

Acts 20_pt1

by Bill Gallatin

Bill Gallatin's sermon emphasizes the dangers of worldly dependence and the importance of faith and community in the face of impending spiritual challenges.

Duration: 1:00:12

Scripture: Exodus 31:16

Topics: "Expositional"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares a personal experience of observing a young man drifting away from the Lord. The young man's lack of focus and commitment to his studies and spiritual growth led him to fall into temptation and ultimately leave the church. The speaker emphasizes the importance of not loving the world and its offerings, as it can lead us away from our faith in Jesus Christ. The sermon also highlights the need for believers to prioritize their relationship with God and spend time in prayer and meditation.

Transcript

Before we begin, I thought I'd read something to you and show you some of the things that are happening. Rosemary and I happen to be listening to Every Man an Answer, and someone had called in about the ten toes, what they represent in Daniel's vision, and they had given their answers, and I had remarked, you know, it's what they should have done is taken them right back to Daniel in the text of the question and shown the man who called in that this has never happened in history. Everything else has taken place historically, and it's verified, and it can be seen historically, but the ten toes have not developed, but it's developing right now around the world in either economic districts or the revival of the Roman Empire, as we see Europe coming back to the forefront in everything worldwide, particularly now that we see the Asian market and the Pacific Rim beginning to weaken economically and Europe being strengthened and the scenario being prepared for the Kings of the East invasion in the Mideast for the oil rights and the power versus Western Europe and the Antichrist.

It's being, you know, prepared, and God's got the hooks, as he said in Ezekiel and the Jaws, and bringing it all right to our, before our very eyes, as we see these things setting up, preparing Armageddon for all of Asia coming against Europe and the Antichrist in the Mideast. It's exciting things to see, but I thought I'd read something to you that John reminds his children in 1 John 2, then we'll get into the book of Acts. Verse 15, it says, Love not the world.

Now, it's interesting how dependent people are becoming on the governments of the world and not God. What I find interesting, that the closer Jerusalem came to its destruction, the more it rejected Jesus Christ. As he began to warn them of impending doom from the invasion of Rome, as a matter of fact, his people, the closer it came to their destruction, the more they rejected Jesus Christ.

Now, we see this very same thing happening all over again. The closer we are getting to that final judgment with the greater Roman Empire that will encompass the whole earth, the more the world is rejecting Jesus Christ again. Very interesting, as we watch that take place.

But it says, Love not the world, and more and more we see people depend on the world and the love of the world, as the world is offering so much, saying, hey, with education and our science and our technology and the way things are going, you don't need God. And if you do need God, we've got all kinds of systems for you, but you certainly don't need Jesus Christ. That's a myth.

That's too narrow. And so we're seeing people drift toward the world. And remember, Jesus said, When the Son of Man returns, shall he find faith on the earth, faith in him? Not only are we warned not to love the world, neither the things of the world, and that are in the world.

If any man loved the world, the love of the Father is not in him. You see, the vacuum's got to be filled, gang. The void that's in there is either going to be filled by Jesus Christ and the love of God or materialism and ease and pleasure that the world offers.

And that's a trap, you see, because when the world finally says, hey, if you don't receive the number, you're not getting in hospitals. You're not getting your gas and electric turned on. You're not getting your groceries.

You're not getting your petrol for your automobiles. And remember, the whole world is being conditioned to receive the number to buy and sell, international, the 10 toes, worldwide, linked together with the computer system, electronic funds transfer. Rose, we're now coming back from the city this afternoon or early this morning, and you can see the lines backing up probably 20 cars, some lines, and then easy pass, no one's using it.

And you can see them preparing people to get so frustrated, everybody's going to say, give me that easy pass. I'm tired of waiting these lines and see these people go right on through. And they're resisting it right now.

But you watch, you see, pretty soon people are going to be so frustrated. Give me the mark. Give me the mark.

I don't even need it on my windshield. Just put it on my forehead. I'm in a hurry.

We laugh at it. But you see, the human race is being conditioned for it. And little things like easy pass, getting through the grocery store in a hurry, trying to figure out what credit card, writing the check, getting the money out, going to the bank, and computer shut down.

Losing the card for all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof. You get too old for lust after a while.

It's amazing how many people destroy their life just over that one little thing when they're young. You see why Paul warned Timothy, hey, flee youthful lusts. It's all going to pass away.

But he that doeth the will of God abideth forever. Little children, it is the last time. And as you have heard, that Antichrist shall come.

He is forming his worldwide government right now before our very eyes. And people are being conditioned for it, accepting it, and they don't know it, you see, because they don't have the Holy Spirit. And they can't perceive it.

They just see, hey, this is great. I'm not going to be left without hospitalization, whatever the government says. And especially if the government has a program that's cheaper than Blue Cross and Blue Shield.

Hey, the government, hey, whatever, give me the number. Even now, there are many Antichrists. The leader of our nation is an Antichrist, whereby we know that it is the last time.

And notice what he says as he talks about loving the world and the things of the world. He says, they went out from us, but they were not of us. For if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us.

But they went out that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. You know, a lot of people profess to believe in Jesus for a while, until they come between the world and Christ. Now, it's interesting, again, as Jesus got closer to the cross, closer to being rejected, it says multitudes quit following him as he began to warn them.

And the closer the nation came to judgment, and the more he tried to warn them, the more they rejected him. Deeply religious people. We're seeing it happen all over again.

Well, I want to show you this, then we'll get into Acts 20. This is in the Wall Street Journal. I love to get these things.

This is a full page ad in the Wall Street Journal. You can imagine what this thing cost. It's just not a new coin.

It's a new way of doing business. It's the new euro money. The euro coin.

That pretty soon, you see, all the stock markets of the world will be tied to it. Here's another interesting thing. I thought I'd show you this one.

The new MasterCard. Move more living, less limits. And it just shows how it can be used all over the world.

And it's called the WorldCard. The latest technology. The WorldCard.

No more limits. And then it's interesting. They're holding a symposium in Europe right now.

And all the computer gurus of the world are meeting together, discussing uniting the world's economies with this united European money that's right on the verge of being official. And you know who's heading it up? Bill Gates. So, you see, we're right at the verge.

You say, well, I'm not going to take the mark. I'm going to use cash. There's not going to be any cash.

They're going to do away with it. They're going to do something to stabilize this fluctuation in all the different currencies that affect the stock market in every nation. These economic earthquakes that affect everybody's job.

And so, you see, one thing is just to combine and unite all the currencies of the world. And so pretty soon you'll just be saying, hey, we've got something even better, folks. You don't have to carry all these plastic cards and figure out which one to use.

Your Blue Cross and Blue Shield card, your health care, your insurance, your driver's license. I mean, we've got a computer system in Brussels called the Beast. It's so powerful.

And it'll just cover everything. All you need is just this little thing in your forehead on your right hand. Church better wake up.

Acts chapter 20. Now, we left Paul, another riot because of his ministry. Remember the silversmiths of Ephesus, all upset because Paul was leading so many people to Christ and so many of the pagans were coming to Christ that they were burning their occultic books.

And then in Ephesus particularly and around that area, they weren't worshiping Diana any longer, the queen of heaven. They quit buying her silver shrines and statues. And the silversmiths said, hey, we make our living because of this religion.

We got to get rid of this guy. He's leading people to Christ. And these people aren't worshiping the queen anymore.

And they're not buying our silver shrines. And you remember it created such an uproar. They dragged him into the theater in Ephesus that seats about 20,000 people.

And then you remember the governor, the mayor of the city would have nothing to do with it. It was unjust and everything. And they let Paul go.

And then in verse 1 of chapter 20, after the uproar was ceased, Paul called unto him the disciples and embraced them. I like that. He embraced them.

This is the type of man Paul was. And he departed for to go into Macedonia. So he's going to get on ship, leave Ephesus and go across the Aegean Sea toward Macedonia, which is the underbelly.

Actually, at that particular time, it was the underbelly of what today is Yugoslavia. Going up into Europe, back to Europe. And when he had gone over those parts.

Now, we don't see that. And unless you study the scriptures and begin to cross-reference and really read the Bible on a regular basis, you miss a lot and can skip over something and not realize what has taken place. It says, and when he had gone over those parts.

Now, this is the springtime of the year, sometime at this particular time in April. But he has already been in a place called Illyricum for over a year. Which, if you look at your maps, today is the area of Belgrade in Serbia.

And so Paul's the one who took Christianity and the gospel up into that area. You remember earlier in the book of Acts, there was the vision of the man in Macedonia saying, come over and help us. And so Paul is

the one who took the gospel to Europe, from Asia to Europe.

And so he's back up in the area where today we know as Serbia, Belgrade, Yugoslavia, or Illyricum. And he spent a year there. But all you see here is verse 2. When he had gone over those parts and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece.

So he moved south back down to Athens. After spending a year going from house to house, checking on the church, you know, the small fellowships and how the saints were doing. And Paul loved to do that.

He loved to retrace his steps. And you do, you fall in love with the saints. One of the most difficult things for me this summer, is not to be able to visit the fellowship that the Lord planted in Hanover, Germany, and in Austria.

They meet in Austria. And then down in Croatia now with Delmir. And I, because of Moscow, going to Moscow, I couldn't go to Europe.

And it's funny, the ache that's in your heart, because I love them so much. And they love us so much. And not being able to go and see how they're doing, but to hear secondhand.

Because I can remember when these people, when I first met them, you know, they were just about ready to walk away from Jesus Christ. No churches, no fellowship in their areas. And then to see what God has done with them in these cities.

And then it's such a delight to go back and visit and see how God is blessing them, how they're growing in the Lord. And now we have this thing, God started in Puerto Rico, and I got a letter from Danny, that there's not even standing room. They're sitting on the floors.

They went out and bought more chairs, and they're back on the floor. There's no more room. It's amazing what's happening already down in Puerto Rico.

And to see what God's doing. Just exciting. Well, that's what Paul loved to do.

Go back and just see how everybody's doing. See if they're continuing in the Word. And nothing is more thrilling as to see that someone has come to Christ, and you see them a year or two later, and you see they're growing in the love of the Lord.

Growing in their love for Christ, their boldness for Christ. Walking away from the world, not struggling to get out of it anymore, because they've been converted. They've been born again to the Spirit, and the love of the Father's in them, and they've walked right out of that world, and are getting further and further out of it.

Not one foot in and one foot out. Trying to make things work and get the blessings from both. And it's so exciting.

And notice Paul exhorted them or encouraged them. That's true prophecy. A true prophet is one who comforts, who edifies, who exhorts.

Stimulates to get going. Get off your duff and do something. And in a way not to condemn, but how long, you know, it's like when someone needs an exhortation, how long are you just going to sit and listen? When are you going to do something? It's easy to sit and say, I love the Lord, in a church setting.

But sometimes we need an exhortation. When are you going to stand up and do something the rest of the week? Not just say, I love you on Sunday, you know, or Bible study night. And so Paul goes around and he wants to encourage them, to exhort them, to continue on.

Much exhortation. Well, he took a year. Probably one area for a while, teaching the Bible, and then go travel into another village, teach for a while, and retrace his steps, go somewhere else.

And then he just felt like now it's time to go down into Greece. So he leaves the area of Belgrade, as we know it today, and goes into Greece. Now, Romans 15, 19, he makes mention of the fact while he's there, when he writes the letter of the Romans.

And there he abode three months. And when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria, he purposed to return through Macedonia. Now, again, this man who knew how to walk in the Spirit, and yet he also knew that God had given him a brain to make decisions and to think wisely.

I think too often, because God may work a miraculous thing in our life, and we see the supernatural in some deliverance, we think, well, that's the way God's going to do it all the time. And if I just have enough faith, and I get into the spirit realm enough, and become that spiritual giant, that's the way he's going to operate all the time in my life. Notice here is the great apostle Paul.

He got word that there were some Jews waiting to kill him, as he's going to go back from the Aegean, actually the western side of the Aegean Sea, from Athens, that he was going, he wanted to get back down to Jerusalem to keep the Passover, because multitudes of his old friends, family members, and Jews who his heart, you know, he wanted to convert them, he loved to go to the feasts, even though he was born again now, because there was such a missionary field to go back to the temple area, and share who Messiah was, and prove in the scriptures. And so he wanted to set sail, and because so many pilgrims, remember, according to the Jewish law, it was Jewish law that every male had to appear at least to three of the main feast days of Israel. If they were too far away, and they couldn't get to three, they were obligated to get to one in a lifetime.

So here's Paul coming all the way from Greece, wanting to get to Jerusalem for Passover, so worldwide that would take place, and the shipping industries would have cruise ships, so to speak, or passages to get Jews on their ships, so they could all make passage back to Jerusalem for the feast days. They knew it took place, and so the Gentile shipping lanes took advantage of it. And so there was a handful of Jews who felt that he betrayed the faith, and they hated him, and they're waiting, they're going to get him on ship as it's on the way down to Antioch, into Syria, just going to throw him overboard, and he gets word of it.

Now he just didn't go and pray and say, well Lord, you know, you sent an angel, got me out of jail, you've done the miraculous before, and you know, Philippi, I was stoned to death, you brought me back to life, I'm not worried, I'm just trusting you. No, he had knowledge of something, and God expected him to think things out clearly, and make a wise decision as a believer. Not to presume that if I am presumptuous, remember David prays in the psalm, Lord keep back thy servant from presumptuous sin.

To presume that because I make a certain decision, and it's a foolish decision, God's automatically going to protect me from harm. You remember Satan tried to tempt Jesus himself into presuming and doing something miraculous apart from the Father's will, and Jesus rebuked him, he said, thou shall not tempt the Lord thy God. And so in this particular situation, the Spirit of God did not instruct Paul, don't worry, get on ship and go.

Paul thought about it and said, hey wait a minute, there's a plot to kill me and toss me overboard, they're going to kill me, and he purposes to go back up around the underside of Yugoslavia or Macedonia and go that way to protect himself. There's a text, I looked at it today, I flashed on this, I'm sure it was the Lord, it says, A prudent man foreseeth the evil and hideth himself. But a simple-minded man, a simple-minded man continues on and is punished.

Just presuming that, well, I'm a child of God, I don't need to seek the Lord or make a decision here, I'll just go on, he'll protect me. The angels will bear me up, no. It's good to make a wise decision and think clearly.

A prudent man foreseeth the evil and hideth himself. But the simple pass on and are punished. And so Paul's exercising wisdom here.

So he goes up to return through Macedonia, back up north again around the underbelly of Europe, Yugoslavia, to go back down toward Philippi. And there accompanied him into Asia, Sopater of Berea. Remember the Berean believers were, you know, they searched the word daily to see if these things would be so that the apostles were teaching.

And of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus, Secundus, and Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus, young Timothy, and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus. Now, Tychicus was a friend of Timothy's and a companion of Paul. And he's the one who delivered Paul's letters to the Ephesians and the Colossians.

Remember, Paul makes mention of them, of Tychicus, as delivering his letters and making known to the people his state of affairs. Plus, these men, you recall, they would take the offerings. In Macedonia, they took a collection for the poor saints in Jerusalem.

And Paul would put the money in these men's hands and they'd take it back to the poor saints in Jerusalem to help them meet their needs. Because they were Christians and the Jews ran things, they weren't getting jobs like they used to. And rather than deny the faith to get a job, they were being left out.

And they were having difficult times financially, but they were trusting in God. And God was providing for them in another way. These going before tarried for us.

Now, notice us. Luke enters in. Now, it's that personal pronoun now.

Luke's injecting his own person. He's with Paul, the writer of the book of Acts. All of a sudden, these going before tarried for us.

So, Luke's going with Paul. God's sending him as his personal physician. And it's interesting how accurate the book of Acts is in the descriptions and how very accurate as a doctor and educated man, Luke is writing everything down very clearly.

And we, there's the end, sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread and came unto them to Troas in five days where we abode seven days. Now, what they did is went back up to Philippi rather than take the ship they were going to take to Syria, knowing that there was a plot to throw them overboard and kill them in some way. They went back by land, Paul and Luke, up to Philippi and then took another ship days later.

And it shows that Paul didn't get back to Jerusalem in time for the Passover. So, he stayed with a fellowship somewhere up there, met in a synagogue where some Jews were congregated and he kept the

Passover there and the feast of unleavened bread there. And then they went across the northern portion of the Aegean Sea and they began to hit these little islands as you come down the Greek archipelago, down the Aegean Sea, down toward Patmos and then around that area of Turkey.

And upon the first day of the week when the disciples came together to break bread, Sunday morning, remember the last day of the week in the Jewish system was the Sabbath or Saturday, the seventh, Saturday, the Sabbath rest. But for the Christian, because Christ rose on the eighth day or Sunday morning, that was the day that the early church, they began to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ, knowing that they weren't under the law, that the Sabbath law was not for Gentiles or for the church, it was a covenant with the Jew only, not for Gentiles. They began to celebrate and gather together to worship and have the communion or break bread on Sunday morning.

You remember Jesus in Matthew 24, he instituted the new covenant, superseding and setting aside the old covenant. This is the new covenant in my blood. You remember he established it, what we call normally the last supper.

But why some people think it's so important that biblically, that as a Christian you can only worship on Saturday, that's the mistake that the seven-day adventists make, but it's interesting to me. James says that if you're going to keep part of the law, you have to keep all of the law. That means if you're wearing slacks, you're under a curse as a woman.

If you've got clothing on now and you're worried about on Saturday, worshiping only on Saturday, because the Bible says though when you're supposed to obey the Sabbath, you better not be wearing cotton and rayon and cotton and wool mixed together in your clothing. And if you live further than a half a mile from your church, if you're an Adventist, you can't go because you'll be breaking the Sabbath, you'll be traveling too far. So if you're going to keep the Sabbath and hold on to that, you better keep it all.

It says you better keep all 363 precepts or don't keep any of it, because if you break one, you might as well break them all. And it makes me thankful, just as my pastor said, it makes me so thankful that I don't have to worship God under law or some legal system, that I can worship God in a wonderful relationship. I'm free in Christ and I can worship any day, every day, and go as far as I want to to worship Him.

Now, so you might see this and know this because you may meet with people and say, what did you worship on? In fact, the Seventh-day Adventists have been so deceived by Satan that they say that if you worship on Sunday, it's the mark of the beast. You've received the mark of the beast. But the Bible plainly shows that Paul in the early church met on the first day of the week.

That's Sunday. You go to Israel today and you say, what's the first day of the week? It's Sunday. Everything's closed down on Saturday in Israel.

It's amazing what goes on for three days. On Friday, Islam, that's their holy day, they close all the shops, don't do anything on Friday. They open up on Saturday, and then their holy day's over, and then Saturday, everything, the rest, another third shuts down because it's a Jewish Sabbath.

It's against the law to have any businesses open or travel over 2,000 cubits or about a half a mile. In fact, today over there, if you go through an Orthodox section of Israel on the Sabbath, they'll stone your cars. The ultra-Orthodox in Israel.

It's amazing. They'll stone the cars for breaking the Sabbath, but they're the biggest bootleggers of cigarettes and whiskey in Israel. The black market, they run the black market.

Then on Sunday, the Jews open everything up, and the Christian, all the Christian churches and denominations, the bells are all ringing in all the churches around Jerusalem, and they're all closed down. It's really rough for three days to get anything done over there. But turn to Exodus chapter 31.

Let me show you the scriptures, so you'll know this. You might have to give someone an answer, and Peter says, be ready to give every man an answer, the reason of your hope in Jesus Christ and your faith, knowing how to instruct them in love, because they may want to challenge you and tell you you got the mark of the beast because you don't worship on Saturday. But this, I think it's verse, let's see, Exodus 31 verses 16 and 17.

God is telling them there's the Sabbath is a sign between his people Israel and himself. Six days may work be done, but in the seventh, which is Saturday, is the Sabbath, it's rest. Holy to the Lord, whosoever doeth any work in the Sabbath day, he shall be put to death.

Wherefore, the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever. For in six days, the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day, he rested and was refreshed.

Now you and I have the marvelous advantage of going into a perpetual rest every day because we don't have to work for our salvation. Jesus said on the cross, it is finished. And the writer of Hebrews plainly shows that that old covenant has been disannulled for the weakness of it.

And now there's a perpetual rest that we enter into that Jesus Christ has accomplished redemption. He's finished the work on the cross, all there is for our redemption. And now we just receive of God and enjoy it through Jesus Christ, my faith in him, and I rest in that.

And because Christ raised from the dead on the eighth day, Sunday, that's our first day, that's when the early church began to worship and gather together to break bread in the new covenant that he established at the last supper before he was crucified. This is the new covenant in my blood at the Passover meal. You remember in 1 Corinthians 16, 1 and 2, Paul said, when you gather together at the first day of the week, make sure you have all the collections taken care of on that first day.

When you gather together on Sunday, take your offerings, your financial offerings, your love gifts to the Lord that we can distribute to the Lord. But when I show up, I don't want you taking any offerings. So Paul wasn't with them on Sundays that often.

When he'd come in, maybe Monday or Tuesday or middle of the week, they'd have a Bible study. He'd exhort them, he'd stay with them for a few days. But he said, I don't want any offerings taken when I'm there with you.

Have it already established. When you gather together on your regular worship time on the first day of the week, which is Sunday, you take the collections then, so you don't do it when I show up. And then I'll take the money and we'll distribute it to the poor saints.

That's the first day of the week also. Now, again, most Christians were the slaves. And because they couldn't get off work, all the Bible studies were in the evening after the working hours.

And after work, they'd all gather together in these different homes or these places. And then Paul or the apostles would teach us. Many times, the slaves themselves would be the teachers.

Now, what's interesting, during the day, quite often, the slave worked for somebody very important, very wealthy. But in the evening, as he was the slave during the day for his master or his owner, in the evening at the Bible study, the owner would be sitting at his feet because God would anoint the slave and he'd be the Bible teacher, quite often. So here they are in a home someplace.

They're tired. And there's a young man that we're going to find out about. His name means fortunate.

This young kid's name is Eutychus. And they're on the third story of someone's house. The workday's over.

Man, they're all gathered. Probably had their evening meal. You know how it is to try to stay awake in an evening Bible study if the air conditioning isn't working, don't you? You're always moving and trying to cover up your yawn so they don't think you're bored.

You know, you kind of, your muscles in your teeth. You're really yawning and you get this weird look. What's wrong with their face? Why not just yawn and relax? No one's going to judge you.

You had a hard day, a long day, and you've got a belly full of food and it's warm. Why do you think we started on Wednesday nights at seven now? To help you out a little bit. And there were many lights in the upper chamber.

Well, it says, notice the first, this would be Sunday night. Remember, they worked on Sunday. Paul preached unto them ready to depart on the morrow and continued his speech till midnight.

So he's going out, you know, real late at night. It's gotten dark and Paul's going on probably 10 minutes past the normal Bible study time and the nursery people are pulling their hair out and the people in the slingshot are going nuts, you know. Well, there goes Paul again, five minutes past nine.

He's going too long and there were many lights in the upper chamber. Now notice, they didn't have light bulbs. What do you have when you have many lights burning? Candles.

You have oxygen being burned up. You have people that are breathing in this room, upper room, with all kinds of candles. It's in the Mideast.

It's in April. It's hot and there's not much oxygen left. They didn't have air conditioning.

And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus being fallen into a deep sleep. We got some people in this church we've called Eutychus. Mr. and Miss.

There's Miss Eutychus over there. There's Mr. Eutychus over there. And they know that and I like this because, man, if you can fall asleep with Paul preaching, doesn't bother me at all.

And as Paul was long preaching, the nursery helpers were pulling their hair out. There he goes again. It's ten minutes after.

He should have stopped longer, long ago. There he goes. He's not being thinking of us.

And poor Eutychus, he's just tired. You know, I don't know what he did during the day, but man, he just sunk down asleep. Fell right out the window, the third story window.

Fell down from the third loft and was taken to the man. He hit the floor dead. Probably broke his neck.

Quick way to get into glory, isn't it? Now, we're assuming that he's saved. We're assuming that he's saved. If he was, just think how quick he was in the presence of the Lord in glory.

I wonder if he really was thankful that Paul prayed for him and he came back. You know, Rosemary read a devotional to me this morning about Lazarus. You know, he's in glory.

He dies. The Lord delays himself purposely. The family's sorrowful, but Lazarus certainly isn't sorrowful.

He's in glory. He's been given his harp, his white sandals, his robe, you know, and his assignment. It says in the devotional, he's been given his locker, you know, and everything.

He's ready to go, man. He's there. Next thing you know, he's back.

And he's in these stinking, dirty, old, putrefied, rotting flesh mummy wrappings. Back in there with his body normal again. Probably wondering, what the heck is going on? You know, can you imagine how happy he must have been when he unwrapped them and he saw his sisters there? Oh, Lazarus, we couldn't live without you.

Oh, we're so glad you're back. Oh, God is so good. He's going, what? What? Can you smell these things? What? Now, what a tragedy if we believe something that some of the church teaches.

Because, see, he died again, didn't he? He died as normal. He lived longer. We don't know how long he lived again, but then he died.

What if he was angry with God? And if you want to believe that doctrine and don't understand grace and the gift of salvation, and you think you could lose your salvation, wouldn't it be a shame to go to heaven for a while, come back, and then lose it? You see how preposterous that is. I certainly wouldn't be that happy to come back. Now, I'm sure God would give grace.

I would not want to come back, ever, until I'm in my glorified body and return with the Lord. But what if that doctrine was true, and he just all of a sudden was discouraged and got in an argument with somebody, hardened his heart, and just walked away from the Lord and he lost his salvation. He died again, he wouldn't go to heaven.

I don't believe that doctrine can hold up if you really examine it. You see, you can't earn your salvation. It's a gift, and we're kept by his power and his grace.

And God had a purpose in sending his spirit and his soul back into that body. And when he died again, his natural death, he went back to be with the Lord. The gifts and the calling of God are without repentance, without change.

And so this young boy's dead. Now, there's a doctor there to know. Remember, Luke is writing this, a physician.

And this is what I find interesting. You see, they didn't have hospitals in those days. So you either prayed, and God did it, or that was it.

Or maybe some herbs and some medicines that God through the wisdom-giving man in those days had. But isn't it interesting how you didn't have hospitals or emergency rooms or 911. So look how God operates when you don't have the other things.

Now, does that mean today that God doesn't heal and cannot heal if someone dropped dead in the service? Should we not pray? Absolutely. But more than likely because of what God's done and what we have now as hospitals and the facilities that we have that they didn't have in those days, God would just as likely send the person to the hospital. And it still requires faith.

It's still not being presumptuous. But see, in those days, they had none of the things we have. That's why it's kind of comical to hear some of these false prophets and these wolves that go to Europe after the eastern communist wall came down, the separation.

And they went running over there peddling their faith books and how-to books from their air-conditioned Mercedes cars and even living at a level like they never in their lives have ever lived that level. With all the comforts we have and all the benefits that God has allowed to western civilization and our culture that I appreciate. And it's not a lack of faith to take advantage of it.

It's presumptuous and foolish not to. But they don't have these things. When they pray, their hand isn't going to a medicine cabinet for Tylenol.

When they pray, it has to work. They don't have hospitals at the disposal like you and I. I met a young girl whose grandmother in Moscow lived outside of Moscow, 85 years old. She's 85 years old.

She's never had a bath or a shower in her life. When they pray over there, you see, they depend on God. They don't need a how-to book from over here to get a car or nice clothing.

They have faith. Because through 70 years of communism, after they've escaped Hitler, they still love Jesus Christ. And these women, they have hands that are like leather.

They don't know what a beauty shop is. They have their nails done every month or every other week. And there's nothing wrong with that.

It's not wrong at all to enjoy those things that God has given on this side. But to say that they need to be instructed by us American Christians on what faith is. Because I know women over here, if they didn't have those things, they wouldn't follow Jesus.

They'd be complaining and murmuring. They don't know what it's like to have hairspray. Men over there don't know what it's like to have one car, let alone, you know, two cars.

We haven't the faintest idea. They have faith. They have faith that puts us to shame.

I go over there and I come away humbled continually. So when they went down and prayed, that's all they had. They believed.

They had to believe. There wasn't an alternative. Well, if the prayer doesn't work, we'll get them to the hospital.

If the headache doesn't go away, take some Tylenol. You see, and again, it's not wrong. I thank God for these things.

But they only had one thing they could do. Pray. You know how God honors them.

Sometimes I think we have so many alternatives, we never develop in our faith. We think it's faith, but because of all the alternatives, we don't really pray believing. Effectually, with a heart, we're demeaning it.

You see, I think we need to learn those things. I think that God in His mercy is going to bring the church, His bride in America, to that point. We may just see some things when we may not have the alternatives that we have now.

And when we pray, we're going to go right to the throne, and we're going to mean it. And God in His mercy may allow it. As Jesus began to maybe speak and touch on some of these things, remember, it says, And many departed from Him.

Many quit believing. And the crowds got smaller and smaller and smaller. Paul went down and fell on Him, embracing Him and said, trouble not yourselves, His life is in Him.

God sent His spirit and soul back. Much like Elijah and Elisha when they threw themselves on the child. You remember when the child died, and they both prayed, and God brought the life of the child back for the mother.

When He therefore was come up again, in other words, they brought the boy back up to the third floor, back into the Bible study, and had broken bread and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day. So He departed. It could be the mere fact that God let him fall asleep and fall out of the window and hit the floor was for what was going to take place afterwards, what He saw, because Paul knew what it was like to go into paradise and come back.

And I'll bet you they had some good fellowship together, and it doesn't tell us exactly how, but I can imagine that God used Eutychus in a powerful way after this experience and this thing he went through, this experience. Now, it probably seemed very negative at first as he's going down. And his friends went, well, why would God allow that? My gosh, he came to the Bible study.

Why is God punishing him, you know? I remember one time, I'm teaching a class and some young people, and this is, he's, long since, I don't know what's happened to the guy. But he was on fire for Jesus, and it's, you know, you can usually see when someone's on fire like this guy was, sure enough, Satan had a girl. Now, God can have a girl too, but this is how you can tell if the girl's from the Lord or from Satan.

Are you being drawn away from the Lord, or is this girl in your life making you want more of the Lord? That's how you can tell if the girl's from the Lord or the guy. Either way, is it starting to draw you, and all of a sudden, they want to do things on Bible study night, and there's a conflict of interest here. All of a sudden, y'all can't do, oh, let's go here.

Well, this is Bible study night. Well, I love the Lord, and you love the Lord. After all, you're older than the Lord now, and pretty soon, if you see that, and that war's starting, hey, I'd seek the Lord.

Because every blessing or everything God brings into my life is to draw me closer to Him, not all of a sudden getting me to the point where it's drawing me away from Him. That's how you can always discern

is the guy or the girl or the blessing from the Lord. Are you drawing closer to the Lord because of this, or is it taking you away from the Lord and less time for the Lord? I'm sitting there teaching, and I'm watching the pattern.

I'm watching the guy just start to drift. I mean, he's not even paying, and then he's staying up so late, he's not doing his homework, he's not doing his studies, and he's having a hard time staying awake during the class. And I'm sitting here teaching, and all of a sudden, I hear this, bam! He fell asleep.

He was out all night with this girl. Next thing you know, he goes like this, and his forehead smacked the wood rail on the pew. Bam! I said, thanks, Lord.

No, I didn't say that. Before you know it, he was gone. I mean, she'd show up at the church and be peeking out the back window, and he couldn't even concentrate.

He was always looking over his shoulder when he knew she was out there. Before you know it, he bit the dust. Bit the dust.

Tragedy. But if you can imagine the fellowship they had together. Man.

Talking about the experience, and Paul being able to personally tutor and say, Eutychus, boy, has God got a plan for your life. To go through something like this and have God bring you back and go through an experience like this, oh, God's got a plan for your life. Isn't it wonderful to know that God's got a plan for your life? And to be used of God and know what God asks you to do.

What a wonderful thing to know that the God of the universe has a plan for my life. And so they brought the young man alive and were not a little comforted. Now here, notice Luke again.

And we went before to ship and sailed to Assos, there intending to take in Paul, for so had he appointed, minding himself to go afoot. Now here, this is amazing. Now Paul teaches a Bible study and shares all night from sundown to sunrise.

He, as we know through the book of Acts, he would always get a job wherever he went so he wouldn't ask for money and be a burden to anybody. And then he'd work during the day and teach studies at night. And here he's up all night long and now they're going to get a ship and go down to Assos.

They're starting to go back south now toward Ephesus to go all the way down to Syria. So Paul can now, he wants to get to Jerusalem because he's missed Passover for the day of Pentecost, the next great feast. And he knows he has time.

And so he's on his way. Now what does he do? Now you're talking 20 miles. He decides to walk.

At this time, this is some six years before he's beheaded. 60 A.D. He's in his early or mid-60s. So Paul, he decides to walk.

He probably just wanted to be with the Lord and get alone with the Lord, meditating. He walks the 20 miles. These guys jump on the ship and catch the winds coming down from the north out of Europe in the springtime, pushing him down.

And he walks to go afoot. And when he met with us at Assos, we took him in and came to Mytilene. So he gets on the ship.

He's had his time and he probably had a tremendous time walking with the Lord. Some 20 miles just meditating, praising God, worshiping the Lord. It's one of the greatest things, I think, if you could ever take the time to just go out sometime and just get alone somewhere and just walk with the Lord.

I love to do it. I have a friend who allows me to go up and fast in his cabin. And one of the most glorious things is to get up there and be fasting and seeking God and then just spend the day just walking through the Adirondacks, talking with the Lord, praising God and letting it all hang out.

Just exposing your heart and saying, Lord, search me. And walking through the woods, just worshiping and praising God. Sometimes I'll just get out, start early in the morning and sometimes it's 5 o'clock in the afternoon and I get back.

I can't believe that I've been walking for 8 hours, tromping around the Adirondacks. And you don't realize because you're walking with Him, communing with Him. I'm extremely tired when you get back.

I mean, you go, man, I can't believe it, Lord. I've been walking all day long with you. But it's glorious.

Glorious. I remember when we had our little fellowship and we were in the depot in Victor, over there on Railroad Street. And the railroad track went by the railroad depot.

We were in the depot. Some of you remember what that place was like, that sweat box over there. Five Sunday services and no air conditioning, no air movement.

We're in there sweltering, 200 people, 250 people crammed in there, dripping all over our Bibles, loving it. And the railroad bed went right by the depot there and wound around through the golf course over there and comes right down here, crosses, what is this road, County Road, whatever, right over here by the back by Mertensia. Crossed right across 41, comes right down along here, right through our property, crosses 332, right through our property into Canandaigua.

And people used to come to our church, when they were kids, they'd take the train for 10 cents from Rochester to Canandaigua and go swimming when they were kids. They'd pull the railroad bed out, the tracks, and I used to love to walk in the morning, get up with my Bible and walk and the trees began to grow over because the trains weren't going through anymore and the smokestack and the steam weren't burning off the leaves and the trees began to grow over and I had a tunnel-like, walking from right over here all the way, and it was about four miles, fantastic walk into Victor, talking with the Lord in the morning and then I'd walk home at night. Just talking with the Lord.

It's a wonderful time to meditate and just get alone with him. He loves to walk. It's like your own little road to Emmaus somewhere.

Try it. You might like it. It is just awesome.

And so he's back with Luke and the guys and we sailed. We, Luke and Ian, we sailed fence and came the next day over against Chios and the next day we arrived at Samos and tarried at Trojillium and the next day we came to Miletus, which was about 30 miles south of Ephesus on the Turkish coast. For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus because he would not spend time in Asia for he hasted if it were possible for him to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost.

Now, rather than stop at Ephesus, now Paul had such a love, remember this was a great church at Ephesus, and he had such a love for Asia, he purposely bypassed the port and went 30 miles south to Miletus and went ashore there so he wouldn't be tempted to go right into Ephesus from the port and stay there and get involved and miss Pentecost. He wanted to get to Jerusalem. And so he calls for the elders of Ephesus to come down, if they would, and meet with him before he departs and leaves for Jerusalem to make Pentecost.

And he gets in probably one of the greatest areas of the Book of Acts, the teachings of the church on wolves and how you can determine and discern a wolf and a false prophet. And we don't have time. We'll get into it next week.

Shall we all stand? Father, we thank you that you do delight in fellowshiping with us. And Lord, no matter what our situation, how severe it may be, you are there. And you have so many means, Lord, to care for us.

And just as Paul and Eutychus, Lord, we can be in a situation and there is no phone. There is no hospital. We could be somewhere, Lord, and not have the medicine cabinet.

And Lord, you're the same yesterday, today, and forever. And so we thank you, Lord, for those times when you put us in those situations to prove to us that you still are. And sometimes it's so frightening, Lord.

And yet, Lord, we're not to be presumptuous. You have blessed us with hospitals and medicine and wisdom. And just as you sent a doctor with Paul, Dr. Luke, he was wise and he listened to that man.

And you used several ways to bring comfort and healing to your apostle. Teach us, Lord, give us the balance that we need and teach us how to truly walk in the Spirit. And again, Lord, oh, what a blessing it is to fellowship with you, to sometimes just take the time to get alone like Paul.

Oh, it's so rewarding, Lord. Draw us, Lord, with the cords of your love that we desire more and more fellowship with you. It is so wonderful, Lord, so glorious.

Oh, it's such a wonderful thing, Father. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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