Voyage to Rome

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[0:00] Let us turn right into the chapter we read, Acts chapter 27.

And we may read from verse 21. But after long abstinence, Paul stood forth in Israel and said, Sirs, you should have harkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss.
For now I exhort you to be of good cheer, for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul, thou must be brought before Caesar.
And lo, God hath given thee all them that sailed with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be a good cheer, for I believe God that it shall be even as it was told me.
Forty-de-gold we considered Paul's address in the presence of Festus and Agrippa.
[1:20] And after his appearance before these men, arrangements were made to have him transported to Rome from Caesarea. And this chapter is the account of that journey.

And of his, and of his, and if you, if you write on through to the middle of chapter 28, the account of his arrival at Rome. He was sent there under the charge of the Roman centurion, Julius, with his own two close friends, Luke and Aristarchus, a member of the congregation, a member of the congregation Thessalonica.
And as we read, they were taken ultimately in a cargo boat sailing from Alexandria, heading towards Rome.
And the voyage was fraught with great difficulties and danger. But there was no question about the eventual outcome.
So the Lord had told Paul long before this day that he would bear witness for him before Caesar.
[2:37] And indeed, the last, you could say that the last ten chapters of this book, from chapter 19 through to, certainly from verse 11, chapter 19 through to the end of this book, these ten chapters really revolve around that passionate desire of Paul's to see, and to see Rome and to preach there.

And this was confirmed to him by the aims of the Lord after his arrest in Jerusalem, you will bear testimony for me in Rome.
He appealed to his trial to Rome, he appealed to Caesar, and was confirmed then that he would be sent to Rome. And the whole, the ten chapters revolve around the fulfilling of this passionate desire of Paul's to go and preach the gospel at Rome.
But when he expressed that desire, little did he know that he would see Rome as a prisoner bound in chains. And here we have the account then of his being transported from Caesarea under the charge of this Roman centurion, Julius, and on board this cargo boat.
And when you consider how the Lord was here fulfilling Paul's great desire, you have here one of the clear instances in the Bible of how a person can be, as they tend to call it today, in the will of the Lord, and yet having that pathway of his fraught with considerable difficulty and danger.
[4:33] There are some people who are of the mistaken impression that if, or rather when, the Lord shows them a particular path in which to travel, that the Lord is going to make it easy for them to go along that way.

Now that does not necessarily follow. An easy providence is no guide that you are in the right way.
Indeed, there's a very instructive verse in this passage, in this chapter, after Paul had counseled the Roman centurion and the sailors with him in a boat not to sail.
He must have had some kind of privilege, perhaps with just his knowledge, of the of the seas at that time of the year in that area. We don't know, but at least he counseled them not to sail.
The centurion conferred with the ship's master and the ship's owner and they both advised that they could sail.

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[5:48] And naturally, the centurion, I suppose, naturally accepted the advice of the master and the captain. And you notice in verse 13 that when the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained their purpose, losing fence, they sailed close by Crete.

But not long after, there arose against them a tempestuous wind called Euroclodon. Now there you have an indication of what I was speaking about.
A fair providence, an easy path, outward circumstance, suggesting to you that you're on the right way, is no safe guide for you that you are in the way of the Lord.
And on the other hand, it can be, and this thought may interest some people present, perhaps though not all, on the other hand, you may be perplexed tonight thinking that you had the guidance of the Lord in a particular course of action.
And because things aren't working out well, because things tend to go against you and difficulties are arising, you may tend to think because of these things that you made a mistake.
[7:08] Well, that does not necessarily follow. I think if Thomas Goodwin the Puritan would put it like this, God's providence can be for you and his word against you.

And yet God's word can be for you and his providence against you. And that may be something for you to ponder tonight.
I remember a minister once putting it like this, they say, he said that when you're in the Lord's will that the Lord takes the difficulties out of the way.
Well, he said if I ever understood the Lord's will I would say this, that was in doing his will that I discovered difficulties in the way.
Under this chapter it's very instructive when you consider that here was Paul directed by God towards a predetermined end.
[8:13] Thou must testify of me in Rome. And yet from the moment that the Lord had said that to him everything in his life seemed to suggest to him that he would never see Rome.

He was arrested in Jerusalem. He escaped by the skin of his teeth from Jerusalem. He spent two years in imprisonment of imprisonment in Caesarea.
He was tried by Jew and by Roman. And now as he said sail for Rome the very elements themselves seemed to combine against him.
And if ever there was a man of whom he would say this man will never see Rome that man was Paul. And yet as we see nothing could keep Paul from arriving ultimately in Rome.
And as he sails and as you see him in this chapter he discovered as someone put it that the power of Paul was the power of his religion.
[9:25] On that ship as written in this chapter there were 276 people. Roman soldiers, centurion, soldiers, captain, officers, sailors.

And yet the true master of the situation was this man who was bound there as a prisoner Paul the disciple of Jesus. At first as we see and as someone said they despised him as a prisoner but in time of peril they obeyed his command and after the shipwreck the nose who were responsible for the lives of the prisoners aboard proposed to kill them.
The centurion's admiration for Paul is apparent in his refusal to comply with this request. The whole incident is a time for Paul's faith and no small tribute to his dynamic personality.
And there are one or two things about this chapter that I want to deal with tonight and with this we draw our studies in the book of Acts to a close. First of all I want to look with you at Paul's assurance in the storm.
And then I want to look secondly at the wonderful illustration we have here of the predestination of God and the responsibility of man.
[10:57] and finally and in a word the deliverance and the manner of its accomplishment. First of all then Paul's assurance in the storm and you have that in verse 21 onwards.

Now this is a very strange situation. Here you have a picture of a prisoner offering advice to all who were with him in the company in the ship.
His advice had been rejected as I indicated earlier. He had counseled them not to sail but they had rejected that advice. And now here is this same man standing up in the midst of this tremendous storm and directing words of comfort and of counsel to their terrified hearts.
And when we consider the assurance that was given to him let us look first of all at the people amongst whom he received it. After long abstinence Paul stood forth in the midst of them.

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Now this was where the Lord spoke these words of great assurance to Paul in the midst of a very mixed company and as far as we know there were only two people of like mind with him in that ship of 256 people Luke and Aristarchus.
[12:36] The rest were as far as we can gather pagans. Some were courteous to Paul some treated him with respect others despised him.

We know there were people on board who were quite prepared to knife him. People were quite prepared to throw him overboard. But it was in that kind of company that Paul received this great and wonderful assurance from the Lord.
It wasn't as you may say the most desirable of situations. Yet it was there that this wonderful revelation was received. I think that this is very similar to circumstances in which you and I may find ourselves in life.
You see when you and I talk about assurance God speaking comfortably to us we tend to think of that kind of experience in a particular situation amongst a particular type of person or people with a particular group in the midst maybe of people who are like minded with ourselves but that does not necessarily follow.
It was while he was languishing in prison and wrongly in prison at that that Joseph knew much of the Lord's presence and the Lord's blessing. It was in the den of lions and in the fiery furnace that Daniel and his accomplices and her associates were aware of the Lord's gracious presence.
[14:17] Similarly with Jeremiah with Ezekiel it was the same with that little slave girl in Syria the Lord was good to that girl the Lord blessed her in the midst of an alien environment it was the same with Paul and Silas in the prison in Philippi the Lord's presence was wonderful there and the assurance of his presence was wonderful the Lord spoke to Paul in the midst of these people and you remember that if you are here tonight and you find yourself perhaps living with people who don't share your convictions regarding the gospel of Christ and the grace of God if you walk with that people who are antagonistic to the stand that you make if you associate necessarily with people who don't share your views and who would destroy the faith that you so much love and cherish you remember that if you are there in the will of the

Lord if that is where the Lord has blessed you you be sure of this the Lord will not forget you and you may have reason yet to look back on these circumstances to thank God that you were in them because it was there that the Lord revealed himself to you in his grace in his power and in his love it was in the midst of them that Paul received this assurance and then not to secondly the place for this assurance was given not just the people but the place it was as he put it himself Paul said you should have happened unto me now I exhort you to be of good cheer for there stood by me this night the angel of God now the significance of that is this that he received this assurance in the midst of one of the most terrific storms that literature gives us an account of for 14 days and nights we read that they were driven by this tremendous wind seems a northeasterly wind they were driven by this tremendous wind for 14 days and nights and the chapter here tells us that the weather was so dark that they couldn't they didn't even have the light of the star from heaven nor of the sun they were in darkness driven by this tempest along an unknown coast unable to take food for 14 days it was after long abstinence that
Paul stood up and spoke to them and he counseled them that night to eat after 14 days expecting at any time to perish in the deep all hope was gone there were moments I'm sure when they despaired I don't know if there were moments when Paul wondered if he would ever see dry land again it was a sad night for many of them a dark night for many of them as we end of line confronted with their inability to cope with their hopeless inadequacy with their own weakness and their lostness outward circumstances driving them to use every single means at their disposal they tied ropes on the ship they threw everything up what they could think of they tried everything imaginable and still they were driven by this tremendous door and it is quite probable though we don't read this that these men prayed as they never prayed before remember
Jonah storm the men in the ship with Jonah they prayed to their gods in agony of soul and it's quite believable that these people have turned to something crying to someone or to something for help but no help was available to any one of them save to Paul it was then it was there and then that night that the Lord spoke to Paul and you know here's another lesson for us it is always when you need it most that the Lord will speak to you it is always when you're at the end of your tether that help will arrive have you ever noticed in the Bible how two things are always tied inseparably together the weakness of the human heart and the unlimited strength of God he giveth power to the

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faint and to them who have no amount he increaseth strength you see the picture that Isaiah chapter 40 draws for us they that wait upon the
Lord shall renew things those who have nothing left in themselves nothing but God and God alone it is then as it were that the two come together God and the human heart God in his power and man in his hopeless weakness and inadequacy when all hope was gone all help failed them that night he said this night the angel of the Lord stood by me this has always been the case it was when Israel and Egypt had come to the conclusion we will never be delivered it was then that God came for the deliverance and as I said this is very often the case you and I have to lose all hope in ourselves before we will ever turn to the Lord and before the Lord's nearness will be meaningful to any one of us we have to be driven to the end of our own resources and our own strength and our own worthiness all our self righteousness have to go you will discover my friend and not even the Bible will help you and I've no doubt that some of you in extreme cases have turned to the
[20:53] Bible looking for help and the Bible failed you prayer will fail you prayer won't save you either people in great and typically have turned to prayer in the belief that prayer was going to save them they will turn to this and they will turn to that they will use every means imaginable for help and for succor and relief and strength but there's only one thing that's going to help you and me not the means that God provides for us but the God who provides the means this night he said the angel of the Lord stood by me and that is why the gospel comes to you unto me with hope tonight amidst the storms and the tempest and the turmoins of life on the sea which can be quite tempestuous a sea of temptation and fear and trouble when things threaten to swallow you up

God will never fail God will never fail I think it's a tragic situation when a person as someone said to me quite recently when a person reaches this stage in life when he says that there's nothing that can be done for me speaking about a particular problem that he has and talking about the things that he tried and the place that he went to and he said that is the conclusion he came to that he was beyond help in this world my friend no one is beyond help while you're in the room of mercy God is available God is near to all who call upon him and he is there in all his glorious might to help you in all your felt weakness in all your need in all your hopelessness in all your lostness of you and
I tonight were to know this that without him we have nothing and we are nothing so that in our lostness we may come to him that is often a place where God meets his people in the depth of their need this night he said the Lord stood by me and then Paul goes on to tell them about the privilege that this assurance conveyed to him there are five things that Paul tells these people about his assurance he told them that he had contact with heaven the angel of the Lord stood by me tonight he told that he had a special relationship with heaven the angel of the Lord the Lord whose I am and whom I serve and he told that a special comfort came to him from heaven the comfort of peace don't be afraid fear not and he communicated that to them he told that he got the promise of
God from heaven all that on the ship I have I have and he told them that he had a confession to make about this God in heaven this is a God that I believe God through time is do you We might not even be aware of that.
But they have a ministry to fulfill in the experience of each one of us. If we are the Lord Jesus Christ. They have a wonderful place in the salvation of Christ. As we were hearing often enough in the past days.
[25:05] They announced his coming into the world. They were there when he was tempted in the wilderness. They were with him in Gethsemane. They were there at the ascension, at the resurrection.

At the resurrection and at the ascension. Their ministering spirit sent 40 ministers to all them that are here to salvation. As Peter says, they look into, they gaze, they study.
The work of salvation tonight in heaven. They think about these things. What Christ has done for sinners in this world. And they are present with the Lord's people in this world.
The Bible leads us to believe that the door of the souls of believers to heaven. After death. We know that they will come again when Jesus comes to judge the world with the holy angels.
And they have a wonderful ministry in the lives of his people. The angel of the Lord, he said, stood by me this night. And as I said, we don't see them.
[26:06] We may not be aware of them. But in a very wonderful way, they minister to us in this world. If we are the Lord's. And that's a wonderful privilege to have from the Lord tonight.

There are some people. I don't necessarily share this with you. There are people who are of the opinion that every Christian has his own angel. I don't think we're warranted to go that far from the

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Bible's teaching on angels.
But we are worried that they fulfill our ministry in the life of every single Christian. Tonight.
And the angel of the Lord stood by me, he said. There are some people who take it from that word.
Thomas Best in the great Scottish theologian. Believed that this word indicated that the angel was only there for a fleeting moment.
That the angel didn't sit down beside Paul. His ministry was just, he had something to communicate and then he had to go. To minister somewhere else.
[27:06] Or to return maybe. To heaven above. He stood by me. An extraordinary visitation of the presence of the Lord. For a special purpose.

That was an extraordinary experience. And those are as I see in a minute. For a special purpose.
And then he goes on to speak secondly up at this special notion he had. With heaven. Just stood by me this night the angel of God.
Whose I am. And whom I serve. He refers to God as his owner. His master. Now we know in which way God owns every believer.
He owns them from eternity. He left them. He set them apart. From all eternity. As his own. He gave them to Christ in eternity. In the covenant of redemption.
Christ came into the world and he purchased them. That God would have them. Through the blood of Christ. They are his by purchase. They are his by grace. Called by God.
[28:06] To serve them in this world. And they are his. In the sanctifying. By the sanctifying influence of the spirit. They are his in the covenant that they give him.

The moment they are called by his grace. They respond. Lord. What would thou have me to do? I put another way. Lord. I am thine.
This is his special notion with heaven. He speaks of God. As his owner. And all that he is. And all that he has. He brings to the Lord.
Have you noticed that picture of a Christian in the Bible? He is a man. A woman. A boy. A girl. That belonged to the Lord. And all that the Lord has given them. They bring to the Lord.
That's the picture. That's the ideal picture. Of the Christian living in this world. He brings his life. Under the authority of the Lord. All the substance that the Lord gives him in this world.
[29:04] All his money. All his talents. All his gifts. They are the Lord. They are brought by him. To the Lord. His relationships. His terms. His pursuits.

If he's right. If he's the way he ought to be. I am the Lord. I am the Lord. You know the trouble you're hearing with me tonight as Christians?
We bring too much of ourselves under our own authority. And we don't bring ourselves enough under the authority of God.
Can you make this claim tonight that Paul made? The angel of God. Whose I am. Are you the Lord tonight?
And if you are. All that the Lord has given you. Belongs to him with yourself. Remember what Paul said to the Corinthians. Corinthians he said.
[30:09] We are not our own. We are bought with our price. Whose I am. And then thirdly. And inceptively connected with it.

Whom I serve. His service was inspired. By the recognition of who he was.
It was because he belonged to him. That he served him. He served him as a result. Of belonging to him. And the service means that.
All that he did. Was brought under the authority of the will of God. All that he did. And the service was bounded. By the commands of the Lord.
And the moment he went beyond the command. He ceased to be a servant of God. So do you and so do I. The moment you begin to serve yourself.
[31:10] You see serving the Lord. And this is the way in which you are to serve him. In obedience to his revealed will. As his Lord directs you. Along the channels.

Of his own will. And that's the question for you tonight again. Do you serve. The Lord. There's a story told of King Cyrus. During one of his victorious campaigns.
He took captive. A noble prince. His wife and family. And when he interviewed the prince. He said to him. What will you give me if I let you go free?
Well he says. I'll give you half of what I possess. And if I let your children go. What will you give me? I'll give you. He said all that I possess. If I let your wife free with your children.

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What will you give me? You set my wife free. He said. And I will give you myself. I will give you my life. For my wife.
[32:13] And my family. Cyrus was so impressed. With the prince's answer. That he set himself. And his wife and family free.

When they were together that night. He said to his wife. He said. Did you not agree with me. That Cyrus is a very handsome man. Oh he says.
I wouldn't know. I didn't know to Cyrus. He says. What do you mean? Oh he said. I didn't know to Cyrus. When I heard the answer. That my man gave.
That he would give us life. For me. I had eyes for no one. But my husband. And this is the way the Christian is.
When he's in a right relationship with the Lord. He has eyes for no one. But the Lord. Whom have I? In the heavens high. But thee. Oh Lord alone.
[33:09] And on the earth. The mighty side. Besides thee. There is none. And when his mind is taken up. With all that he is. Nothing is too much for him to do.

For the one. Whom he belongs to. And in whose service he is found. How does this find you tonight? Are you the Lord's?
And are you prepared. To serve him? Oh my friend. What a better life you would have. What a better life I would have. If we gave more to him.
More of ourselves. All of ourselves. To him. Why do you give so little to the Lord? Of your life. And of your time. And your affections. And your talents. Why? Why? Why is the free church of Scotland.
[34:08] Like every other church. Constantly. Passing through times of. Financial crisis. Why? Oh there's only one answer.

To that question. And I know that some of you. Don't like these things. And you feel uncomfortable. When these things are mentioned. So do I. So do I. And I thank God.
That I do feel uncomfortable. Under his word. Why do we find a church. So often in financial distress. Because those who claim. To be the Lord's.
Aren't meeting. Their obligation. To the Lord. That's why. And I challenge you tonight. With these questions. Are you giving yourself.
To the Lord. The way you ought to. And all. That the Lord. Has given you. Your families. Yourself. Your time. Everything.
[35:10] That the Lord. Has given you. Are you bringing. Under his authority. And allowing him. To direct your path. Instead of. Trying. To run your life.

The way you want it. Instead of. Bringing it. To him. This is Paul's claim. Whose I am. And whom I serve. And he said.
Further. That he got this. He got this assurance. For this special comfort. I'm taking far too long. He said. Lord. He said. Fear not Paul. Thou must be brought. Before Caesar. Hear now. Here's the answer.
Why was this wonderful revelation. Given to Paul. Because. Not just the circumstance. Of the old. But of the predetermined end. That God had in you. Paul was on the road. To Caesar. That he was on the road.
To his home. There was an honorous task. That awaited him. A great duty. And a great privilege. Awaited him. And this is the way. That the Lord works.
[36:06] Whatever the Lord calls you to. Be assured of this. He will equip you for it. If God is telling you. To do a certain thing. He will give you. The necessary grace.

And the necessary equipment. God. If God is placing. Certain demands. Upon you. And calling you. To special privileges. These callings of God.
Do not lose you. From serving him. But bind you. To greater and closer service. And God is going to give you. Comfort.
And counsel. For every needed out. That is the way he works. He will give grace. And glory. And he will withhold. No good thing. From them. That live uprightly.
And then the special promise. He got from heaven. Lo. He says. God hath given thee. All them. That sail. With thee. And you know. That it was.
[37:01] I hope it was the. It's the virgin. Who believed. Who claimed. I believe. He said. That this was an answer. To prayer. God hath given thee. All those. Who sail with thee.

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Now whether this is. Our reference. To the fact. That they were going to be saved. From. In the ship break or not. I'm not very sure. Or whether it is. A promise. That they would. All be saved.
That God had given them. To Paul. In answer to prayer. I'm not very sure. But there may be. Something to sail for it. If anyone. When you think of this man. Whose heart was so open.
To all people. Whose great passion. It was to preach the gospel. I believe. That he prayed for them. Of course he did. And you. Who are Christians. Here tonight. Whoever you are with.
Whoever you live with. Whoever you work with. In the will of God. God. Wherever God has placed you. You ought to pray. For these people. Some of them may not like you.
[37:58] Some of them may not be very good to you. Some of them may persecute you. Some of them may have the knife in you. Some of them may want to burn. To get rid of you. I say try to get rid of Paul.

Pray for them. Who despitefully. Use you. Pray for them. And you who are here tonight. As non-Christians.
Perhaps you are desperate to get out of here. Well just. You will be out in a minute. But you remember this. My friend.
Is there someone living with you. Who loves the Lord. And you don't. You don't realize. How much you owe that person. That person is.
Praying for you. And you know it would be wonderful. That person I'm saying. Would give everything in the world. To hear this assurance. That Paul heard that night. What a wonderful night.
[38:56] It would be for them. If God were going to say to them. I have given you. All those. Who are with you. Think of a believing mother. Praying for an unconverted husband.

And an unconverted family. What a night in storm. It would be for her. If God were to say to her. I have given them all to you. A believing father and mother.
Praying for unbelieving children. So on. What a wonderful assurance. What a wonderful promise. I have given all them. That sail with thee. To you.
Finally this. His confession of faith. In the God of heaven. I believe. He says. God. That it shall be even. As he has told me.
This was his testimony. In the face of friend. And foe. The God who calls. And the God who guides. The God who rules. And overrules. The God who speaks.
[39:52] The God who comforts. The God who will fulfill. All that he has promised. This is the God I believe in. He said. He wasn't afraid to own him. Don't let you.

Don't you be afraid to own your Lord. Wherever you are. In all your ways. Acknowledge him. And he will direct your path. Say with a hymn writer. I'm not ashamed to own my Lord.
Don't you be ashamed of it either. Confess him in this world. There aren't many who do it. And it's worth. He's worth confessing. He's worth standing up for.
And he bore this testimony. To commend God to them. I believe. This God. And he bore this testimony.
To bring comfort to them. Be of good cheer. I believe. That God. Will fulfill. What he has promised. And if you believe God tonight. Confess that faith that you have.
[40:48] If you believe and keep on believing. Oh you say it's difficult. I know. But I'll tell you something else. The longer you put off. Confessing your faith in God.

The more difficult you will find it to be. To confess him. Have you ever noticed. When you're in a place. And you feel that you ought to witness. If you don't do it the first time.
It's going to be more difficult. To do it the second time. Witnessing for God. Confessing God. Strengthens you. To continue to believe in God.
Well. The second point I want to deal with. And deal with very briefly. Before drawing this to a close. Is the very wonderful picture we have here.
And the beautiful illustration. Of the predestination of God. And the responsibility. Of man. Now what did God tell Paul. God told Paul.
[41:46] He assured Paul. That no one will be lost. Aboard that ship. He assured Paul of that. And Paul conveyed. That assurance. To all on board.

Fear not. Paul. Though God hath given thee. All them that sail with thee. For for such be of good cheer. I believe God. That it shall be even.
As it was told me. That is what God told him. This ship. Everyone on this ship. Will be saved. Later on we read.

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That. When the storm wasn't abating. The sailors. Believed that they were heading for shipwreck. They began to take soundings. And they recognised that they were nearing rocks.
And they were afraid that if they hit rocks. That they would be lost. So what they do. They hatched a plan. They hoodwicked. Some people on board.
[42:45] Into thinking that they were casting anchors. Fore and aft. But what they were really doing. Was they were preparing to let. The lifeboats down. And they were going to jump in.

And get away. From the shipwreck. But that plan. Came to light. And Paul. States. The case. Paul said to the centurion.
And to the soldiers. Except these sailors. Abide in the ship. Ye cannot be saved. Then the soldiers. Cut off the ropes. And let the lifeboat. Fall into the water.
Now that there you have the two things. On the one hand. God's assurance. No one on this ship. Would be lost. On the other. The condition.
That Paul states. Paul believed. That they would be saved. But there was a condition. Unless. These sailors. Stay aboard. We will not.
[43:45] Be saved. Now the two things. Are brought together. The salvation. Of all. On the ship. Was absolutely. Guaranteed. Because God.

Had said so. But certain conditions. Had to be fulfilled. Before they would be saved. They all had to stay.
Abode. Now then. This is the question. Did the laying down. Of the condition. Destroy. The certainty. Of the preordained plan. No.
The plan. Preordained. Was that they would. All be saved. The means. To all. That salvation. Was that. Soldiers. Centurion.
Soldiers. Prisoner. Paul. Luke. And Aristarchus. Would all. Stay. In the ship. And therefore. The plan.
[44:42] And the means. Towards the fulfilling. Of the plan. When all. Under the sovereign. Decree. Of God.

God. Who was sovereignly. Decreeing. That they would. All be saved. Was also. Demanding. This responsibility. Of them all. That they would.
Stay in the ship. To be saved. And that's the case. With the salvation. Of the soul. Through faith. In Jesus Christ. Predestination.
Assures. All. Who are to be saved. That they will be saved. But it is. Absolutely. Unwarrantable. To deduce. From that. That we need.
In time. To be saved. If we will be saved. Anyway. That is the wrong. Application. Of our correct. Biblical. Doctrine. God. Purposes.
[45:37] To save. By his grace. But God. Has also. Purposed. The means. By which. We will be saved. It is through faith. In Jesus Christ. And just as Paul.

Said to these sailors. On board the ship. And to the soldiers. Look. Unless these people. Stay on board. We will not be saved. So we say to you. In the gospel. Unless you believe.
You will not. Be saved. That. That. Is the condition. That God. Lays. Down. Take two illustrations. Or one illustration.
The farmer. Or perhaps even the seaman. The fisherman. Which some of you will understand. Perhaps. Bet on the farmer. Take the farmer. The farmer. Reaps. A bountiful harvest. Now if he's a good Calvinist.
He will say this. Well it was decreed. That this harvest. Would be bountiful. God knew exactly. What I would have. God knew. From all eternity.
[46:36] That I would reap. A bountiful harvest. But you see. If he's a good Christian. The farmer would say this. Though I know. That God.

Decreed that. I also know. That God. Demands of me. That I work. That I may reap. And that's that man. Putting.
What he believes. Into practice. He believes. In the sovereignty. Of God. But he accepts. His own. Responsibility. And I'll tell you this.
There isn't a Christian. In this church. Tonight. Who. Having believed. The doctrine of election. Sat back. And said. Well. If God.
Has elected me. To salvation. I'll be saved. And he finds. That's here tonight. A saved. Sinner. There isn't a person. Like that. In this church. Tonight. But I'll tell you.

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[47:31] Who's here. As a Christian. The person. Who believes. In the predestinating. Plan of God. And who came. To recognize. His responsibility. God would.

That he had to believe. And unless he believed. He was lost. And he cried. To God. As a responsible being. God. Help me.
To believe. Or else I'm lost. And he came. As a sinner. To God. Wanting. What God alone. Could give him.
And that's the sovereignty. Of God. And the responsibility. Of man. Not brought together. They can never be brought together. But placed side by side. As parallel lines.
God decrees. But you remember this. God has also demanded. That you act. Responsibly. And there's no one here tonight.
[48:29] Who can never be charged against God. Because it's an unsaved state. God. You didn't elect me to salvation. That's why I'm not saved. I know my friend.

That's not the answer. The answer is this. You haven't applied yourself. To the salvation. That God has made available to you. And that's why you stand tonight.
In an unsaved state. There was a man once in his deathbed. A man who was greatly interested in theological debate. And who was very good at arguing. Theological points.
But he wasn't a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. And a Christian friend went to see him. And even in his deathbed. He was prepared to argue. About theological points. People like that are very difficult to get through to.
And he was particularly. He was particularly. Argumentative. On the question of election. And predestination. And the friend who went to see him. That day in his deathbed.
[49:27] Said to him. Ah William. He said. This is the decree. That you have to deal with. He that believeth. Shall be saved. He that believeth not.

Shall be damned. And that my friend. Is the decree. That you have to deal with as well. You and I don't know. Who have been elected by God.
Except. Those. Who believe. In Christ. And I tell you tonight. All you have to do.
To know. That you. Have been elected by God. Is to believe. In the Lord. Jesus Christ.
That's all. God. Asks you. To do. That. Is your. Responsibility. Are you going to act.
[50:26] Responsibly. As we take our leave. Of this great book. We see Paul. And those who were with him.

A board ship. Casting themselves. Ultimately. Into the sea. And getting to land. Some on boards. And some on broken piece.
Of the ship. And so it came to pass. That they escaped. All. Safe. To land. And. Well. I suppose.
There's a picture here. As well. In the station here as well. Of. If you want. What's going to apply it like that. The way that. Each one of us. Who believes in the Lord. Jesus Christ. Will end up.
On the shores. Of eternal glory. Some will. Swim ashore. Some will get there. On boards. And on planks.
[51:20] Some by the skin. Of their teeth. As it were. But this is the wonderful thing. All who commit their lives. To the Lord.

Will arrive ultimately. At that blessed haven. Above. And this is a great question. For you and for me tonight. Are we on the way.
To that heaven. To that rest. And to that haven. The gospel. Brings the hope of heaven. To us all. And we're trying to follow through.
We're trying to study. And to follow through. The story of the unfolding. Of this great. Gospel message. The mission that the church had. In the world.
Of the first century. In the first century world. A story that began. With the death. And the resurrection. The ascension of the Lord. At Jerusalem. With the outpouring. Of the spirit upon the church.
[52:19] In Jerusalem. With the spreading of the church. From Jerusalem. To Samaria. And to regions beyond. And ultimately. To Europe itself. We saw the.

Place that Peter had. In this unfolding story. The place that Paul. Had particularly in it. And we take our leave. Now of this. Story. As we leave this man. Ultimately.
In role. What happened to him. We don't know. We know that he was at least two years. Imprisoned. But then the Holy Spirit draws avail.

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Over it. All. For each one of us. But I want to end with this. Note. The book of Acts. Is a story of the church's extension.
The story of the gospel's triumphant forward march. Moving on. Bringing people under its sway.
[53:26] But all to whom the gospel come. Did not believe the gospel. And this is what I want to leave you with. Some of you in the past few days.

And especially children. May have noticed. On one or two television programs. What used to happen in the old days. When the Romans.
Conquered. A people. And Paul makes use of the same illustration. Writing to Corinthians. In the first chapter. In the first epistle. And indeed in the second.
When they conquered a people. They moved triumphantly. Through that area. And the general. Who was in charge of the campaign. Was greatly honoured.
And everyone was caught up. In that triumphal. In that procession. Victor. And vanquished. We're caught up in it.
[54:26] And this is what Paul says in the gospel. He says to the church in Corinth. The gospel says. Which we preach. Is either a saver of death.

Unto death. Or a saver of life. Unto life. For many. The Roman conquest. Was a saver of life.
For many other. A poor person. It was a foreboding of death. And so is the gospel. In every congregation.
Its proclamation. You are either caught up in its triumph. And you rejoice. In its progress. For it is unto you.
A saver. Of death. What is it to you tonight. As we close the pages. Of this wonderful book.
[55:24] What is the gospel to you. Are you caught up. In its forward movement. Do you long. For its success.

For its blessing. In this town. And in the island. And throughout the world. Tonight. Do you long. For the day that God. Would give you. All who are with you.
And that they would come with you. Under the sway. And the authority. Of the gospel. Of Christ.
Well my friend. You answer the question. What does the gospel.
Mean. To you. Let us pray. Have mercy upon us. O Lord. And bless us. With thy presence. And part us. With thy blessing.
Tonight. And forgive all our sins. For Jesus sake. Amen.

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