, Or whatever,

[37 : 48] And, We need to get him to change his script, Because his script could be offensive, To people, And then we say, Check him out, He's cool, And then we wonder why, There's so many false converts, In our midst, What we need to do, To strip all that away, And just do all we can, To show them Jesus, He has the power to save, Alone, And this is not something, That's new, Now you all know, My, One of my, The men I look to, For an example, Not just, He was definitely not perfect, I can, Tell you his flaws, But overall, Had a life of yielded, Humble obedience to God, Was, Jim Elliot, And, And this is something he wrote, He was in Portland, And he was, Trying to help, Some of the churches, In the Portland area, Just going, Teaching, Sharing, And he's so depressed, By how lukewarm, A lot of the believers there are, And he's like, They got a bunch of Bible knowledge,

But they go, They leave here, And they go and live in the world, That's what I see, So he was just heartbroken over this, And he was like, The power to save people, Is only in the gospel, Only in the gospel, And this is kind of what he wrote, Total ignorance of the truth, Is the general status, Of church goers hereabouts, Oh, That God would shake up, Some of these married couples, Around the Portland area, From their prim, Unconcerned, For souls and saints, Dabbling with building lots, Houses, Jobs, Babies, Silverware, While souls starve, For what they know, God shall not hold us guiltless either, He shall suffer loss, 1 Corinthians 3 15 says, It makes me boil, When I think, Here it is, When I think, Of the power we profess, In the utter impotency, Of our action, Believers who know,

One tenth as much as we do, Are doing a hundred times more, For God, With his blessing, And our criticism, Oh, If I could write it, Preach it, And paint it, And say it, If only God's power, Would become known among us, Ichabod.

So, That's it, We're so preoccupied, With so much other junk, That we forget, The power of the gospel, Is what saved us, And can save the world. So again, Nothing wrong with being, Trying to relate to your audience, Alright, But our mistake, Is when we think, We must be, Or this won't work,

In our attempt to, Be relevant, We often lose the gospel, So just be careful, And tread those waters, Carefully, And remember, That Paul is as relevant, As he could be, But they rejected him, Right? So, The power of the gospel alone, Turn to Romans, Chapter one, We're going to look at one verse, Memorize this verse, Scripture memory, Romans 1, Verse 16, Paul says, For I am not ashamed, Of the gospel, For it is the power of God, For salvation, To everyone, Who believes, To the Jew first, And also to the Greek, All right, So the power to save people, To bring salvation, Does not reside, In just having simple, Relevant messages, Professional leadership, Cutting edge, Business growth strategies, Entrepreneurship, New marketing techniques, Extravagant buildings, Buildings and programs,

[41 : 46] Of every, For every single, Age group, And walk of life, Fog machines, Hip musicians, Stage lights, And cultural sensitivity, They're not going to help, All right?

Not going to help, The power to save dead sinners, Lies only and only, In the risen Son of God, Period. That's it. The end. So here's two questions for you, Do you recognize, That lost, Depraved men and women, Need an extraordinary, Incredible power, To save them from sin?

Second question, Do you recognize, That this power, To save, Cannot be found, Within the human spirit, Or the world, But only, In the divine, Supernatural power, Found in God?

If you can answer yes, To those two questions, Then you've experienced, The reality of the gospel, I am not ashamed, Of the gospel, For it is the power of God, For salvation, To everyone who believes, Our word power, Here in our text, Nothing crazy about it, Dunamis, Right?

We get a lot of our words, From that word, But what's really cool, Is Paul uses this word, Earlier in Romans, Or uses it later in Romans, The same word, He uses it, To describe the same power, That God raised Jesus from the dead, And the same power, That created and upholds the universe, So, According to the language, This same power, Puts the gospel, The gospel message, On par, With creation, And upholding it, And raising Jesus from the dead, Very powerful gospel, The son of God, So, It's mind blowing, When you think of how incredible, Those acts of power are, And the gospel is on equal footing, With both of them, It has the power, To save lost souls, So get everything away, All you can, And just try to show people, Of Jesus, Your job is not to save them, Your job is to lead them to him, And point them to him, And allow him to do his work, Right?

[43 : 57] Then rejoice, If you know the saving power, Thirdly and lastly, And I'll bring it in for a landing here, In a second, Thirdly and lastly, The third point on evangelism mission, God will provide, The means necessary, For his people, To connect, With lost people, He desires to reveal himself to, God will provide, The means necessary, For his people, To connect, With the lost people, He desires to reveal himself to, Alright?

Paul had been making plans, To go to Rome, You see that in chapter 19, Verse 21, Yet he still is in Jerusalem, Being seriously held up, As we see, And yet, We see God providing, His spiritual, And definitely, His physical protection, In the midst of this, There's going to be, So many obstacles, If you truly want, To reach your friends, And reach your family, And the people that you work, And live around, There's going to be serious obstacles, Everything from your health, To I don't feel good, To laziness, To I've got other things to do, To I don't know how to relate to them, I don't want to make an awkward situation, Like there's going to be a thousand obstacles, This isn't working, Right?

I'm just kind of on a whim, I remember, Just over the years past, Cody and I were trying to reach guys on the baseball team, And we set up, Probably three or four Bible studies in a row, Where nobody showed up, We ordered pizza, And everything, Right?

Come get the pizza, Gospel, Right? So, And, It was discouraging, But I'm like, We are not, We have God on our side here, Like, They can be lazy, And they can stay in their rooms, And tell us they're going to show up, And then not show up, But, We're going to keep praying, And persevering, Until they show up, And I remember when they did, It was great, And, It's all due to the power of the gospel, And over the years, God has allowed us to see guys on the team, Come to faith, Through his work, And the power of the gospel, So, Don't be tempted here, To cheer Rome on, Like, Go Romans, When has imperial Rome, Ever been a friend of Jesus?

They're the ones who crucified him, Later on, They're going to be the ones, Who imprison and kill Paul, Right? He used wicked men, To save Paul, From other wicked men, God's going to accomplish his purpose, He's going to accomplish his purpose, He saw fit to do this, And, In verse 11, We see, Christ promising, The risen Christ, That he will testify in Rome, All your needs will be met, Whatever you think you lack, He will provide, He will provide, Spiritually, Physically, Mentally, He will provide, If you ask him, To do so, Paul said in Philippians 4, 19, And my God will supply,

Every need of yours, According to his riches, In glory, In Christ Jesus, Right?
[47 : 08] He has more than enough, To fund his own mission projects, Alright? If he pays, He's, I
always heard a long time ago, God pays for what he orders, If he orders you, To go and do
something, He's going to provide, All you need to do it, Ask him, So, With those things, In mind,
Let's go to the Lord, In prayer,