

Ministry of the Apostle Paul

Part 1

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Place	Catford, 2015
Duration	00:54:23
Online version	https://www.audioteaching.org/en/sermons/eab036/ministry-of-the-apostle-paul

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[00:00:01] Good evening, dear friends, and welcome to this meeting tonight here in Catford. It is a pleasure to see you.

It is on my heart to have a few thoughts on the ministry of the Apostle Paul, and I would like to base these thoughts on a passage that we find in Acts, chapter 20. I would like to read first of all the text, Acts, chapter 20, as of verse 17.

Acts 20, verse 17.

From Miletus, having sent to Ephesus, he called over to him the elders of the assembly. He is the Apostle Paul. And when they were come to him, he said to them, Ye know how I was with you all the time from the first day that I arrived in Asia, [00:01:07] serving the Lord with all lowliness and tears and temptations, which happened to me through the plots of the Jews, how I held back nothing of which is profitable, so as not to announce it to you and to teach you publicly and in every house, testifying to both Jews and Greeks repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ. And now, behold, bound in my spirit, I go to Jerusalem, not knowing what things shall happen to me in it, only that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city, saying that bonds and tribulations await me. But I make no account of my life as dear to myself, so that I finish my course [00:02:02] and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus to testify the glad tidings of the grace of God. And now, behold, I know that ye all among whom I have gone about preaching the kingdom of God shall see my face no more. Wherefore, I witness to you this day that I am clean from the blood of all, for I have not shrunk from announcing to you all the counsel of God. Take heed, therefore, to yourselves and to all the flock wherein the Holy Spirit has set you as overseers to shepherd the assembly of God, which he has purchased with the blood of his own. For I know this, that they will come in amongst you after my departure, grievous wolves, not sparing the flock, and from among your own selves shall rise up men speaking perverted things to draw away the disciples after them. [00:03:01] Wherefore, watch, remembering that for three years, night and day, I ceased not admonishing each one of you with tears. And now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and give to you an inheritance among all the sanctified. I have coveted the silver or gold or clothing of no one.

Yourselves know that these hands have ministered to my wants and to those who were with me. I have showed you all things, and thus, laboring, we ought to come in aid of the weak and to

remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that he himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive. And having said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all.

[00:04:07] These verses are full of rich blessing and instruction for us, and it is impossible to go through all the verses that we have read. It is not my intention tonight to do this verse by verse. I would just like to point out some essential points that come before us in this chapter concerning the ministry of the Apostle Paul. And I don't want to do that tonight in a theoretical way, but I would rather do it in a practical way, which means we would like to ask ourselves what can we learn for our ministry, for our service that the Lord Jesus Christ has given to each of us. [00:05:04] Of course, no one would dare to compare himself with the Apostle Paul. We are not gifted as the Apostle Paul was, and we are not devoted as the Apostle Paul was. He is a great example that the Lord Jesus puts before us. But we can learn from the Apostle Paul, and this is my intention tonight. Three sections that I would like to put before us tonight. First of all, let us have a look at the contents or the essence of the ministry of the Apostle Paul. Secondly, and that will be the main point tonight because it is a very practical point, we would like to look at the way or the mode or the manner in which the Apostle Paul has served. [00:06:06] And thirdly, if there will be more time, we will have a look at the dangers, at the resources that we have in our present time.

Now, if we have a look at the ministry of the Apostle Paul itself, there is again a threefold division. In verse 24, Paul says that he testified the glad tidings of the grace of God.

This is the first point. He was teaching the gospel, the glad tidings.

Secondly, in verse 25, he says, I have gone about preaching the kingdom of God.

That is the second great point in the ministry of Paul, the kingdom of God. [00:07:06] And thirdly, in verse 27, he says, I have not shrunk from announcing to you all the counsel of God. That is the third point.

So, we have three pillars here before us on which the ministry of Paul was based. First, the gospel. Secondly, the kingdom. And thirdly, the counsel of God.

Of course, it is impossible now to speak in detail about these three things that would take more than one meeting to do so. But very briefly, the gospel. The gospel is the message of God for us.

It is the gospel of God. He is the origin of the gospel, of the good tidings, or of the glad tidings. [00:08:05] Those who receive these glad tidings are, first of all, unbelievers, and secondly, believers. The gospel is for us all.

As far as the unbelievers are concerned, the gospel speaks about the necessity of repentance, of conversion, and of faith.

In verse 21, Paul says that he taught in every house, testifying to both Jews and Greeks, unbelievers, repentance to God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ. When the gospel is presented to unbelievers, we speak about the grace of God. We speak about the Lord Jesus Christ who came to give his life for us. [00:09:04] We speak about the necessity of repentance, of conversion, of confession. We speak about the necessity of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Believe in Jesus Christ and you will be saved. That is the great message of the gospel when it is preached to people who are

not yet converted. And the basis, of course, is the work of the cross that the Lord Jesus has accomplished for us. He died for us. He gave his life for us. He is the substitute God has given so that we might not perish but have everlasting life. But in verse 24, Paul says, I testify the glad tidings of the grace of God to believers.

[00:10:03] Here he addresses himself to the eldest in Ephesus. And it is true that the gospel is the message of God for those who have not yet believed. But the gospel is also the message for us who have believed. Why that? It is the gospel of God, the glad tidings, and the great contents is the Lord Jesus Christ. This is what we read in Romans 1. And the gospel, the message of the gospel, gives us a clear understanding of the position that we as believers do have now before God. Maybe we could briefly turn to 1 Corinthians 15 to prove what I said. [00:11:02] 1 Corinthians 15, verse 1.

But I make known to you, brethren, the glad tidings.

To you, brethren, the glad tidings. Here it is not the glad tidings for unbelievers, but here it is the glad tidings for believers. To you, brethren, the glad tidings which I announce to you, which also ye received, in which also ye stand, by which also ye are saved. There are four steps here.

The gospel is announced or preached. It is received.

It gives us a standing that speaks of our position that we have justified before God. And the fourth step, by which ye also are saved.

Salvation truth is a great and precious truth. God has brought us into this position of salvation.

[00:12:08] We have forgiveness of sin, for example. We are reconciled. We are justified. We have peace with God. We are sanctified. We are quickened with Christ. All this has to do with salvation truth. This is what the Apostle Paul preached. And all this is founded on three great facts, which we find in verse 3, 1 Corinthians 15. For I delivered to you in the first place what I also received, that Christ died for our sins. That is the first, according to the scriptures. And that he was buried, that is the second. And that he was raised the third day. That is the great contents of the gospel. Now Paul preached the gospel. [00:13:01] And we should also be witnesses of the gospel.

Some of us might preach the gospel. Others not.

But we all are witnesses of the gospel.

We all should live in a practical way that the gospel can be spread among the people where we live and with whom we get in touch and in contact. The second thing the Apostle Paul had preached in his ministry is the kingdom, verse 25.

And now, behold, I know that ye all among whom I have gone about preaching the kingdom of God. We should not underestimate the truth of the kingdom of God.

If we go through the Acts of the Apostles, we will realize immediately that preaching the kingdom of God is a very important thing. [00:14:14] When the Lord Jesus Christ raised from among the dead, he was together with his disciples for 40 days. And he talked to his disciples. What was their topic? The topic was the kingdom of God, Acts chapter 1. And in the last chapter of the Acts, we find the Apostle

Paul in his own house, I think for two years. He taught the believers what was the subject, the kingdom of God. And there are other references in the Acts of the kingdom of God. We should not underestimate the truth of the kingdom of God. Now again, it is not the time to expose that subject, which is an important one. [00:15:05] Just some very brief thoughts. The kingdom of God has to do with the great fact that the Lord Jesus Christ is Lord and King. The day will come when this kingdom will be visible in this world. In the millennium, there will be a public manifestation of this kingdom. And he will be accepted by all who live on earth. This is future.

Now, in the present day, the Lord Jesus Christ is King. He is Lord.

But he is Lord and King in heaven. Here on earth are those who follow him.

The kingdom is not visible on earth. It is invisible.

The King is rejected. When the Lord Jesus Christ was on earth, they said, we don't want him. We don't want him to reign. [00:16:01] They rejected him. They refused him.

And he is still the rejected one. Now, we are in the kingdom of God. We are his disciples.

Discipleship has to do with the kingdom of God. We are those who learn. He is the one who teaches us.

The kingdom of God has to do with service. We are his servants. He is the King. We are the servants.

I don't say he is our King. He is our Lord. But it remains true that we are his servants.

And we share his rejection. In the present time of the kingdom, we share the rejection of Christ. We should be prepared to bear, to a certain extent, his reproach.

This has to do with kingdom truth.

[00:17:03] And we now, in the present time, we show forth the great characteristics of the coming kingdom in glory.

What are these great characteristics of the coming kingdom? We find them in Romans 15.

There are three.

Justice, peace, and joy.

In the millennium, there will be justice on earth. There will be peace on earth. And there will be joy.

We can just read this verse, Romans 14.

Romans 14, verse 17.

For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking. It's not an outward manifestation. But

righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. [00:18:04] Now, in the millennium, righteousness, peace, and joy will be seen publicly, openly. But now, we, in our lives, we should carry these three characteristics while the king is rejected. Righteousness, practical righteousness. Peace, we should be those who live in peace with others. And we should show forth this joy in the Holy Spirit. This is what we had before us yesterday when we studied the wonderful example of the young Thessalonian believers. The kingdom of God. Kingdom truth.

Important truth. And I would like to encourage you to study this subject more in detail. The third thing, the third pillar of the ministry of the Apostle Paul is the counsel of God. [00:19:04] I have not shrunk from announcing to you all the counsel of God. Now, the counsel of God has to do with the purpose of God. Has to do with what is in God's heart. The gospel has to do with our need.

The gospel answers to our needs. We, as sinners, we have and we had certain needs. And the gospel gives us the answer to our needs. The counsel of God, on the contrary, does not answer to our needs. But the counsel of God shows us what was in the heart of God in order to share it with us. In order to bestow it on us.

God has opened his heart.

And he has shown us all that was in his heart.

The counsel, the eternal counsel or purpose of God.

[00:20:06] And again, this is a great subject.

A subject that is particularly dealt with in the epistle to the Ephesians. In Ephesians 1, we see the counsel of God in regard to us personally. In Ephesians chapter 3, we see the counsel and the purpose of God in connection with the church. With the assembly of God.

This assembly that he has purchased with the blood of his own. Wonderful chapters. Ephesians 1, Ephesians 3. Chapters that we have often considered. And we rightly do so with worshipping God for what he had in mind to give us.

We are blessed with every spiritual blessing. [00:21:04] And we can only say with the Apostle Paul, blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places. Who has had this wonderful counsel. Who has opened us his heart in order to show us all the rich blessing that he had for us. So, three pillars of the ministry of Paul.

The gospel, the kingdom, and the counsel.

And if we today, in a feeble way, minister the word of God. If we teach others, also our children and our families. We should have a look to these three topics. We should talk to others, to our children, to our young people, about gospel truth. We should speak about kingdom truth. [00:22:04] We should speak about the counsel of God. So we see this has also a practical impact.

A practical application to us. It is not only that we look at what Paul received and what he did. No, it is also written for our personal instruction.

The second section tonight is the way how the Apostle Paul has ministered.

It is one thing to consider what he did and what he preached. But it is another thing to see how he did it, how he ministered, how he dealt with people. And this section that we have read together tonight is full of instruction concerning this point. [00:23:04] First of all, we realize that Paul did not just preach. Of course he has preached, but look to the different expressions that are used. In verse 20, it says that he announced something. In verse 20, again, he taught something. In verse 21, he testified something. And later on, in verse 31, he was admonishing.

Again, in verse 25, it is preaching.

It is announcing in verse 27. So different expressions are used.

It was not always in the same way that the Apostle Paul did it. But sometimes he preached, he announced, he taught, he admonished, he encouraged. [00:24:02] How rich was the ministry of the Apostle Paul! Let us have a look at the motives of the ministry of the Apostle Paul. Why did he minister? Why did he preach? Why did he announce? Why did he encourage? The first and the greatest motive that we find here is love. Let us read verse 35, where he brings to memory the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, who said, It is more blessed to give than to receive. If you look for a definition of the word love, here you have one. This is love.

It is more blessed to give than to receive.

Love gives. Love loves to give.

[00:25:03] John 3.16, we all know this verse by heart, I think. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son. Galatians 2.20, the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me. To love, that means to give, to give a sacrifice, to offer something. Now here Paul said, It is more blessed to give than to receive. This is also valuable in the service for our Lord.

When we do something for him, the motive, the great motive should be love. It is more blessed to give, to serve, to do something for others than to receive, than to be egoistic. This is love. And the great motive for the Apostle Paul was the same motive than the great motive of the Lord Jesus when he gave his life. [00:26:01] Why did the Lord Jesus die? It was love. That was the motive. And we have that great chapter, 1 Corinthians 13, the chapter of love. This chapter is not given for an address at a marriage. Of course we can read it when a man and a woman, when they marry. Of course we can apply 1 Corinthians 13 to marriage. But the very reason why 1 Corinthians 13 is given to us is to show us that the very motive in exercising our spiritual gifts should be love. 1 Corinthians 12 speaks about the gifts.

And 1 Corinthians 13 shows us the motive to use the gifts that God has given to all of us.

We all have a gift. We all have a ministry. We all have a service. [00:27:06] And the great motive should be love. A second motive is found in verse 19 where Paul says, I arrived in Asia serving the Lord with all lowliness, humility.

Again, the Apostle Paul is a follower, an imitator in the positive sense of the word of the Lord Jesus Christ. If we look to Philipians chapter 2, a well-known passage, we see one of the great motives of

the Lord Jesus Christ. Philippians chapter 2, verse 5, Therefore let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus. [00:28:05] And what was the mind? Verse 3, In lowliness of mind, here we have the word back from Acts 20, each esteeming the other as more excellent than themselves.

This was a second motive of the Apostle Paul to fulfill his ministry, to see to the interest of the others. Not to his own interest, but to the interest and the benefit of others. A third motive is found in verse 24, But I make no account of my life as dear to myself, so that I finish my course in the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus. This is devotion, commitment, and dedication.

[00:29:06] How devoted was the Apostle Paul.

No account of his life as dear to himself.

He wanted to finish his course.

He wanted to finish the ministry. Not just to do it, but to finish it. And in 2 Timothy 4, at the end of the life of the Apostle Paul, he could say, I have finished my course.

He was a devoted minister, and we can learn of this wonderful example.

So we have the motives of the Apostle Paul. Love, lowliness, or humility, and devotion.

Now, there is another point that comes before us in this chapter. That is the flexibility of the Apostle Paul. [00:30:04] He was indeed a very flexible minister.

We have already considered the three great pillars. Gospel, kingdom, counsel.

The Apostle Paul was not fixed on the gospel. He was not fixed on the kingdom. He was not fixed on the counsel. No, according to the needs, he talked about the kingdom, about the counsel, or he preached the gospel. He was flexible.

And there is a lesson for us. Particularly for the brothers who preach the word of God. Let us be, at least to a certain extent, flexible. Of course, we have our gift, and we should minister according to our gift. But nevertheless, let us not be only on one side, but let us be a little bit flexible.

[00:31:08] I remember a brother, when he stood up in the meeting, he always read a passage from the epistles of Paul. Never anything else. He was not flexible. There are others who are specialists on prophetic subjects. They only know prophetic subjects, nothing else. They are not flexible. I hope you understand what I mean. Flexibility.

The Apostle Paul was flexible as to the places where he worked. In verse 20, he said, I announced to you publicly and in every house.

So he did it in public, and he did it in private. He was flexible.

Sometimes it was necessary to preach the gospel, to preach the word of God, [00:32:03] to preach the kingdom publicly, and he did so. Sometimes it was necessary to do it in private. Maybe in a personal talk to a brother or a sister. And when this was necessary, the Apostle Paul did it. So we also, we

should be flexible as to the place where we are. Sometimes publicly, sometimes not publicly.

The Apostle Paul was also flexible as to the target groups.

In verse 21, we read, testifying to both Jews and Greeks, repentance to God and faith towards our Lord Jesus.

He was flexible.

He was not limited to the Jews.

[00:33:02] He was not limited to the Greeks. No, he says, to Jews and Greeks. Now, it is true that the Apostle Paul was the apostle of the uncircumcision, whereas Peter was the apostle of the circumcision. Circumcision means the Jews. Uncircumcision means the heathen population. So Paul had a special ministry to announce the gospel to the Greeks, to the uncircumcision, to the heathen world. And he did so.

But yet, he was also flexible to talk to the Jews.

We see the same thing with the Apostle Peter. He was the apostle of the Jews, of the circumcision. But we also see him talking to people that came from the nations. Acts 10 is a clear evidence. [00:34:02] Yes, Peter had some problems to do so, but the Lord Jesus Christ helped him. So we see a certain flexibility as to the target group.

Of course, we may have a special gift to talk to children or to young people or to couples or to old people.

But if we have a special gift to talk to a special target group, let us not forget that there are also others. A teacher of the word of God should also be able to give a short address to children maybe. Or somebody who normally works with young people should not say, oh, I am absolutely unable to talk to old people. The apostle Paul was a little, no, not a little. He was flexible, and we should also be flexible as to the target group.

[00:35:07] The apostle Paul was also flexible as to the time when he ministered.

In verse 31 we read, Therefore, watch, remembering that for three years, night and day, I ceased not admonishing each one of you with tears.

Night and day.

A flexible minister. Whenever there was a need, he was available. He was at hand.

When they called him during nighttime, he was there. When they called him during daytime, he was there. Of course, we cannot work 24 hours a day.

[00:36:04] This is impossible. We need our sleep, and the Lord Jesus Christ knows this very well. But generally speaking, we should be available when we are needed.

When there is something to do, we should be available. Again, the great example, of course, is the Lord Jesus Christ. He was always available.

After a long day, a tiring ministry, the Lord Jesus Christ needed some rest. And there came those who brought the little children. The disciples say, no, Jesus has no time for you now. He is tired.

He wants to have a rest. Come back later.

The Lord Jesus Christ, he heard it, and he said, let the children come to me. [00:37:04] He was tired, yes.

I'm sure he was, but he had time for children.

When somebody calls you at night, at 10 o'clock or 11 o'clock, he has a problem, what is your reaction? Call me again tomorrow. I'm tired now.

Or will you help the one who calls you and has a problem and needs your help, needs an advice?

The Apostle Paul sets us a wonderful example. He says, night and day.

He doesn't say day and night. He says night and day.

He was available.

He was flexible.

There is another character that comes before us in this chapter.

I already read verse 19.

[00:38:02] I arrived in Asia serving the Lord with all lowliness and tears. And tears.

Dear friends, servants of the Lord are not machines.

They have emotions.

And they should have emotions.

The Apostle Paul speaks of his tears. Serving with tears.

With emotions.

The Lord Jesus himself has wept when he was on earth.

During his ministry. When he saw those who didn't want to believe, who didn't want to accept him, who rejected him, he dropped tears.

When he saw the one, his friend, who was buried, [00:39:02] and the others who were sad, full of

sorrow, standing at the grave, he shed tears.

Oh, yes, the Lord Jesus Christ was not ashamed of his tears. And the Apostle Paul neither.

With tears.

With emotions.

With inner feelings. The Lord Jesus Christ was touched with compassion. This is the expression that we find different times in the Gospel. This speaks of the heart, of the emotions. Dear friends, when we, in all our weakness, do something for the Lord Jesus Christ, let us not forget. We should have and we can show our compassion. Let us not be ashamed of our tears.

[00:40:07] Again, verse 19, there is another point in it. Serving the Lord with all lowliness and tears and temptation.

Temptation.

When we minister and serve the Lord, there might be opposition.

There might be resistance.

There might be problems. There might be temptations. It is not always a smooth way where everything goes fine. Where everybody is happy. No. Sometimes we are attacked.

Sometimes we are attacked by unbelievers. That is already difficult and hard. But sometimes we are even attacked by believers. [00:41:01] And that is even harder, isn't it?

When a brother or sister says, hey, what are you doing? Why are you doing it like this? Do it like that.

Don't do this. Don't do that.

Opposition.

Resistance.

The way of ministering the Lord Jesus, of serving him, is not the way of least resistance. There will be opposition.

The Apostle Paul, he has experienced this opposition, this resistance, more than one time.

Read his last letter that he wrote, the second epistle to Timothy. All that are in Asia have left me.

That was a hard burden on the Apostle Paul.

[00:42:03] Resistance.

Opposition. A not understanding.

That can happen when we work for the Lord. The Apostle Paul accepted the opposition and he overcame it with the help of his heavenly Master.

So, we see some indications. There are more, but just some indications about the way or the mode how the Apostle Paul ministered.

Now, briefly, a third point.

The Apostle Paul also mentions dangers.

He did not only explain the truth. He did not only preach the gospel. He did not only encourage people. But he also spoke about the dangers that would come up very soon after he departed.

[00:43:10] The dangers in which we are today.

And there are two great dangers or two great directions from which dangers come.

They come from without and they come from within.

What did he say?

For I know this, verse 29, that there will come in amongst you after my departure grievous wolves not sparing the flock. Where do these wolves come from? They come from the outside. They are outside and they want to come inside. [00:44:01] And secondly, from among you, so inside, from among you, your own selves shall rise up men speaking perverted things to draw away the disciples after them. Again, it is not the time tonight to enter into the details. But it is important that we know that there are two directions where the danger and the opposition comes from. Sometimes it comes from the outside. It comes from the world. It comes also from the Christian world. People coming in telling wrong things. They are like wolves.

Sometimes they appear like sheep, but they are wolves. And they will not spare the flock.

They are grievous. They are dangerous wolves.

But maybe the second danger is even the bigger one. [00:45:03] From among your own selves shall rise up men speaking perverted and wrong, dangerous things. And what do they do? They draw away the disciples after them.

It is good that the Apostle Paul tells us how we can recognize these people. What are they doing? They are drawing away the disciples after them. A good shepherd among the flock, among the people of God, will always draw the attention to the Lord Jesus Christ. A wrong shepherd, men who speak wrong and perverted things, they draw away disciples after themselves.

If somebody tries to attract people for himself, all the alarm rings should bell.

[00:46:10] Something is wrong. If somebody directs the attention of the believers to the Lord Jesus

Christ, he is most probably a good shepherd.

One in whom we can have confidence. So two dangers.

But we are not helpless.

We are not without resources.

We have resources.

What does the Apostle say?

He says, I commit you.

Where is that verse? 32. Thank you. [00:47:01] And now, I commit you to God and to the word of his grace.

I commit you to God.

It's the triune God. God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit. To whom the Apostle Paul commits these elders of Ephesus. And we can have full confidence and full trust in God. That is the first great resource that we have.

Secondly, the word of his grace.

We have the word of God in our hand. This wonderful weapon.

This wonderful light. This wonderful food.

When wrong things arise, wrong teaching, when dangers come up from without or within, we have the word of God. [00:48:03] We have this wonderful word of his grace. And it will show us what is right, what is false, and what is right.

And there is a third resource that we have.

That is prayer.

Verse 36.

Having said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. If we don't know if something is wrong or right, true or false, we can ask.

We can ask.

In all things, we can go to our Heavenly Father in prayer and ask him for advice.

Another wonderful resource that we have.

But that is not all.

[00:49:04] In view of the dangers, we do not only have these resources, but there should also be a reaction on our side. In verse 28, the Apostle Paul says, Take heed, therefore, to yourselves and to all the flock.

Take heed.

Pay attention.

Be careful.

Don't be careless. No, take heed.

First of all, take heed to yourselves to pay attention. First of all, as to ourselves, the flesh is still in us, and we are able to commit any crime, any wrong thing. So let us take heed, first of all, of ourselves, but also of all the flock.

[00:50:01] All the flock.

There are those in local assemblies, and the Apostle Paul here addresses to the elders of a local assembly. There are those who have a particular responsibility for others. So take heed for yourself, but also for all the flock. For the old ones, for the young ones, for the children, for the brothers, for the sisters. Take care.

Take heed. Be careful.

We have a responsibility.

In verse 31, there is a second thing that is mentioned. Wherefore, watch.

We should watch.

We should be on guard.

It is also important to watch. Not to wait until the wrong thing has entered, but to watch that it does not come in. [00:51:02] That is the much better way. Prevention is much better and easier than repairing things that have already gone wrong. And in verse 31, it is added, watch.

Therefore, remembering that for three years, night and day, I cease not admonishing each one of you.

In verse 35, he says, I have showed you all things that thus laboring we ought to come in eight of week, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus. To remember.

Twice we are reminded to remember something. So we have to take heed. [00:52:02] We have to watch.

And we have to remember.

This is our responsibility in view of the dangers that are around us.

Now, time is up.

It is true there is much more in that chapter. And it is worthwhile studying it more in detail because there is such a full and rich instruction in it. But let me very briefly repeat what we have seen. First of all, the three pillars on which the ministry of Paul was based, the gospel, the good and glad tidings concerning unbelievers and believers, the kingdom of God, and the wonderful counsel of God, these three great subjects that the Apostle always had before him. [00:53:03] We have then been considering the way of ministering, how the Apostle Paul did it. We have been occupied a little bit with the motives of the Apostle Paul, his love, his lowliness, his devotion. We have seen the flexibility of the Apostle Paul in different ways. We have seen his emotions, his tears that he shed.

We have seen that there might be resistance and oppositions. And then, thirdly, we have seen a little bit the dangers that are there, that were there at the time when the Apostle Paul left this earth, dangers that are still present for us today, how we react and the wonderful resources that we have.

I think it is a great subject. [00:54:01] It is a great chapter, and I hope that we all have received a rich blessing through this passage in Acts 20, a well-known passage, but it is always fresh and new for us. Thank you for your attention.