

Rabbit Trail in Acts

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[0:00] Well, this morning I'd like to go down a rabbit trail with you. Now, usually we think of rabbit trails as something to avoid. It's something that takes us far off the track, off the topic at hand, and leads us down unprofitable, fruitless tangents.

But if the rabbit trail leads you to a rabbit, is it fruitless? That's what I'm hoping today on this rabbit trail that we would profit from it.

The book of Acts. I'm going to take you back to Acts chapter 18. The book of Acts is arranged as it is in order to tell a story.

It's a Holy Spirit-inspired story. It's his storyline that determines what was included in the book of Acts. You know that this is not all that happened in the first century concerning the spread of the gospel.

There was tons of other things going on. But why were these things included and other things excluded? Well, the Holy Spirit has this storyline that he's telling us in the book of Acts.

[1:11] And so in preaching through the book of Acts, I've tried to stick fairly closely to the storyline of the Holy Spirit. What I mean is we haven't gone often in other places in the scriptures and studied a lot in other places about some of the things that are mentioned in Acts.

But we've tried to stay more within the book of Acts itself. Those would be profitable things to do. And in fact, we're going to do that this morning. But we've been asking, what's the big picture here in Acts?

What's the storyline? And then to see how our text in Acts fits into that storyline. Well, what is the big storyline in Acts? Jesus Christ is what?

Building his church through the apostles, through his church, indwelt by the Holy Spirit to be his witnesses to the end of the age, from Jerusalem to the end of the world.

And so we're seeing that theme. And we're just trying to show week by week how the Lord Jesus was doing that through his spirit, his apostles, his church.

[2:16] Now, our rabbit trail this morning is with the church at Ephesus. And I'm wanting us to follow other information given to us in the New Testament about this one local church.

Because I think in doing so, it will unfold some important lessons for us as a local church. So, five places in scriptures.

We want to look at five different sections of scripture that give us information about this church at Ephesus. We begin, number one, with Acts. We'll not get to all of them this morning.

But that's our topic for the next two weeks, Lord willing. So here we are in Acts 18, verses 19 to 21. John says that, speaking of Paul and his team, that they arrived at Ephesus, where Paul left Priscilla and Aquila.

He himself went into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. When they asked him to spend more time with them, he declined. But as he left, he promised, I will come back if it is God's will.

[3:26] Then he set sail from Ephesus. So here at the very end of Paul's second missionary journey, he stops briefly in Ephesus, just for a brief while, preaches in the synagogue, and promises to return if God is willing.

Then he sails home. But he left behind Aquila and Priscilla, not to be confused with Ananias and Sapphira. So he leaves them behind, and while he's gone, Apollos comes.

Remember, this man who's full of Scripture and mighty in both eloquence and the knowledge of the Scripture. And it was there that Aquila and Priscilla took him home and explained the way of God more fully so that he could preach the full message.

So that's going on here. And when he's ready to leave, the brothers there in Ephesus commended him to the brethren in Corinth. So it seems like there is already the nucleus of a brotherhood here in

Ephesus before Paul comes back to them on his third missionary journey.

So chapter 19, then, we see Paul coming back to Ephesus on his third missionary journey. It's that pagan city full of idolatry, superstitious, demonic, black magic.

[4:49] The temple of the goddess Artemis is there, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Idolatry had a stranglehold on the people of Ephesus. And so for three months, he preached in the synagogue first, as was his custom.

And when they became obstinate and maligned the way, he took his disciples with him. They left the synagogue, went next door, and there in the lecture hall, he proclaimed the word of the Lord, a place where both Jews and Gentiles would be welcomed.

And so he continued for two years to preach and to reason and to proclaim Christ so that people from that whole region of Asia Minor, we're looking now at the very western bulge of Turkey.

If you think of Turkey, that vast country right along the west is Asia Minor, and there is Ephesus on the coast. This whole region heard the word of the Lord as Paul was headquartered in Ephesus and people coming and going.

The word of the Lord was upheld and spread rapidly, grew in power. Powerful works were done to vindicate that Paul was indeed the messenger from heaven.

[6:03] Demons were cast out. Demons that were cast out even testified to the power of the Lord Jesus as they were cast out. And so the Lord did a mighty work here at Ephesus.

So much so that it threatened the business of the tradesmen of the town who were busy making idols to Artemis, their Ephesian goddess.

And so you remember that stirred up a riot and Paul's life was being threatened, but in the end he was spared.

But that ever there was a church of Jesus Christ established in Ephesus was itself one of the ancient wonders of the world. That there in such darkness was a people of God who loved the Lord Jesus and served him.

Now the importance of this visit to Ephesus can be seen in the fact that it consumed three of the four years of Paul's third missionary journey. He's got about four years he spends on the road.

[7:06] Three of it is spent in Ephesus. It's the longest stay of any place on his missionary trips. And it became the new important center of Gentile Christianity.

And so we have then in chapter 20 the farewell address to the elders. And he calls them to a humble, loving leadership of the flock just as he had done while he was among them, leaving them an example, preaching the whole counsel of God, all that God has had to say to his people to shepherd the flock over which the Holy Spirit had made them overseers.

And so before he commits these elders to God and the word of his grace, he leaves them with a warning. verses 29 to 31. This is chapter 20, verse 29.

He says to the elders at Ephesus, I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. Even from your own number, men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them.

So be on your guard. Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears. It's clear that Paul knows trouble's coming.

[8:38] How he knows that, some think that the Holy Spirit revealed it to him. Others believe that after spending nearly three years with them, he could already see the seeds of sedition among them.

They could already see some men just waiting until he gets out of town to come to the prominence and to seek to draw people after them. Either way, Paul knows what's coming and he warns the elders of these false teachers.

Now what does he call these false teachers? I'm asking for some response. What does he call them? Savage wolves. Savage wolves. What does that tell us about them? They're not sheep.

They're not sheep. Excellent. Excellent observation. What else does it tell us? They're hunters.

And? There's going to be destruction. They're not going to spare the flock. So this isn't just talking about some minor difference of opinion on a minor matter.

[9:51] We're talking about something that would destroy the flock of Christ. False teachers. Savage wolves. Who are praying on Christ's church.

Now, Dave says that they're not sheep. Ah, but what does Jesus say about these wolves? They come in sheep's clothing.

So if the wolf showed up in a flock of sheep, they'd run. They wouldn't come near him. But if he comes disguised as a sheep, well then he can get very close to them and his pernicious doctrines can influence them and destroy them.

And that's the picture that the New Testament gives us. Yes, they're savage wolves. They're out to kill. They're out to destroy the flock of God. But even Satan himself disguises himself as an angel of light and so do his ministers.

And they come looking like sheep even though, as Dave rightly said, they are not sheep. So that's how these false teachers get into the flock.

[11:04] Now, even worse than these false teachers who come from outside are other men who come from within.

You see that? Verse 30. Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them.

So he's warning about those who come among them from outside as wolves in sheep's clothing.

But then he points the finger. Think of it. He's saying goodbye to these elders and he's saying, some of you, even from among you, some of you will arise and distort the truth.

This is a real burden on the Apostle Paul's heart as he takes his departure from them. Note how he describes their false teaching.

What's the word he uses? They will arise to do what? Distort the truth. What does that mean, to distort something?

[12:18] Any images? I think of like a circus mirror where certain features get blown out of proportion and others get shrunk out. Okay.

The circus mirror. Have you stood in front of one lately? It can either make you look skinny or real fat. But it's still you, isn't it? So it takes you and makes you look different than what you really are. It takes some parts and makes them big and other parts small. It's a distortion of reality. And that's the picture here used of these false teachers.

And that's what makes their false teaching so dangerous. There's a lot of truth in it. They're dealing with the body of truth. But some parts that are small like the nose, they're making real big.

And other parts that are large like an arm, they're making tiny. And so it's a distortion of the truth. But there's a lot of truth in it. And so it sounds good.

[13:24] It sounds biblical. They even use Bible verses. They use Bible terms. But they're putting different meanings. They're twisting the scriptures. Paul in 2 Corinthians 4 says that this is what we don't do.

Me and my team, Paul says. We do not distort the word of God. On the contrary, notice what he puts as the opposite of distorting the word of God.

On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly. Okay? That's what they weren't doing.

Just how are we to receive the word of God? Well, we're to put the normal meaning on words. just set it forth plainly. What do these words mean? And that's what Paul did.

He took the scriptures and he set forth the truth plainly, not distorting it, not twisting it. Some of you perhaps are already in your mind thinking of that passage in 2 Peter 3 and verse 16 where Peter talks about the writings of Paul.

[14:39] Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters.

His letters contain some things that are hard to understand which ignorant and unstable people distort or twist as they do the other scriptures to their own destruction.

So again we're seeing this idea of twisting distorting. Here the word that's used is what they did to people in persecuting them. They stretched them out on the rack and then they began to twist and stretch and torture them.

Well some people do that to the scriptures. They put the scriptures on a rack and rather than just letting it speak plainly what it means they start twisting it and torturing it.

You ever hear to somebody we say he's torturing the English language? He's taking common words and twisting them and putting all kinds of foreign meaning because he's not setting forth the truth plainly.

[15:47] He's lying to us. So that's what is being warned about here at Ephesus. Not only are you going to have people coming in as wolves in sheep's clothing, you're going to have some of you rise

up to twist to distort the word of God.

Flat out denials of scripture might be rejected out of hand. But a new twist on scripture? Ah, everybody's always looking for some new twist, aren't we?

Something new, something novel. Now what's their motive? What does Paul say their motive is? Verse 30. to draw disciples unto themselves.

So some of them will not be happy just to be an elder along with other elders ministering in the church, this influential church at Ephesus. They will want to be someone who draws disciples after them and have people looking to them for all the answers.

quite an insight into what is behind much of false prophets, false teaching, a desire to have a following.

[17:08] This proud, self-centered motive lies beneath their distortion of the truth and is even the cause of it. So, here we are, dangerous, twisting of scriptures to their destruction, to the destruction, the not sparing of the flock.

Danger so real that Paul says for three years, I warned you day and night with tears. Okay, so, remember, we're not talking about just little things, we're talking about big things, such that made Paul three years, day and night, weeping, pleading with these men as he preached the truth as it is in Jesus.

Now, don't you wonder what happened? You see, in preaching through Acts, we just had to go on to the next place and the next town and the next triumph of the gospel as Jesus is building his church.

But my rabbit trail is to say, well, what did happen at Ephesus? And we're not left to guess. There's much more light. So we've seen one text, the text given us in the book of Acts and the establishment of this church, the warnings that are given.

Now let's turn to the book of Ephesians. Four years later, Paul sends a letter to this church.

[18:33] And you notice it begins in verse 1 of Ephesians, Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God to the saints in Ephesus, the faithful in Christ Jesus.

So here's the letter to this Ephesian church. Now the fact that they were a well-taught congregation ought to be expected if Paul spent some three years there.

But it's what we see as we read the book of Ephesians. These aren't initiates. These are not people that haven't understood anything about the scriptures.

Rather, we find in Ephesians some of the richest, deepest doctrine found anywhere in the scriptures as to its depth and breadth.

He speaks in chapter one of this salvation beginning with God's choice of them from before the creation of the world and he works it out all the way to the end of God's full and final redemption at the end of the age and how it's all accomplished in Christ and it's our union with him that brings this to us and it's all a sovereign grace there's rich teaching that again makes sense that Paul has been there and preached for two to three years.

[19:50] Now we can also hear in this letter echoes of his earlier warning given to the Ephesian elders about those savage wolves. Chapter four of Ephesians he's talking in verses seven to thirteen how Christ has given gifts to his church Christ is the chief shepherd and he's gone back into heaven but he hasn't left his flock without shepherds he's given them gifts apostles!

Prophets! Evangelists! Pastors! And teachers! they are to equip the flock! They are to bring the flock to from infancy to maturity in Christ even that they might attain to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ!

Why? Why pastors and teachers? Why do we have the words of the apostles and prophets that were given to us? Why all of this? Why did Jesus do this?

To what end? Verse 14 Then we will no longer be infants tossed back and forth by the waves and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men and their deceitful scheming.

Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up unto him who is the head, that is Christ, and so on. So he wants this church to be well armed against the false teachers.

[21:32] Without the truth being taught to them, they're like a cork on the sea, and the waves just knock it around, and they're here, and now they're there.

They're holding to truth, and now they're holding to air, and they just keep getting splashed around by the waves, or they're like a leaf, and it's just being blown here and there by every wind of

teaching, you see, and a special kind of teaching, the cunning and craftiness of men and their deceitful scheming.

The wolves, can you hear them growling in this passage? Indeed, instead, we will be those who know the truth and know it well enough to speak it to one another.

And that's our protection. That's what the shepherd means for his flock. And you see how this background at Ephesus helps us to understand these words in Ephesians chapter 4.

Now, one element of the prevailing errors at Ephesus was the idea that what you did in the body did not affect your soul. It was something of perhaps a pre-Gnostic heresy.

[22 : 48] But that what you do in your body doesn't affect your soul or your spirit. If your soul is united to Christ, well, then it doesn't matter what you do in your body. Nothing can touch that connection that you have to Christ.

It was an antinomian downplaying of the place of God's law in the believer's life. So all the commands for holiness and obeying God's commands, well, they were just pushed off.

That doesn't really matter. you're in Christ. Nothing can separate you from him and this makes unimportant what you do in your body. So throughout this letter we see this clear call to holy living that befits their calling in Christ as children of light.

You're children of light. You're no longer children of the darkness. Now live, walk as children of light. light. And it's a clear warning against this false teaching.

Look at chapter 5 verses 5 to 7. For this you can be sure. Again, he's speaking to these at Ephesus.

[23 : 54] No immoral, impure, or greedy person, such a man as an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Now why would he need to say that?

Evidently, there were some false teachers running around that were saying it doesn't matter how you live. You can be an immoral, impure, greedy person and still inherit the kingdom of God.

That was one of the errors, and so Paul is writing to correct it. Notice what follows. Let no one deceive you with empty words. You see, there were people in Ephesus with these empty words.

In other words, they're empty. They don't carry any truth with them. And because of such things, God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient. Therefore, do not be partners with them.

So Paul's calling them out, isn't he? And he's arming the church against these deceitful liars. Verse 11, have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them.

[25 : 04] verse 18, do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Why does Paul need to say that to the church of Jesus Christ for crying out loud?

Because they were saying what you do in the body and what you take in doesn't matter. As long as you're united to Jesus, your body doesn't affect your soul. So the book closes with a call to spiritual warfare against spiritual forces of evil, the need for the full armor of God, which includes the belt of truth buckled around your waist, the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God, all to fight the lies of the evil one.

And so Paul sends this letter on to Ephesus by way of Tychicus. There was always news coming back and forth between the churches that he established and hence the letters and what he wrote in them from what he hears and gathers about what's happening.

So we've seen Acts, we've seen Ephesus. Now we look at 1 Timothy. Turn to 1 Timothy. Now this is where you perhaps would not have thought to look when studying the church at Ephesus, but I want to show the connection.

1 Timothy is Paul's letter to Timothy, his true son in the faith. He greets him. And then in verses 3 and 4, notice what he says, as I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain men not to teach false doctrines any longer, nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies.

[26 : 53] These promote controversies rather than God's work, which is by faith. faith. The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.

Do you see, Timothy had been with Paul. He had been there when the church was established. He was on the team. He had been there at Ephesus when it was established. And so Paul, when he left, left Timothy in charge of the church at Ephesus for a time.

Why Timothy? If you're Paul, why are you going to leave Timothy in Ephesus? Remember, this is one of the most influential churches. This is the new center of Gentile Christianity.

Why Timothy? Any ideas? What do you know about this man? Gentile. Okay, he's a Gentile.

Alright, there's a good hint of why he might want to plant Timothy in that place.

What else? Roger? He knew the Holy Scriptures from infancy. He had a good grandmother and mother who just poured the Scriptures into him.

[28:05] Who better to present the truth of God's Word than Timothy? What else? Paul says one of the Scriptures is he had no one else like him that could follow and preach what he preached.

So as Paul looked over his men, he said there's no one like him. And one of the things he points out in that Philippians 2 passage is that there's no one who cares for your benefit like he does.

He cares about you. Yes, he knows the Scriptures but he's not just all about the truth. He's about you. He wants you to know the truth. He wants you to be kept from all these by-paths that would take you away from Christ.

I don't have anyone that has a heart for you like this man. Timothy's the man for Ephesus and so he leaves him in Ephesus. Now that ought to put a slant on your whole reading of 1 Timothy then.

Maybe you just want to highlight or underline that verse 3, Ephesus, so that when you next read through 1 Timothy you'll be thinking of Ephesus, this same church that we've been studying.

[29:16] These things were given to Timothy as he's left him in charge of this large and important church at Ephesus along with the other elders there. Now, there's two things going on in Ephesus that need to be stopped at once.

What are they? You see them in verses 3 and 4? Two things. Give me one of them. False doctrine. Meaningless talk.

Meaningless talk. In other words, there's more than one way to kill a church. You can kill a church with false doctrine. But you can also do it by which I mean just flat out wrong teaching.

but you can also do it with empty things. You can kill a church by getting their eyes off of the main thing and getting them on to lesser things and treating the lesser things as if they were the main thing.

If you can get a church to devote their attention to myths and endless genealogies, what have you done? You've taken them away from the truth as it is in Jesus.

[30:36] And that's the way to kill a church too. It's not just by getting in the pulpit and saying Jesus is not the son of God. You can do it by just distracting your people and just preaching all sorts of myths and endless genealogies, perhaps a Jewish error here having to do with the Jewish genealogies.

But notice what it produced. What did this produce? controversies rather than God's work.

There is a truth that produces godliness, god-likeness in its people. And then there is another topic of preaching that creates controversies.

Now, that's not to say that you don't sometimes have controversies over very important truths, but it is to say that one of the devil's methods to kill a church is to get their eyes off the main things and to get them onto myths, endless genealogies, things that create controversy, speculative things, endless diversions away from the main thing.

And so Paul is telling Timothy they've got to be stopped. You've got to stop the mouths of those who are teaching false doctrines and you've got to stop this nonsense about these endless speculations about myths and genealogies.

[32:12] And you've got to return to the gospel. Faithful sayings like verse 15. It's a faithful saying. Here's something worthy of everyone's acceptance that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.

Teach them that, Timothy. don't swear from the gospel, from the core elements of the gospel. Verse 5, the goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.

There's the main things. Teach that, that promotes love and a good conscience, a sincere faith, pure heart. God. So, all of this goes on.

He's talking about those who, some have wondered, verse 6, away from these things, these important things, and have turned to meaningless talk.

They want to be teachers of the law, but they do not know what they're talking about or what they so confidently affirm. Now, all of this is proving to be quite a challenge for young and timid Timothy.

[33:25] It's almost like he said, this is too much for me, Paul. And so Paul's writing to encourage him. Yes, he's a young man. Yes, it's a big church.

Yes, there's false teaching and distractions and distortions going on, but Timothy, you're the man for the job. Remember the grace of God given to you.

And play the man. And so he needs encouragement and Paul is giving that to him here in this first letter, urging him to fight the good fight. His authority was being questioned for his youthfulness. And Paul will tell him, well, you just be a good example. Don't let anyone despise your authority, but be a good example to the flock of purity, faith, and love. So the book gives instructions about their worship there at Ephesus, how to care for widows, and qualifications for elders and deacons, and so on.

But then in chapter 4, we hear this note about the savage wolves again, don't we? Chapter 4, the Spirit clearly says that in latter times, some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons.

[34:42] demons. Such teaching comes through hypocritical liars whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. They forbid people to marry, and they order them to abstain from certain foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth.

So there's doctrines of demons, and some of them are these ascetic commands to not marry. That's from the devil. devil. To not eat certain foods, that's from the devil.

These are doctrines of demons, and he can say in verse 6, Timothy, if you point these things out to the brothers, you'll be a good minister of Christ Jesus, brought up in the truths of the faith and of the good teaching that you followed.

So don't have anything to do, he says, with these godless myths and old wives' tales. Rather, train yourself to be godly, and on he goes. You see, he's calling them back to the main thing, and be done with all this extraneous stuff that's pulling people away from Christ, that's pulling them away from the good gifts that God gave us to be received with thanksgiving.

He's seeking to encourage Timothy against the false teaching going on at Ephesus. So he calls him to, until I come, devote yourself to public reading, preaching, and teaching of the scriptures.

[36:06] Be diligent in these matters so that everyone can see your improvement. Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you'll save both yourself and your hearers.

In chapter 6, verse 3, we hear the savage wolves again in the background. Chapter 6, verse 3, if anyone teaches false doctrines, and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to godly teaching, that is, teaching that promotes godliness, he is conceited and understands nothing.

Whatever he claims, he has this special knowledge. No, he's just puffed up and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions, and constant friction between men of corrupt mind who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness, that is, religion, is a means to financial gain. That's quite a mouthful, isn't it? But can you see the problem at Ephesus and how it matches Paul's word to Timothy as he's fighting against this, these who are men of corrupt minds who have been robbed of the truth?

You've seen how pickpockets work sometimes in teams and the idea is to get your attention over here and while your attention's there, they're going away with your wallet over there. And that's the picture of these all sorts of distractions away from the truth as it is in Jesus.

[37:47] And while the church is, or while these men are focusing on these things, they are having the truth robbed of them, blindsided. And what's their motive?

Again, these men think that religion is a means to financial gain. So they not only want to draw people after them, but here Paul shows why they want people, because with the people they get their money.

Wednesday night we read a letter, a heartbreaking letter from one of the congregants, one of the believers in Eldorette, under Nathalie Ogallo's ministry, and he just gave his testimony and told us how before he was converted, he was caught up in the health, wealth, and prosperity movement. He was giving his weekly check to the minister over and over until he was bankrupt, couldn't supply food and housing for his family. His mother says, well there's another group over here.

And so he goes over there and in the end they're wanting from him. And so he moves to Eldorette and he gets caught up in the same thing. You plant your seed, give so much money and you'll get three times back.

[38:59] And he's giving and giving until he has no more. And then he says, I don't want to have anything to do with church. I don't want to have anything to do with religion. And then his children

went to a vacation Bible school at Grace Bible Church in Eldorette.

Three years later, Naphtali and Hilda come and knock on the door and share the gospel with this couple. Timothy was converted.

He'd never heard the true gospel. His greatest need was to be saved from God's wrath due to his sin through a redeemer. Not to be rich.

His greatest need was not money. Well, you see, nothing's new under the sun. That's what was going on in Ephesus. And Paul is seeking to arm Timothy to fight the good fight of the faith.

And he closes with these words in 20 and 21. Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to your care.

Yes, the word of God and these saints. Guard what's been entrusted to your care.

[40:05] Turn away from godless chatter and the opposing ideas of what is falsely called knowledge, which some have professed and in so doing have wandered from the truth. Grace be with you.

There's the power, the enablement to do all that you're called to do there at Ephesus. The grace of God be with you. So though all these words are perhaps not limited to the church at Ephesus and Timothy's ministry there, they certainly are especially directed toward him in that capacity of ministering to the church at Ephesus.

These principles go much further than just Ephesus. They reach Bremen. But I think it helps us to understand the ongoing storyline of the church at Ephesus to see this book of 1 Timothy and to hear this same note of warning and how to deal with false teachers.

Let me just conclude real quickly. We still got 1 John and we still have Revelation 2, 1-7.

Another letter written to Ephesus by the Lord Jesus. I challenge you just maybe just to read those seven verses. Revelation 2, 1-7. That last word we hear in the New Testament about this church at Ephesus began so brilliantly and gloriously and there's some sober reflection that should grow out of that last letter from Jesus in Revelation 2.

[41:40] Well, we're dismissed. Thank you.