Travels, Trials, and Testimonies

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[0:00] This is the First Mustang Pulpit Podcast, a podcast of the weekly preaching and teaching at First Mustang.! Thank you for joining us.!

We did that some time ago and continuing it on this month.
I love it because we're covering so many great chapters. I so enjoyed hearing from Revelation 5 and then John 1, from 2 Timothy 2, from Psalm 46, Isaiah 53, Ephesians 2.
So if you haven't been here, those are the chapters that we have covered. Some of them that we've covered as well as Psalm 51 and then Romans chapter 8 as well.
So I believe those are still online and you can go back and access those. I'm getting the head nod from the back there. So you can go back and listen to those if you've not listened to any of those yet or missed one or two.
[1:34] The assignment, though, is to preach the entire chapter. And that in and of itself is a challenge. And so it's a challenge. I think it's a greater challenge for some of us than others.

But that's the attempt that we're trying to do is take you to a chapter in the Bible and then preach or teach through that entire chapter.
And that's a good practice for us to do that as teachers and preachers, but then also for those who are listening to be able to take in a text of Scripture from a little bit higher level, that you're at 10,000 feet or 30,000 feet looking down as opposed to walking through the forest, if you will.
So with that being said, Acts chapter 20 is not only a lengthy chapter, but it's also a chapter that carries with it challenges.
And you'll see what I mean as we begin making our way through this chapter just with the pronunciation of names of cities and names of individuals.
[2:48] And so as our pastor shared with me this morning when we were talking about this, because we were in Acts 17 this morning for part of our time in Sunday school, and there were some challenging names in Acts 17 as well.

Michael shared with me, he said he was listening to Alistair Begg not long ago, and Alistair Begg came upon a text in Scripture, and it had a lot of cities and a lot of names.
And he said, your assignment is to read this when you're at home. Number one, because I want you to do the reading of God's Word while you're at home.
And number two, I struggle with pronunciations just like you do. So you can, you'll see when we get to these portions here that we'll just skip over them and reference them, and I'll let you pronounce them at home.
But Acts chapter 20 is near and dear to my heart in that I think overall, specifically looking at Paul's farewell address to the Ephesian elders, verses 17 to the end of the chapter, the Lord has particularly used that in my life, specifically verse 24.
[4:08] Acts 20, 24 for me, if you want to coin the term a life verse, this would be a life verse of mine.

But it's also a verse that the Lord used in an unmistakable manner in my life in confirming a call to ministry and of giving my life to the ministry.
And so verse 24 says, But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course in the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.
powerful verse and a powerful verse in my life that the Lord used some nearly 40 years ago and continues to use in my life in ministry.
But before we get to that verse, let's break this chapter down. And it's there in the title, if you got the sermon notes, the three segments that we will look at drawn from this chapter, we will look at

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travels, then trials and testimonies.
[5:39] Travels, trials, testimonies. And it doesn't all fit neatly just in a chronological manner, but we can see, even as we begin in chapter 20, verse 1, the travels that are before us.

After the uproar ceased, verse 1, 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.
Then you see the list of traveling companions and friends who were with him in verse 4. Verse 5, these went on ahead and were waiting for us at Troas.
But we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread. And in five days we came to them at Troas, where we stayed for seven days.
[7:00] It's interesting when we think about the acts of the apostles. Many of your Bibles may title this book of the Bible.

And as some have said, we could really look at this and say, it's the acts of the Holy Spirit through the apostles and through the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.
That's what's recorded for us in the book of Acts. It's the birth of the early church. And it's the movement of the gospel that travels around the world.
Now, let me show you something here. Flip back. Keep your finger there or put a piece of paper there or your gum wrapper or whatever you have. And go back to the left and go to Matthew chapter 28.
Matthew chapter 28. I'm going to show you this. And not assume that all of us just naturally know this or even remember this.
[8:05] Matthew chapter 28. We know after the resurrection that this is known in verses 18 to 20 as the Great Commission.

Verse 16 says, Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. And when they saw him, they worshipped him, but some doubted.
And Jesus came and said to them, All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.
Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.
And behold, I am with you always to the end of the age. That is the Great Commission. And as you've probably heard it said before, this is a commission, not a suggestion.
[9:19] This is an optional. This is what we are to be about as the people of God. As the disciples of Jesus Christ.

As the followers of Christ. And Jesus is the one who says, All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore, as you are going, make disciples of all nations.
And then we baptize them in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. And then we teach them. That's what we call discipleship. We're teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.
All that Jesus has commanded. All right. So that's the Great Commission. Now flip back to the book of Acts. But before you get to chapter 20, stop in chapter 1. Acts chapter 1.
Acts 1. Let's look down beginning in verse 6. So when they had come together, they asked him, Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom of Israel?
[10:27] He said to them, It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. Take note of this. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you.

And you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth.
You have the Great Commission in Matthew 28. That's the commission that all of us are to go forth. The message of the gospel on our lips. And then we are witnesses.
Means we share. We give testimony to that which we have seen, to that which we have heard. Even John in 1 John 1 says, That which we have touched with our own hands.
We are witnesses of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is what we see unfolding in the book of Acts. Acts 1.8 is going to unfold before our eyes.

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[11:32] That after receiving power from the Holy Spirit that comes upon them in Acts chapter 2, and then you'll be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth, which I would submit to you, is still going on to this day.

The message of the gospel is still going forth to the ends of the earth. And for that we say, praise God that the message continues on some 2,000 years later that the same commission and the same testimony that you're going to receive power and you're going to be my witnesses is still happening today.
Why? Because the message of the gospel is traveling. Just like we see in the early church. It's traveling around the world.
We say here at First Baptist Mustang that we long to reach the neighborhoods and the nations. It's not an either or.
Just like our pastor shared this morning that we shouldn't be a church that, hey, we're about local missions. And so we're going to be about the work of ministry and Mustang and Yukon and Oklahoma City and Tuttle and Bridge Creek and all around.
[13:00] But we're going to let another church go to the ends of the earth. Just like we shouldn't do it the other way. That we're a church that goes to the ends of the earth but we don't even know our neighbors.

But there's other churches who know our neighbors and minister to those who are in the community. No. The call biblically speaking is that we would be a church that would minister to and bring the gospel to the neighborhoods right around here where we live under the shadow of our our steeple so to speak to the ends of the earth.
Both and. And this is what we see happening even in the beginning of Acts chapter 20. The gospel message is still going forth.
So that's one observation that we see from travels as the gospel message goes forth just as it said it would in Matthew 28 18 to 20 and in Acts chapter 1 verse 8.
That still continues to this day. But number two we see under travels that ministry is a team effort. Ministry is a team effort.
[14:21] and again we see it with the traveling companions that are here with Paul but we see it throughout this not only this book but we see it throughout the New Testament.

The idea is that ministry happens in a collective manner or we could put it this way there are those who pray those who go those who give those who may do all three things but all of us are together as a team in bringing the gospel to the neighborhoods and the nations.
It's not a solo effort. Now here's what's beautiful about that. if we all go then who's here? Right? Or if we all stay then who goes? The idea is the Lord is the one who raises up those who will go and those who will stay. But it's a team effort.
There's more than one individual involved and so I love what some of our mission partners even say when referencing the idea of them serving on the front lines of ministry.
[15:46] The idea that we're holding the rope while they're cascading down into the cavern or into the valley and we're holding the rope for them through the prayers that we offer, through the support, even specific support, with finances.

I love what John Piper had to say about this that the Lord may have blessed you with finances, not so you can buy a bigger lake house, but that you can be a greater supporter to those who are doing front line ministry.
The idea that the Lord is the one who blesses and uses us as a team. We see that here at the beginning of Acts chapter 20, but we see it littered throughout this entire book.
Ministry is a team effort. It's never to be done just by ourselves. Number three, under travels. And this is meant to be a great encouragement.
There are faithful believers gathered around the world worshiping the one true God by grace alone, through faith alone, in Jesus Christ alone.
[17:10] There are faithful believers gathered around the world, some in remote locations, some in larger cities, that are worshiping.

They're brothers and sisters in Christ. And again, if you've ever been on a mission trip, or you've served on the mission field, or you've traveled around the world, and you meet others, and you know instantly there's a bond that is there.

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And the bond that you have is the Lord Jesus Christ. That we share this common bond, and that you're a brother, and you're a sister, and we may not speak the same language, but we have the same Lord and Savior.
God is faithful. In the message of the gospel that travels around the world, we can rest assured that there are faithful believers who are gathering in different cities, whether you've been there or not, that are gathering.
Why? Because God is the one who saves. God is the one who sanctifies. God is the one who raises up elders, and teachers, and leaders within the church. And this happens as this traveling takes place, of not only individuals like the Apostle Paul, like Luke, like Peter, like others who are traveling, but the message of the gospel that travels around the world.
[18:43] Well, let's look at the second big category, and that being trials. Trials. We see this in verse one.

If we go back to verse one, you can see that after the uproar ceased. Now, wait a minute. After the uproar ceased, if you're a good student of the Bible, you know you should read the greater context, right?
Okay, clearly there's something that happened. Well, if you go back in chapter 19, and beginning in verse 21, through the end of the chapter, there was a riot at Ephesus.
Verse 21, after these events, Paul resolved in the Spirit to pass through Macedonia and Achaia and go to Jerusalem, saying, after I've been there, I must also see Rome, and having sent into Macedonia two of his helpers, Timothy and Erastus, he himself stayed in Asia for a while.
Now, I love the way this is recorded for us. About that time, verse 23, there arose no little disturbance concerning the way.
[19:55] That's an eloquent way of saying, there's an uproar, there's a riot, there's opposition. There are trials that come, whether we say, no little disturbance concerning the way, or we call it an uproar in chapter 20, or we see that it breaks out into a riot.

There are trials that come. Let me pause here and make observation number one under this. We are engaged in war.
We are not living in peacetime. We are engaged in war. So expect opposition.
Expect it. And take note, I didn't say go look for it. Don't be obnoxious. Don't be the one who says, I want to be a martyr, so I'm going to go and present myself in a way where somebody wants to kill me.
Understand the ministry that we are engaged in. The ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ invites opposition. What makes you think if they hated him, that they would love you?
[21:19] they hate him, they're going to hate his followers. Jesus tells us that. He lets us know that.

And then again, not only in chapter 20, but then in chapter 19, and all throughout the book of Acts, we see that we are engaged in war.
This is battle time. It's not peace time. time. So expect opposition. Number two, with that, that flows right out of that, don't be surprised by trials.
Don't be surprised by trials. We're living in the midst of a battle. We're living in wartime, so don't be surprised by trials. Opposition that comes.
Tertullian had this to say, the famous quote, the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church. We see the church advancing and being pushed, fulfilling the Great Commission and the witnesses in Judea and Samaria and Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the world, primarily through persecution.
[22:37] persecution. The advancement of the gospel, the push of the church, primarily is coming through persecution in the early church.

We still see it happening today. So those are trials, some trials we see, but not just those trials that we live in the midst of wartime, but we have this very interesting account of Eutychus.
Verse 7, on the first day of the week. Chapter 20, verse 7, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul talked with them, intending to depart on the next day, and he prolonged his speech until midnight.
There's biblical precedent right there for me to go till midnight tonight. And so just strap in, just as a long chapter, there's biblical precedent. Verse 8, there were many lamps in the upper room where we were gathered, and a young man named Eutychus, sitting at the window, sank into a deep sleep

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as Paul still talked longer, or as Paul talked still longer.
There's biblical precedent for you to fall asleep, and not only to fall asleep, but to go into a deep sleep. And being overcome by sleep, he fell down from the third story and was taken up dead.
[24:01] Here it is. In the word of God, what in the world is happening? Well, verse 10, but Paul went down and bent over him, and 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 when they took the youth away alive, and they took the youth away alive, and were not a little comforted.
Okay, fascinating account. Is it there just to poke fun at preachers? Is it there to just poke fun at listeners? No, I believe it's there on purpose.
I think the purpose behind this, one, is highlighting a trial. Okay, we understand the biblical setting, that it would have been warm and crowded in this room.
And I think it's on purpose that we see that there were many lamps. Those would have been oil-burning lamps. It would have been an atmosphere conducive to a deep sleep that we see with Eutychus.
[25:29] And actually, the Greek term here used would be that he was a boy. Most scholars would say he's probably between the ages of seven to fourteen. And so he tries to go up and position himself where there'll be fresh air, where there may be a little bit cooler air.

And while he's positioned there, he falls into a deep sleep, which, by the way, is a reminder to us that we're a needy people.
It's a reminder to us you will fall asleep because you can't function without sleep. And if you've ever had to go prolonged periods without sleep, you know what happens.
you begin to lose your mind. You're fatigued. You're exhausted. It's another great reminder that we could highlight in our dependence upon the Lord and his omnipotence and his sustaining us each time we get the rest that we need all night long.
But that's not the point of this. That's just a side note. Eutychus. Eutychus. He falls down as though dead. Now, why insert this in the book of Acts? Well, I think one reason is if you know your Old Testament, you remember the Old Testament prophets in Elisha and Elijah.
[27:00] And you remember accounts when they themselves, through the power of God, raise the dead to life. I think that is a biblical reference to all those who would understand and they'd remember that when he falls upon the boy and then he reminds them, do not be alarmed for his life is in him.

I don't think that's referencing he wasn't really dead because, again, just the previous verses in verse 9, he was taken up dead. And guess who is involved in this?
Luke, the physician. Surely Luke would know dead and not dead. And so, one reason I think that this is included is to show that Paul himself is in the line or in the heritage of even the Old Testament prophets and the power of God is upon him.
Not to highlight a ministry in and of himself that he would begin selling out stadiums and wearing a white suit and blowing on people and claiming to raise the dead.
No. This wasn't about Paul. Just like it was never about the apostles, it's about the power of God. So, I think that's one reason we see that in there.
[28:29] But then, I do think in verse 12, we see another reason. And they took the youth away alive and were not a little comforted.

This is a repeated phrase, encouraging them in verse 1. And you're going to see it just throughout then in verse 2, and had given them much encouragement.
The idea of encouragement and hope and comfort, comfort, all tied into the ministry of the apostles, but then the ministry of the church to one another as well.
The hope that we have in that we serve a risen Savior. The hope that we have that the church is God's church. The hope that we have that the gospel is going forth from not only Jerusalem to the uttermost parts of the world, of the earth.
So, that too is a trial though. We look at that and we say, that's a trial. It's a trial for the young man who fell from the third story.
[29:35] It's a trial for all those who are sitting there. Can you imagine, it doesn't mention his parents here, but can you imagine if parents were there and you're thinking, what in the world just

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happened? But yet, he's brought to life and they took the youth away alive and were not a little comforted.

So, trials come, whether it be uproar, riots, opposition. Why? Because we are engaged in war. We should not be surprised by trials.
And even Tertullian's statement of the blood of the martyrs is a seat of the church. It's the part God uses trials to advance the gospel, pushing it to the uttermost parts of the earth.
And then we have trials like this that are unique to Eudicator. Eudicator. Now, third big section here. Testimonies.
Testimonies. We've looked at travel. We've looked at trials. Now, we look at testimonies. We see that we have another reference in verses 13 and 14 all the way down to verse 16 of travel.
[30:49] That could fall under the travel, the itinerary as Paul is going forth in the providential hand of God guiding him and leading him and his goal of getting to Jerusalem, if possible, verse 16 on the day of Pentecost.

Now, we get to verse 17 and Paul speaks to the Ephesian elders. Now, from Miletus, he sent to Ephesus and called the elders of the church to come to him.
And when they came to him, he said to them, now, this is to me the highlight of the chapter. I mean, this address is powerful.
He says to the Ephesian elders, you yourselves know how I lived among you the whole time from the first day that I set foot in Asia.
You know why? Because I lived my life with you. This is not some ivory tower theologian. It's not some distant and remote pastor with no access to him.
[32:04] This is not someone who is aloof. This is someone who lived his life. And you saw it. You saw the way that I lived my life.

It wasn't a secret. It wasn't in private. And you saw how I lived it the whole time from the first day that I set foot in Asia.
Now, observation number one. Ministry is with people. Ministry is with people.
The great book. Great ministry book. The trellis and the vine. The trellis and the vine is a great reminder for us in all of ministry, especially for elders and pastors and teachers that we can spend so much time on the trellis.
And we can look at the structure. And we can look at the building. And we can look at the budget. And we can look at the decor. And we can look at the programs.
[33:12] And we can be so fixated on the trellis and how beautiful the trellis looks that we forget the purpose of the trellis.

And the purpose of the trellis is to be a support to that which is living. The vine. Those structures I just mentioned are not living.
We are living. The people are living. And ministry is about people.
And news flash for you. There's a reason we're compared to sheep. Ministry is messy.
People are messy. Guess what? I'm messy. Not like in my office where you can see it. But I'm messy in my life.
[34:15] We're all messy because of sin. Because of decisions we have made that have carried with them consequences. And ministry is messy.

And people are messy. But understand the structure that supports the people is not more important than the people. And Paul says, you yourselves know how I lived among you the whole time from the first day that I set foot in Asia.
verse 19. Now again, he says, you know how I've lived. So now he says, serving the Lord with all humility.
And with tears. And with trials that happened to me through the plots of the Jews. See, there it is again. Trials. It came through the plot of the Jews.
But take note of his character. Serving the Lord with all humility. You understand that serving the Lord carries with it the idea that you're a bond servant.
[35:23] You're a slave. You know what a slave has for rights? Zero. None. You're a slave of Christ.

You're a bond servant. It means it carries with it the picture that you're an under rower. On a ship. That means you're in the lowest part of the ship that nobody sees.

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And yet you're doing the majority of the work. Because ministry is not about you being seen. You being highlighted. You being celebrated.
Ministry is about our Lord. Our Master. We make much of Him. So he says I've served the Lord with all humility and with tears.
Have you been there? Have you shed tears? Tears over those who've defected? Those who've departed?
[36:22] Those that you've poured your life into? And yet they continue on a path that you've warned them of? Or you've admonished them in? Or tears of those who have departed from us physically that are no longer here that we miss?

And while we rejoice that to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord, still we miss them and we shed tears. We grieve because they're not with us.
How about this? Tears that have been shed over those who have fallen. Men. Perhaps even mentors and heroes of yours.
We shed tears. Paul says you have seen this in my life. Serve the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials that happened to me through the plots of the Jews.
Verse 20. How I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable and teaching you in public and from house to house. Okay, here we go.
[37:30] Point number two. There is a public ministry of the word. There is a public ministry of the word. That's right now. This is what we do Sunday morning, Sunday school, Sunday morning worship service, Sunday night worship service, Wednesday night, Bible study service, youth service, college get-togethers, whether it be in Sunday school or retreats or that it's a public ministry of the word.

The only thing that we do that is perfect is when we read the word of God. Because God's word is perfect. Even if we mispronounce names in cities, it's still perfect.
It's his word. It's the only thing that we do that is perfect. So when we gather together, we're going to open the Bible. We're going to hear from the word of God. Why? Because that's the most important thing we can do.
It's the public ministry of the word. That is a strength of our church. It's the public ministry of the word. I'm not just talking about this pulpit, but I'm talking about every Sunday school class from the earliest age to senior adults, all the way in between.
The public ministry of the word. But don't miss this. verse 20, teaching you in public and from house to house.
[38:56] Point number three, the private ministry of the word. This is the private ministry of the word. And from house to house.

It's what Richard Baxter in the reformed pastor details. Even down to verse 28. Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock in which you, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.
Listen, the private ministry of the word. is most effective when not just your pastor, teacher, shepherds, elders are doing it, but all the congregation is doing it.
You are ministering the word of God one to the other. Now, again, if we say the most important thing we do when we gather together publicly, uh, corporately is to read the word of God, that's a public ministry of the word of God.
What's the most important thing you can say to another individual in your life? Doesn't change. It's the word of God. And I'm not just saying just quote a Bible verse, pray with them and pat them on the back and say.
[40:21] Go in peace, be warm, be well fed and good luck to you. No. We walk alongside. We constantly remind them of who God is, of his promises, of what he has said, how he has commanded us to live our lives, of the great worth in which he's worthy to receive praise and worship, of the great promises that we cling to and the inheritance that, that awaits us.

This is a private ministry of the word. And again, if we go to Romans 15, 14, you yourselves are competent to admonish and teach one another in the word, especially, especially you who are here gathered on a Sunday night.
You're competent to minister the word of God to others. You may not feel that, but again, if just what you're doing is bringing them to the word of God that you read maybe that morning, that is good and that is profitable and that is, that is worthy of ministry of the private ministry of the word of

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God.
Paul says, I, I did this publicly. I did this in private. So much more that can be said, but we are going to go to midnight if I don't move on point number four.
We see it here. Well, before I get there, let me show you verse 21 testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.
[42:00] This is biblical conversion. Biblical conversion is repentance and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

The gospel message that we proclaim should carry with it the idea of we are calling people to do an about face from trusting in themselves, from trusting in their own works, from heading down the path of destruction.
They, they do an about face and then they trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. They have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. He said, I didn't shrink from sharing that or testifying both of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.
Verse 22. And now behold, I'm going to Jerusalem constrained by the spirit, not knowing what will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that, that imprisonment and afflictions await me.
Side note, I wonder how many name it, claim it preachers would still be name it, claim it preachers if they lived like this. It's not Learjets. Millions and millions of dollars that is being given.
[43:17] It is what? Imprisonment and afflictions. That's what awaits me. But verse 24. But I do not account my life of any value, nor is precious to myself.

If only I may finish my course in the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus to testify to the gospel of the grace of God. Point number four. Wholehearted devotion.
Wholehearted devotion. We saw this in Paul's life. He said, you've seen this in my life from the time that I set foot in Asia, that I did not account my life of any value.
Why? Verse 23 says, the Holy Spirit testifies that imprisonments and afflictions await me. But I don't account my life of any value, nor is precious to myself. Why? Because I may only, if I may only finish my race or the course that is set before me.
And that ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus is what? Testify to the gospel of the grace of God. It calls for wholehearted devotion. Verse 25.
[44:20] And now behold, I know that none of you among whom I have gone about proclaiming the kingdom will see my face again. Therefore, I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all, for I did not shrink.

There it is again. Didn't shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God. He didn't withdraw. He wasn't a man pleaser.
He wasn't worried about being politically correct. He was preaching the whole counsel of the word of God. The whole counsel of God. And then verse 28.
And this leads us to our next point in point five under this testimonies. Warnings alerting them to false teachers in unfaithfulness.
Warnings alerting them to false teachers in unfaithfulness. He said, Now, behold, I know that none of you among you will see my face again. Therefore, I testify to this day.
[45:22] Verse 28. I mean, pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.

I know that after my departure, fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. And from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things to draw away disciples after them.
Therefore, be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish everyone with tears. And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.
I coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my necessities and to those who were with me. In all things, I have shown you that by working hard in this way, we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.
Warnings alerting them to false teachers and unfaithfulness. But then the next point, point six, there is confidence in the gospel work being done by God.

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[46:40] There is confidence in the gospel work being done by God. You see it there through the teaching of the gospel. God is building up his church by the means of the gospel.

God promises an eternal inheritance. And in the gospel, God declares those who are in Christ to already to be already sanctified. God is doing a work.
The word of his grace. As John MacArthur was fond of saying, the word does the work. It's a ministry of the word. We simply open the word.
We teach the word. We preach the word. We give ourselves wholeheartedly to it. We preach and teach the whole counsel of the word of God, which is going to involve warning and alerting.
It's going to involve admonishing, exhorting. It's going to involve ruffling feathers and calling out false teachers. It's going to involve letting people know if there are dangerous devotional books that they're consuming.
[47:45] It's going to involve that we would walk alongside people in their darkest hour and in their time of grief or in their time of suffering and their time of trial. And all the while, we are bringing them back to the word of God.

And the word of God is what builds up his church and reminds us of the promise of the internal inheritance that awaits us. And it reminds us of sanctification as well.
Now, before I close. Verse 36. And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all.
And there was much weeping on the part of all. They embraced Paul and kissed him. Being sorrowful, most of all because of the word he had spoken.
That they would not see his face again. And they accompanied him to the ship. Here's what I love about that.
[48:55] Weeping is God-given. Shedding of tears is God-given. Grieving that we'll not see your face again.

Is biblical. It is something that has been experienced by brothers and sisters in Christ from the birth of the early church. And so it will be with us this day.
That we too. Again, you know this. But many of us on our staff and in our church who have been influenced and impacted by John MacArthur and his ministry.
And we grieve. And yet, as our pastor shared this morning, we grieve. And yet we rejoice. For we know where he is.
And so we grieve his voice being present today. And his influence and his impact in our lives today. And yet we rejoice in knowing that he's with the Lord.
[50:04] That everything that he preached and everything that he taught and everything that he did in ministry that pointed to the gospel of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

That that which he preached about, he gets to experience. That which he clung to by faith, he sees by sight. Well, that's just an example that pales in comparison to what they were experiencing here with the Ephesian elders.
When they grieved over, we will not see your face again. So, Acts chapter 20.
We see travels. We see trials. We see testimonies. And may it be said of us that we would be faithful.
Not perfect. We serve a perfect God. And we're an imperfect people. But that we would be found faithful. Even as we see on display in the book of Acts.
[51:12] Let's pray together. Our Father, we once again thank you for the ministry of the Word of God. We thank you that you have spoken.

And your Word is beautiful. And your Word is wonderful. And your Word is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword.
And your Word as it goes forth will never return void. It will accomplish that which you have set it out to accomplish. And for that, we simply say again, thank you.
For communicating with us. Thank you for giving us your Word. And now, Father, we pray that even as we have considered tonight. Number one, we're thankful for the ministry of the Gospel that continues to travel this day.
And then, we ask you. Search our hearts. Should I be one who's giving my life on the mission field?
[52:22] Should I be one who is funding and helping fund others to go? And should I be one who's praying and encouraging and comforting those who are on the front lines?

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We've been given a commission. We're to be witnesses. Oh, may we be found faithful in the travel of the Gospel. And then in the trials that we face, Lord, whether it be those that are in direct opposition to us or those that just seemingly come out of the blue that are out of place like Eutychus falling out of a window for dead.
There could be times in our lives when we're left with not really understanding what is happening and why it's happening. And yet, in the midst of the trial, may we be comforted in knowing we serve a risen Savior.
And we serve the God who providentially is orchestrating all things. And we trust you. You are good. And then, oh Lord, would you help us to be those who give ourselves wholeheartedly to Gospel ministry.
That we too could join with the Apostle Paul in saying, We do not account our lives of any value, nor as precious to ourselves, if only we may finish our course in the ministry that we've received from the Lord Jesus to testify to the Gospel of the grace of God.
[53:48] May this be said of us. We pray this all in Jesus' name. And all God's people said, Amen. Amen. All right. God bless you. Thank you for being here.

Remember, this Wednesday night, all activities are on as normal. And so, may the Lord bless you and keep you and make His face shine upon you. You are dismissed.
God bless you. God bless you.
God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you.

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