

What is the Outcome?

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[0:00] Our scripture reading will be Luke 10, 1 through 24. After this, the Lord appointed 72 others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go.

! He told them, the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.

Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. Do not take a purse or bag or sandals and do not greet anyone on the road.

When you enter a house, first say, Peace to this house. If a man of peace is there, your peace will rest on him. If not, it will return to you.

Stay in that house, eating and drinking, whatever they give you. For the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to house. When you enter a town and are welcomed, eat what is set before you.

[1:10] Heal the sick who are there and tell them the kingdom of God is near you. But when you enter a town and are not welcomed, go into its streets and say, Even the dust of your town that sticks to our feet, we wipe off against you.

Yet be sure of this, the kingdom of God is near. I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom than for that town.

Woe to you, Chorazin. Woe to you, Bethsaida. For if the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago sitting in sackcloth and ashes.

But it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you. And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted up to the skies?

No. You will go down to the depths. He who listens to you, listens to me. He who rejects you, rejects me.

[2:19] But he who rejects me, rejects him who sent me. The 72 returned with joy and said, Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name. He replied, I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.

I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy. Nothing will harm you. However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.

At that time, Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned and revealed them to little children.

Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure. All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows who the Son is except the Father.

And no one knows who the Father is except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. Then he turned to his disciples and said privately, Blessed are the eyes that see what you see.

[3:37] For I tell you that many prophets and kings wanted to see what you see, but did not see it. And to hear what you hear, but did not hear it.

With such blessed truths as those that we've just sung of, how could we fail to tell others about that glorious truth?

How could I fail to tell others about that glorious truth? And so, you all know that for the past weeks, we've given ourselves in the evenings to a study of personal evangelism.

And we just sang about why. Because we have a great high priest. One who has suffered and died in our place.

One who's taken the punishment that our sins deserved. One who's provided us with a righteousness that we could never provide. One who has saved us. And he can save others.

[4:43] But they won't be saved unless they hear about him. And so we must be telling. And so we want tonight to draw that series to a close.

And at the beginning, I want to remind you of some of the materials that I've referred to as we've gone through our study. In the hope now that you might be more inclined to pick them up and read them than perhaps you were at the beginning of the study.

Perhaps having seen the need for further work in this area of our lives. And so, maybe you want to do some more study now. I'm going to remind you of some of the books that I've referred to. Some of the things that have been a help to me. Four books in particular during this study. Will Metzger's *To Tell the Truth*.

Perhaps the most comprehensive. If I could only recommend one, it would probably be that one. J.I. Packer *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*. It's short. It's a quick read for the most part.

[5:46] Very helpful. Also, a brief read, but very helpful, is Mark Dever. I haven't shown this one to you before, but I've referred to it. *The Gospel and Personal Evangelism*.

And then an old one, but a good one. Ernest Reisinger's *Today's Evangelism*. And so, I encourage you, if you want to know more about evangelism, get one of these.

Get all of them. And read them to your benefit and put them into practice or the things that you find in them. I've referred to my friend Rush Witt as a great help in this area.

I can point you to his website that has a lot of the material that I've drawn on if you're interested in that. And I want to remind you also to make good use of our tract rack. Pick up some of these and hand them out with a friendly, personal word about what it's about to people you may encounter.

There's the information about our church. Very helpful when you're inviting folks to church. And then these other tracts that we've mentioned. *Don't Waste Your Life*. *God's Message for You*.

[6:48] *There's Two Ways to Live*. *A Quest for Joy*. And then *Ultimate Questions*. Perhaps for those that have more significant questions or more deeply interested than just a surface contact with someone.

So, I'd invite you to take advantage of those things. These are all available for free on the tract rack down in the foyer to the Fellowship Hall. So, as we conclude tonight, we want to consider the question, What is the outcome of evangelism?

What are the results of evangelism? Of you taking the gospel message and sharing it with another individual? And I want to give you something of Packer's response to that.

And this comes right from evangelism and the sovereignty of God. He says, Were it not for the sovereign grace of God, evangelism would be the most futile and useless enterprise that the world has ever seen.

And there would be no more complete waste of time under the sun than to preach the Christian gospel. Why is this? Because of the spiritual inability of man and sin.

[7:53] He says, Evangelism is a waste of time. Apart from the sovereign grace of God. He goes on to say, However clear and cogent we may be in presenting the gospel, we have no hope of convincing or converting anyone.

Can you or I, by our earnest talking, break the power of Satan over a man's life? No. Can you or I give life to the spiritually dead? No.

Can we hope to move men to obey the gospel by any words of entreaty that we may utter? No. Our approach to evangelism is not realistic till we have faced this shattering fact and let it make its proper impact on us.

Regarded as a human enterprise, evangelism is a hopeless task. Well, how's that for some encouragement as we conclude our message on evangelism?

Especially as we talk about the outcome or the results of it. That's hopeless. It's pointless. It's useless. But don't forget the very first phrase I read. Apart from the sovereign grace of God.

[8:57] And there is such a thing as God's sovereign grace, isn't there? God is still in the business of saving sinners. And remarkably, He uses human means like you and me to accomplish it.

And that means that though our very best efforts, our most well thought out presentation of the gospel, will fail in and of itself and in our own strength, we still give ourselves to the work of evangelism, knowing that this is what God has called us to do.

And it is the means, one of the means He has ordained to extend His kingdom to save sinners. We call. We call. We call. God effectually calls. And the thing is, this really is encouraging.

A quote from Packer is exactly what I need to inspire me or you to the work of evangelism. What if the results of evangelism were up to us?

What if the saving of men's souls was in our hands? If the outcome hints solely on our presentation of the gospel? That would be too much for me to handle. Too much for any of us to handle.

[10:05] As it is, being an instrument in the hand of God to communicate that gospel, it's almost more than we can bear. Paul's writing to the Corinthians in 2 Corinthians 2 and he says, We are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing.

To the one we are the smell of death, to the other the fragrance of life. And what does he say? I can handle that. No problem. He says, who is equal to such a task? Who is sufficient for that?

To be the instrument in the hand of God to bring life or death. I can't handle that. But in chapter 3 he says, Not that we are competent or equal to the task in ourselves.

To claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God. And so it's God that does the work of saving sinners and he uses people like us to do it.

He graciously gives us great responsibility and he brings about the result that he wants. When I think of evangelism, I can think of no more comforting truth than a sovereign God on the throne drawing lost sinners to himself.

[11:14] He's the one that saves them. Psalm 98. Sing to the Lord a new song. For he has done marvelous things. His right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him.

The Lord has made known his salvation and revealed his righteousness to the nations. We don't sing for the praise of the evangelist.

We sing for the praise of the Lord who has worked salvation. What a blessing that all authority and power belong to Jesus and not to us. And what a blessing to know that this Jesus is with us.

And the work of evangelism to the very end of the age. And so Packer says, he doesn't just give you that negative, it's impossible. Quote, he gives us this as well.

So persevere in presenting Christ to the unconverted people as you find opportunity. You are not on a fool's errand. You are not wasting either your time or theirs. You have no reason to be ashamed of your message or half-hearted and apologetic in delivering it.

[12:14] You have every reason to be bold and free and natural and hopeful of success. For God can give his truth and effectiveness that you or I cannot give it.

God can make his truth triumphant to the conversion of the most seemingly hardened unbeliever. You and I will never write off anyone as hopeless and beyond the reach of God if we believe in the sovereignty of his grace.

Without the sovereignty of God in evangelism, it's a pointless task. But with it, anything is possible. No person beyond his reach. And so as we wrap up our study on evangelism, let's remember the danger of confusing evangelism, which is telling people the good news about Jesus Christ, the Savior of sinners.

Let's not confuse that ever with the results of evangelism, which is God's work of saving sinners or sinners rejecting that message.

If we confuse those two things, if we confuse the results with the act of evangelism, then one of several things will happen. We'll be hopelessly discouraged.

[13:20] We fail. This person rejected it. And so it's my fault. It's my failure. I haven't succeeded in evangelism because they've rejected the message. But that's not so. Because the work is to tell them.

Or we'll be excessively proud. Look at all the souls I have won that I have saved. Look at what I've done in drawing these people to Christ. No, that credit can go to God and him alone.

Or we could become dangerously twisted in our method and message, doing whatever it takes to get the results that we want. And so producing false results, false conversions.

Be aware of these dangers. We've spoken of them in other messages, so we won't focus on them tonight. But now come to the outcome of evangelism with me. It can be summarized in two responses.

There's very simply rejection or acceptance. People will receive the message, repent and believe, or they will reject it to their own eternal destruction. You remember what Paul said, we are to God the aroma of Christ among those being saved and those who are perishing.

[14:25] To the one with the smell of death, to the other the fragrance of life. And so let's begin with rejection tonight. Because many times this will be the result of you sharing the gospel with

another person.

It will be rejected. These are the ones to whom we ultimately were the smell of death. And we have to understand, remember, that if rejection is the response, we haven't failed.

Mark Dever says in his book, we do not fail in our evangelism if we faithfully tell the gospel to someone who's not subsequently converted. We fail only if we do not faithfully tell the gospel at all. And so the result of evangelism is not success or failure on our part. It is if we have evangelized, if we have proclaimed the gospel, we've succeeded in our mission.

The result is either acceptance or rejection. And some will reject. But it's for us to be that aroma of Christ. And some people will breathe deeply of that aroma.

[15 : 25] The aroma of Christ. And that should be the way you live. And you breathing grace. And breathing the gospel. And living Christ before them. And speaking of Him before them. And that aroma that they breathe.

Some people will breathe deep in. It will make them sick to their stomach. Like the stench of a rotting animal. It's the aroma of death to them.

Because they'll reject it. They want no part of it. But for us, we must go on breathing Christ.

Breathing the gospel. Breathing grace to them. And some will reject it.

But we've done the work of evangelism. Now that rejection, let's think about it for a few moments. It can take all sorts of forms. It can be indecision. I'm not sure if what you're telling me is true.

Doubt. Skepticism. It can be delay. Not now. Maybe one day, but not now. It can be interest. Oh, I'd like to know more. But tell me more later.

[16 : 24] I'll hear you again on this. It might be fear. It's a prospect of judgment. But none of these things are acceptance of the message. Think about some of the people that Paul shared the gospel with.

Officials. There's Felix. In Acts 24. And we read, Several days later, Felix came with his wife, Trusilla, who is a Jewish. He sent for Paul. And listened to him as he spoke about faith in Christ Jesus.

You know, Paul didn't talk about the weather with Felix. He didn't talk about his conditions in prison. He talked about faith in Christ Jesus. What an example for us. What an encouragement. And here's a great governor.

He's not intimidated by him. He's not fearful before. He talks about faith in Christ. And not only that, as Paul discoursed on righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come. There's a lot more than just, how you doing here, Felix?

He's bold. And he speaks on these things. As he did it, Felix was afraid. And said, that's enough for now. You may leave. When I find it convenient, I will send for you.

[17 : 27] At the same time, he was hoping that Paul would offer him a bribe. So he sent for him frequently and talked with him. And you can bet when they talked that Paul didn't just talk about the weather. That he had further opportunities to speak of faith in Christ.

But you know what we never hear about is Felix coming to Christ. Fear is not faith. Fear is rejection of the gospel. If it doesn't lead to faith in Christ.

He was really afraid. Paul's talking about the judgment to come. And that inspired that man to fear. But that doesn't mean that he was saved. We never read that he came to Christ.

It's rejection of the gospel. Agrippa. In Acts 26. Then Agrippa said to Paul. Do you think that in a short time. Such a short time. You can persuade me to become a Christian.

Or maybe better translated. In a short time. You will persuade me to become a Christian. And Paul replied. Short time or long. I pray God that not only you.

[18 : 24] But all who are listening to me today. May become what I am. Except for these change. Sometimes when people present the gospel. We're almost apologetic for it. And there's no such apology with Paul.

He says. I wish that you would be like me. A believer in Jesus Christ. But his response is. In a short time. You might persuade me to become a Christian.

Paul says. Short or long. It doesn't matter. And Agrippa may have been very close. But as far as we know. He got no closer. And that is rejection. And this. Could happen to you.

You say. I feel that I'm very close to the kingdom. I feel that I'm close to faith in Christ. One day I will trust in him. When I am ready. I would like to learn more about Christ.

On the day of judgment. None of that will matter. If you haven't put your faith in Christ. These are all responses of rejection. The delay. The indecision.

[19 : 27] The not now. The interest. But not pursuing it any further. Even fear like Felix. There will be people in the day of judgment. Maybe some in this room. That have shed tears on their pillows at night.

Because they feared judgment. But it didn't send them running to the Savior. And you won't be able to stand before God and say. I was interested in the gospel. I was even afraid of judgment.

And I even cried when I thought about it. And I said. I'll find out some more information. I did get some more information about it. And I wanted somebody to talk more to me about it.

Later. But. But. None of that will avail. If you haven't trusted in Christ. If you haven't actually come to him in repentance and faith. Oh we see people in the scriptures.

And perhaps you see people around you every day. That get very close. But that is still rejection. It is one of the outcomes of presenting the gospel. And so if that is where you are tonight.

[20 : 28] Delay no longer. Come to Christ. Come. Receive him. This glorious high priest. Who takes away our sin and our guilt. The one who gives us true joy.

And life everlasting. Interesting. So you may tell the gospel to someone. And you might have a hopeful response. Like Felix or Agrippa. They show some interest. They want some more time to think.

Sometimes it might be feigned. Faked. They don't want to offend you. And so they pretend like they're interested. Other times there may be genuine interest. Sincere interest. But it develops no further. Don't be deceived.

You can be thankful for the good signs. Pray that God would develop it further. But if you see that there's nothing true and lasting. Then the response is one of rejection. There will be delays like this. Interest. But nothing definite. Some people will flat out reject you. Right on the spot. I don't want to hear about it now. I don't want to hear about it ever. Not interested.

[21 : 30] There's no interest in pursuing it at a later date. No delay. It's just no. They walk away without responding. And without any further interest. And that happens. It happens when the gospel is proclaimed. It might happen here tonight.

You walk away and say. I want nothing to do. With the gospel of Christ. Whether it's public or personal. Private proclamation. People will reject. Now God could come at a later time to that person.

And move in their heart. And save them. But so far as you see. Their immediate response is one of rejection. And the result is not. Just a light matter. It's eternal. They're making an eternal choice.

Choosing destruction over life. Eternal torment over eternal happiness and joy. Condemnation over forgiveness. You know you might make lots of choices in your life.

You might pass up on a business deal. That could have been one of the worst choices you ever made. If you had made that deal. It could have taken you to the top. Set you up for life financially. And that's a poor choice.

[22 : 29] And it's going to have some sad consequences. But you can recover from that. You can make another business deal. You can live with a little less money. Than you thought you were going to have. The results are far reaching. But they have their limits.

But when you make a choice. To reject the gospel. The consequences are infinite. It's not just a mistake. A little thing here or there.

That has gone wrong. It's the choice for eternal destruction. And we see that happening sadly. All around us.

We see it in the pages of scripture. The rich young ruler comes to Jesus. And boy. Well if ever there was a promising young man. It's the rich young ruler. And we find sadly. That this response of rejection.

Can even come from interested seekers. Those who come to you. Seeking out the truth. And this man found out the cost of discipleship. He found out what it meant to take up his cross.

[23 : 26] And to follow Jesus. And he went away sad. And what a sad thing. That some people will be kept out of the kingdom. By temporary pleasures. Earthly wealth that they cannot take with them.

When they die. They're exchanging the temporary fading things. For that which is eternal. They pass the test of riches. The trial of riches.

Or they fail the trial. Of riches. They're consumed by them. And so they reject Christ. We see with the rich young ruler.

That we must tell the truth in evangelism. Jesus could have sugar coated the thing for him. And would have had a follower in moments. And perhaps many evangelists today. Would have had a follower. And maybe a false convert at that.

But Jesus tells them the truth. There will be sacrifice involved. If you follow me. We can't pull punches. When we tell the gospel. We can't soften the message. We can't remove the stumbling block of Christ. Or the cost of discipleship.

[24 : 23] We have to tell it in its fullness. In its truth. And some people will reject it. When Paul preached in Athens. There were different responses.

But some when they heard about the resurrection of the dead. Some of them sneered. Others said we will hear you again on this subject. And others believed. But this flat out rejection.

Those are the ones that sneered. And we don't know what came of the ones who said we'll hear you again on this subject. But Paul left Athens shortly thereafter. It's possible that they never heard the truth again.

But many will reject. And they'll do so to their own doom. It's one of the outcomes. One of the results of evangelism. And so knowing that in advance.

What should our response be when we encounter a response like that? Well first of all let me say. That if someone says. I'd like to know more. Man. Make sure they learn some more.

[25 : 20] Put some good material in their hands to read. Make sure you ask them again the next time you see them. Follow up. If they say they're interested in knowing more. Don't just leave it. Man. Bring them to church with you. Invite them.

Make sure that they have the opportunity to learn more. And that's one of our responses. To someone that does the delay. Or expresses interest. But what about those that we see. Are clearly rejecting it.

What should our response be? Oh well. It's no big deal. It's just what. What he said would happen. And. And on to the. The next occasion. I hope that's not our response.

You should be disappointed in the lack of response. We want people to know Jesus. It should break your heart when people reject him. Now. That's going to be more true. Obviously. Of people that you know.

Your own family members. Your children. Then of a stranger. That you might encounter. But it should. Regardless. Break our hearts. When people reject the Savior. And do so to their own.

[26 : 16] Destruction. To their own. Doom. And we should pray that God would yet change their hearts. Pray that they would hear the truth from someone else. That God would.

Use something to awaken them. And draw them to their selves. Draw him. Draw these sinners to himself. But there's another response. And I think we see it in. This account.

In Luke chapter 10. Jesus sends out these 72. To heal. And to proclaim the kingdom coming. And in verse 17.

They return with joy. They've had success. Lord. Even the demons submit to us in your name. And we'll talk about rejoicing in the success in a moment. Or in the response of acceptance. But. But what does Jesus say.

In verse 20. However. Do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you. But rejoice that your names are written in heaven. No doubt they faced rejection as well on this trip.

[27 : 11] He tells them what to do when they are rejected. He says regardless of whether people receive the truth. Or they reject it. You can rejoice in knowing that your name is written in heaven. That God has seen fit to give you the response of acceptance.

There's great blessing in that. We have joy in knowing that our place is secure in glory. And even greater than that is the glory. Or the knowledge that God is giving glory to his own name.

Verse 21. At that time Jesus. Full of joy. Through the Holy Spirit. I said I praise you Father. Lord of heaven and earth. Because you've hidden these things from the wise. And learned and revealed them to children.

Yes. Father. For this was your good pleasure. Some respond. God. In faith. Others reject. All of it is unto the glory of God.

And so we can delight that we have been saved by grace ourselves. And that God is getting glory to his name. We should count it joy when rejected for Jesus' sake.

[28:11] Luke 6. Blessed are you when men hate you. And when they exclude you and insult you. And reject your name as evil. Because of the Son of Man. Rejoice in that day. And leap for joy.

Because great is your reward in heaven. We can be glad knowing that our reward isn't in the way people treat us on earth. Whether they respond favorably to our message or with rejection. Our joy is that our position is secure in Christ. Our reward is in heaven. And so we can respond with thankfulness.

Even when people reject the truth. And also don't make the response when the message is rejected of quitting. Saying, well, you know what? My evangelism failed.

And so I'm done. And you know what? It can be discouraging when you share the gospel with somebody. And they don't come to faith in Christ. And you know what? That's going to happen if you share the gospel with people. This will be one of the responses you get.

[29:08] And that can be a discouraging thing. You should say, you know what? I'm going to throw in the towel. I'm done. I've had it. I'm not going to do it anymore. But that must not be our response.

Their response is not indicative of your success. You've shared the gospel. Go and do it again. Trusting God with the result. You know, William Carey, we've talked about this. He went seven years in India before there was one convert.

What if after one or two opportunities to share the gospel with an Indian or a couple of preaching opportunities, he said, you know what? This ain't working. I'm done. I'm going back to England.

Well, we wouldn't be talking about him tonight, would we?

No, he persevered. He kept sharing the gospel. Kept preaching. And God blessed his labors. If your message is rejected, don't deviate from that truth the next time.

Don't try to make the message less offensive so that you get a more favorable response. No, you hold the line, the truth. And understand that people will reject you because Jesus is a stumbling block.

[30:08] You can take a look. You can learn from that encounter how it went. You can find things that you can improve your tact and your timing and your winsome manner and so on, but never change the truth for quick decision making and psychological pressure.

It results in false responses of acceptance. Rather, press on. Count it a joy to suffer and be rejected for Jesus' sake.

And count it a privilege that God has chosen you to be an instrument of proclaiming that gospel to others around you. There's one response. It can be the response of rejection. But secondly, and much more joyful in many ways, is the response of acceptance.

Others will receive the message. These are those to whom we are the fragrance of life. As we breathe grace and speak of Christ, people will breathe deeply and they'll smell not the stench of death, but a beautiful aroma like fresh cut flowers or your favorite meal cooking in the kitchen.

And just as when you smell that smell, you want to seek out its source. If they see that in you, they'll want to find its source. To them, you are the aroma of life. If this too is God's work, not our well thought out presentation of the gospel, it is God changing their hearts.

[31:28] And so they repent and believe. And so when Peter goes to the house of Cornelius, the Gentiles, and proclaims the gospel, and then he comes back to Jerusalem and he reports the apostles, when they heard this, they had no further objections and praised God, saying, So then God has granted even the Gentiles repentance unto life.

Peter preached. And what happened? God granted repentance. God did that work. Saving sinners, giving them repentance and faith. Or when Paul writes to Timothy, he's talking about elders, but he says in 2 Timothy 2, Those who oppose him, the servant of God, he must gently instruct in the hope that God will grant them repentance, leading them to a knowledge of the truth, and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil who has taken them captive to do his will.

This is our aim. We present the truth in the hope that God will grant them repentance. This is the response that we long for, the one that we pray for, but the one that only God can give.

It may take time. And you must have patience. You remember that one plants in another waters, but God gives the growth.

You might never see the fruit of an evangelistic conversation you have with someone or of a tract that you put into their hands. It may take someone else down the road, sharing the truth with them again, and getting into a church before God saves them.

[32:56] You don't know what step you are in that. It might be over the course of a relationship that you have with someone. It may take time. And what begins with rejection may, in the end, turn out by God's grace to be acceptance.

And so Paul, writing to the Corinthians, says, what after all is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants through whom you came to believe. Notice he says, we didn't save you.

We're just servants through whom you came to believe. As the Lord has assigned each to his task, I planted the seed. Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. Again, the testimony of Scripture is God is responsible for the results of evangelism.

Paul did the work. Apollos did the work. But God's the one that gave the increase. He's the one that brought the result. We see it different places in Scripture.

The woman at the well, at first she's confused, but then we see her beginning to believe. And she goes and tells others who also believe her testimony. And many there come to faith in Christ.

[33:56] Jesus proclaims himself to be the Christ. And what is the result? Sinners are saved in that town. Samaritan sinners. Or the Ethiopian eunuch. Philip goes up in the chariot with him and he explains the truth from the passage that he's reading.

And what's the response? The man says, look, there's water. Why shouldn't I be baptized? Signifying that something had taken place in his heart that he had repented and believed.

And so he's baptized and he goes his way rejoicing. Philip teaches God saves the Ethiopian eunuch or the Philippian jailer. He's shaken to his core by the earthquake and by the fact that none of the prisoners escaped.

They all stayed there, though they could have escaped. Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they replied, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved.

You and your household. Proclaim the gospel to him. Believe. Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. At that hour of the night, the jailer took them and washed their wounds.

[34:58] Then immediately he and his family were baptized. The jailer brought them into his house and set a meal before them. He was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God. He and his whole family, they preached the word believe.

And this man, by God's grace, believed. And his household believed. And they were baptized. This is the response that we long for, that we pray for. The acceptance of the gospel message.

And so what should our response be to that? Look at this great work I've done. No, it should be one of humble gratitude to God.

Humility, our first response. 1 Corinthians 3, 7. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything. Not, oh, I'm something. He's nothing.

But only God who makes things grow. So when we get this response of acceptance of the message, repentance and faith, we must keep ourselves and our role in the proper perspective.

[36:00] We are instruments in the hands of God. When a builder completes a home, you don't hear anybody saying, man, what a cool saw. What a great hammer. What a great nail gun. Wow, what fabulous tools he had.

Now, he needs tools and he uses tools, but people praise the builder. What a great job so-and-so did to build that house. Or when your wife cooks an excellent meal.

I really hope that none of you men say, wow, we have a great oven. We've got great pots and pans. And they've provided a wonderful meal for us.

No, you praise your lovely wife who made the meal. At least I hope you do. Such a thing is absurd. We could use other examples. We don't praise the paintbrush.

We praise the artist who created the painting. And so it is with evangelism. When someone repents and believes, we praise God. Not the evangelism. We don't brag about how many souls we've won.

[36:58] We praise the God who saved the soul. Humility is our response. We should be amazed that he would use someone like us. We should respond with praise and rejoicing.

Listen, the shepherd who finds his lost sheep says, rejoice with me. I found my lost sheep. There will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over 99 righteous persons who do not need to repent.

The response is joy and rejoicing and praising God. I hope you do that when you see sinners coming to Christ. It's something that we can do in a pointed way when we have a baptism service and we hear the remarkable testimony of God's grace in someone's life and we praise God that he

saved them.

And in these examples that we've given of someone that's been saved, did you notice that that's always the response? The Ethiopian eunuch went on his way rejoicing. When the 72 came back, they were rejoicing that the demons were subject to the name of Christ. And Christ with joy praises his Father in heaven.

[38:03] And the Philippian jailer was filled with joy. And the Gentiles, the response of the Jerusalem church at the Gentiles receiving repentance, they praised God.

It's what God demands. It's what the Scriptures model for us. We read from Psalm 98 earlier, Sing to the Lord a new song, for He has done marvelous things.

We praise Him. Lots of things in this world cause us to rejoice. Touchdown for your favorite team. Good grade. Well-being of your family.

All worthy of rejoicing over, but none so much as the salvation of a lost and dying sinner. There is cause for praise. There is reason to give thanks to God and to worship.

The taking of a lost person who is on their way to hell. Destroying their life. And seeing them set on the path that leads to life. There's few things better in life than hearing of those things.

[39:05] And so we praise God for them. And then we keep on spreading the truth. Say, well, I shared the gospel and somebody was saved.

Good. I've done my work. No. Go share it with someone else. Press on. And we must never sit back and say, well, God is in control of who is saved. And so I'm going to wait for Him to do His work. I'm not going to give my best effort. I'm not going to give an effort at all. No. No. No. God uses instruments to take that gospel and to proclaim it. And so go and tell someone of what Christ has done.

And see what God will do. Keep spreading the gospel till the Lord takes you home. Do you see the urgency of the matter tonight? Life and death hang in the balance.

If they never hear the truth, they have only one option, and that is death. But if they hear the truth, there are now two possibilities. Life or death. So tell them the truth and then trust God to work His desired result in their lives.

[40:11] Well, just some concluding thoughts tonight. And one is that I hope that we're challenged to go and evangelize. Start with one person. Start with one person.

You can probably think of somebody right now. I know you can think of somebody right now while you're sitting there that you know that needs to hear the gospel. Go and tell them. Figure out how you're going to do it.

Take some attract with you. Work your way and then go and do it. Think about it and go and do it. And work your way up from there. You can set goals for yourself.

You remember Moody. He made it His goal to not let 24 hours pass over His head without having shared the gospel of Christ with at least one person. Make it a person a week.

But make it your goal to do it. Whether it's one a day or one a week or just that first person that you're thinking of right now. And I'm going to tell you that this does not come naturally.

[41:12] You're going to have to force yourself to get outside of whatever it is you're comfortable with and to go do it. You're going to have to literally physically say, Aaron, pick up your feet and walk over to that person.

And then you're talking to him. And you're going to have to say, Aaron, in your mind, don't say it out loud. You might think you're nuts. But Aaron, open your mouth. Ask the question.

You're just going to have to convince yourself. And then open your mouth and do it. And then it's out. And then you have to do something with it. But do it. And remember to bathe the whole thing in prayer.

God, help me to open my mouth. Help me to share clearly and plainly. Prepare this person's heart. Use those words once you've shared it with them. And they're gone. Pray. Pray.

Pray. And evangelize until it becomes a way of life. And go on continuing in that work. Very simply, go and do the things we've talked about. And dear people, it is, in some senses, relatively easy for me to stand up here and to preach about evangelism.

[42:22] And I confess to you that it is an entirely different thing to walk out those doors and to go and do it. And so pray for me. Pray that God would make me a faithful evangelist.

And remember what we've said before about sharing opportunities with one another. How God helped you to take advantage of an opportunity. Showing you where you missed one.

Find someone that you can fellowship with over on that point. Say, man, I really missed a chance today. And as you share those things, you think, oh, I never thought about that as an opportunity to share the gospel. I'll watch for that in my life over here.

Encourage one another. Speak with one another about these things. Hebrews 10 tells us, let us consider how we may spur one another on towards love and good deeds. Let us consider how we may spur one another on towards evangelism.

Talk about it. And let us not give up meeting together as some are in the habit of doing. But let us encourage one another. And all the more as you see the day approaching. The day is approaching. Sinners are dying.

[43:22] They're going to eternal punishment. And so tell them about Christ. And then talk to one another about those chances. The ones you've had. The ones that you've missed. And tell you what I said about picking up your feet.

I was on my bike the other day. And I saw someone from one of my English classes. Someone from Mexico. And they were about to head into a store.

And this particular lady had been over to our house with one of our classes. We do that sometimes. Have an English class over to our house for a meal.

And when they come, I just put out some of ultimate questions in Spanish. Ultimate preguntas. I just left it on the coffee table. Maybe somebody will look at it. Maybe they'll pick it up.

That's how much of a coward I am sometimes. That's all I can do is put it on the coffee table. Maybe somebody will look at it. And so this lady had picked it up. And she had looked through it. And I said, you know what, if you want it, you can take it home and read it.

[44:18] And have a read. And she had taken it. She had taken it home. This was probably been six months ago. And I saw her. I was on my bike. And I saw her getting out of her car. This older lady about to go into a store. And I rode right by.

And I thought, man, I could go ask her about that book. And I went right by. And I said to myself, Aaron, turn your bike around. Go back and talk to her.

And God gave me grace. And I went back and asked her how her new English class is. And moved up a level. How she's doing. And I said, hey, what did you think of that book? That little booklet. Últimas preguntas. He goes, sort of a blank.

She goes, oh, muy bien. That's good. I said, well, what did you think about it? She goes, oh, I don't remember very much. I said, well. And that was it. That's it. I'm telling you that I stumble and flop around and flounder.

And I don't know what to do always. And you won't either. But God gives grace. And man, there's been other opportunities that I've let slip by. I've been standing right next to a guy for 30 minutes at a soccer game.

[45:19] And we're talking about soccer. And we've both coached these. We're talking about it. Talking about it. And I let it get within one minute of the clock being left. Before I wasn't sure where he went to church or if he did. I had a guest with one minute left.

I said, hey, do you go to church anywhere? He goes, yeah, I go over to St. Dominic's. He goes, it keeps me out of trouble. Man. What an open door.

Going to church didn't keep any of us out of trouble. Jesus keeps us out of trouble. And the clock expired. And we started walking back towards the cars. And one of the parents called him over and missed it.

Because I waited. Killed it. By waiting too long. But next time I see him, I've got an opportunity. If God gives me strength. If I just open my mouth and say, so dear people, know that I struggle.

I'm preaching these things to you. And I want to live them. And I hope that you want to as well. And so let's pray for one another. That God would help us to open our mouths.

[46:18] And to use those opportunities. And not to wait until there's one minute left in the game. Till when it's really too late. To have time to say something. Help them. Pray for help to open our mouths. And to do it in a way that's appealing, attractive, and winsome.

As we've spoken of. We've seen what's at stake tonight. And so, may we encourage one another in these things. And may God give us the strength to do this work. And what a blessing that the results are in His hands.

That He will save His people. And so we leave it to Him. Let's sing of it in Hymn 370. Jesus saves. We praise God that it's Jesus that saves sinners.

May He use us to draw in many of these sinners that need to hear the Gospel. In Hymn 370, let's stand together as we sing. Amen.