

Participation in the Gospel

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Preacher: Brian Ellis

[0:00] As we come to prepare to hear God's Word preached, please take your Bibles and turn them to Philippians 1.

Brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel.

As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. Because of my chains, most of the brothers in the Lord have been encouraged to speak the Word of God more courageously and fearlessly.

It is true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of goodwill. The latter do so in love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel.

The former preach Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing that they can stir up trouble for me while I am in chains. But what does it matter?

[1:15] The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this, I rejoice. Yes, and I will continue to rejoice.

For I know that through your prayers and the help given by the Spirit of Jesus Christ, what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance.

I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage, so that now, as always, Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death.

For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose?

I do not know. I am torn between the two. I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far, but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body.

[2:19] Convinced of this, I know that I will remain, and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith, so that through my being with you again, your joy in Christ Jesus will overflow on account of me.

Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you, or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in one spirit, contending as one man for the faith of the gospel, without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you.

This is a sign to them that they will be destroyed, but that you will be saved, and that by God. For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him. Since you are going through the same struggle you saw I had, and now hear that I still have. Well, good morning, everyone.

It's good indeed to be here again in Bremen. Thank you, everyone. I do thank you indeed for all your prayers and for your support for the work in the Philippines.

[3:38] You've had various folks from our little church in England, Wattisham, over here from time to time, and we're grateful, too, for the fellowship you have with our church in England, which I'm a member of, my wife and I are members of.

I'd like to thank particularly Stan Heaney for all that he's been doing on behalf of Christian Compassion Ministries and everything else, sending money and writing and letters and everything. We are very grateful indeed for all the work he's done, and also for Cindy, who's been looking after the sponsorship program. We are very grateful indeed. We had a good meeting last night with them, and it was good to be with them again.

I'd like to thank, too, that Aaron has taken over and is going to be helping in that particular work of looking after the finances that come in, particularly for Christian Compassion Ministries, but also other funds that come in to help with the Grace Ministral Academy and, in fact, supporting workers that are going out.

If those of you were here with the presentation earlier, we're becoming more and more involved with church planting work because we see men come through Grace Ministerial Academy, and some of those men do not have churches.

[4:55] Quite a few of them already ministry, but then we have that opportunity to send out men to new church planting works, and we are grateful to God for what he is doing in the Philippines.

There have been many coming in the last 30 years to embrace the doctrines of God's sovereign grace. Many are now covenanting together and accepting the 1689 Baptist Confession.

As I begin to look around, I just don't know how many churches are in that situation, but we begin to put up the figure getting on for 100. So God has been at work in the Philippines and is at work, and I would like you to be encouraged that he is working in many, many areas of the world, although you might feel under attack and very much sometimes discouraged here in the States.

Well, my task is to preach the Word of God to you this morning. And let me say, first of all, I'm not using the NIV. What I'll be speaking from and what I'll be quoting will be the New King James.

I hope you don't mind. I didn't prepare this with the NIV in mind. And in fact, I don't normally use the New King James, but it's the Scriptures, the different translations.

[6:10] But I want us to look at the letter of Paul to the Philippians, because here, in one way, we see a church, a young church, a very young church indeed, being involved in the work of missions.

This letter of Paul is a happy letter, a joyous letter in some ways, even though he is in prison. And when he wrote this letter, he was in prison in Rome.

But I have a little book in my library, a little sort of exposition of this letter, and the title of the book is The Joy Way, because it is joyous.

There is a joy that comes through. He is rejoicing in God and his goodness to him, even though he is imprisoned in Rome. He says this, and I'm going to quote verse 4.

He says, Always in every prayer of mine, making request for you all with joy. And then over in chapter 4, he speaks of them in verse 1 as being, My joy and crown.

[7:15] This is a joyous letter. So Paul has, I believe, a special relationship with the Philippians. And you say, Well, why? There's lots of other letters in the New Testament.

But I think in a special way, because of perhaps even the way that the church came into being. But he says this, in verse 8, for example, God is my witness of chapter 1.

How greatly I long for you all with the affection of Jesus Christ. There's an affection, there's a love for these Philippian believers. Chapter 4, again, verse 1, I quote a little bit.

I'm my beloved and longed for brethren, my joy and crown. And he prays for them, and there's joy in his prayers for them.

His past remembrance of them, thinking about them, the definite work that God has done in them. In verse 7, he speaks of them.

[8:13] You are all partakers with me of grace, of the grace of God. And God will, he knows, will complete in them, these believers in Philippi, what he has begun in them.

And will bring them through to glory. And then, there is this, he thanks them for their participation in the gospel.

Verse 5 of chapter 1, from the first day until now, from that first day that he was in Philippi. And here it is, and he forgot, his remembrance of these dear believers.

Now, this is possibly that there's a special place in Paul's heart because of the way the church began. This church came into being really as a direct command of God.

You remember how he was in Asia Minor, there was a field open to him it seemed, but then he had that night vision, did he not, of the man of Macedonia saying, come over and help us.

[9:20] And God was directing Paul to come over into Europe. There was that definite call of God, a special direction. And then Paul leaves that seemed to be fertile field of Asia Minor, crosses over into Europe.

Europe, and he makes his way with his companions up to the city of Philippi. Now, Philippi was really a Roman city, been founded by Roman soldiers following a battle in that area many years before.

And there wasn't a synagogue there, there were very few Jews, and in fact, it seems only women have met. There was a group of women who met down by the river to have prayer.

There wasn't a synagogue like in many of the other cities. And Paul finds out about these women, goes and meets with them for prayer, and he preaches the gospel, does he not? And God opens

the heart of Lydia to believe.

And Lydia, the seller of purple cloth, comes to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. She takes Paul back to her home, and there he preaches again, and ministers the word, and members of her household come to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

[10:38] This is the beginning. This was the command to go to such a place. And then Paul is preaching in that city, and you remember how that slave girl follows him around the city, crying out after him, and he eventually rebukes her because she has a demon, and he casts out the demon.

And the owners of the slave girl are absolutely furious because they're using her to tell fortunes and make money out of her. And they have him and Silas arrested, and then flogged with whips until their backs are raw, and then they're thrown into prison.

And this is what has happened. God had sent them, and sent them there. Well, he even sent them into the prison. And there in that night in the prison, as they sang praises to God, even with their backs hurting and full of pain, God came in a special way.

The whole prison shook. The power of God and the doors opened, and the shackles and chains all fell off. And that prison keeper, the keeper of the prison, he thought his prison had escaped, was about to kill himself because he knew what would happen to him.

And they call out, we're here. And he rushes in with a light, and he cries out, what must I do? To be saved. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you'll be saved, you and your household.

[12:06] And that very night he takes them, and he washes their wounds, and Paul again preaches to him and his household, and it says, his household believe on the Lord Jesus and are baptized.

And that is the beginning of the church in Philippi. All of those experiences of the Apostle Paul in the beginning of that church, being sent, being called over, to Philippi.

And what happens? Almost immediately the next day, the magistrates, they come, they find out that he is a Roman citizen. A Roman citizen.

And they had flogged a Roman citizen without trial. They were, it could be in terrible difficulty, what would happen to them? Because you did not do such things to Roman citizens.

And so they really push Paul and get him to leave the city immediately. And he leaves the city and goes off to Thessalonica. And, but what do we read?

[13:06] Well we find when we come to that, in that fact, that he speaks of this fellowship and the gospel from that first day. From that very first day. And now you find the Philippians, these young Christians, this new church, these Christians were only a few days or weeks in the faith.

Thijia may be in a few weeks, but the jailer and his family were just days Christians. And what do we find with this little fledgling church? We find that they are concerned, that they have fellowship in the gospel.

That's what Paul is saying, in view of your participation or fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now, chapter 1 verse 5. That word fellowship is translated into quite a number of translations, but it does mean participation.

Fellowship in scripture is a participation in something with someone else. And that is really what it means. There's a sharing in, there's a working together in, there's doing things together for to accomplish a purpose.

And in this letter we find that there's a chapter 1 verse 5 a fellowship in the gospel, a participation in the gospel. There's chapter 2 verse 1, there's a participation in the Holy Spirit, a fellowship in the Holy Spirit.

[14:36] Paul, as he prays, does he not, and longs to have the fellowship in the sufferings of Christ in chapter 3 and verse 10. Often we use the word fellowship in a wrong manner.

We often think of just a personal chatting together with fellow Christians, something like that. We don't look upon a public meeting as such, but it may be an outing together, but it's not that, it's not just socializing, it's far more than that, it's a bond which joins Christians together, that we have fellowship together, it's a participation together in some object outside of ourselves, something there, we share together in something, and it depends on the context often, but here it's a participation in the very gospel, it's a sharing in the gospel, it's a sharing in the life of God in Christ, sharing in the Holy Spirit and experiencing him in our lives together, and rejoicing together in all it means to belong to the Lord Jesus, this is fellowship, and here he writes to them about an active participation in the gospel, having fellowship in the good news, what is the gospel itself, in verse 6

he says this,

I'm confident of this very thing, that who's begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ, and he will do, taking us through to glory, and we as it were marching together as true believers, we're together, we're on that road, we're on the narrow road that leads to life, and to glory, and we'll one day we'll be in the presence of our God, rejoicing in all that he's done for us, and all of his mercy and goodness to us, yes, confidence that God has begun a good work in him, you're partakers with me, he says, in verse seven of grace, and he will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.

Let's stop a moment, let's ask ourselves, are we participating in the gospel? Do we have a place? Do we rejoice this morning, each and every one of us, boys, girls, older ones with grey hair, everybody?

Do we rejoice in the gospel? It's good news to us, not just some news as we put on our television and watch the evening news or something, not that which is outside ourselves and has really little effect upon us, and just some information that comes into our minds about what's happening perhaps in another country, or happening in Washington or something else, but good news that has affected us, and changed us, and made us new creatures in Christ, because it's news about the Lord Jesus Christ who came into this world to save sinners like you and me.

[17 : 51] Do we participate in the gospel? Has it affected us? Has it changed us? Are we new creatures in and through the Lord Jesus Christ?

Because, dear friends, it's no good just hearing about the gospel. We must participate in it. It must change us. It must be truly good news to us because we've experienced it.

We participate in it. We have fellowship in the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Active participation also, these believers had in the proclamation of the gospel.

They were concerned that the gospel would go out. This young church, this fledgling church, this little new group of believers in Philippi, were concerned too, we see in this letter, that the gospel, the good news would go out to other people.

They wanted others to know what they had experienced and to participate also in the truth, in the glorious news, in the wonderful redemption that is found in Jesus Christ.

[18 : 58] If you turn to chapter 4, you find in verse 15 the following. Now again, I'm using New King James, but it says this, Now you Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, that was when he first there, when I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me concerning giving and receiving, but you only, for even in Thessalonica, you sent aid once and again for my necessities.

They had got, he left, been thrown out basically of Philippi by the magistrates, and he got off to Thessalonica and these new Christians, these young Christians in Philippi, now immediately send gifts to him to help him.

It may have been gifts in kind, in food and other things, but it could have been money, but they sent to help him, they were participating they were concerned too for him and his companions for Silas, that they preached the gospel, that he would preach there, and so they're at work, as well with him, they're doing all of this, they're the only church, he says, you're the only ones who participated with me, they were working with him, they were concerned for the gospel, but what happens now, we find too, that he is in Rome when he's writing this letter, and he's writing this letter to encourage the little church in Philippi, and what does he say?

Well, he also mentions this, that they have actually sent to him, they've sent there, Epaphroditus, they've sent Epaphroditus, one of their members, to him in Rome, this is what has happened, you can find this, in chapter 4 again, and you go on in verse 18, he says, I have received everything in full, and have abundance, I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus, what you sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God.

Well, this church also, now, they knew he was in prison in Rome, and what do they do? One of their members, this man, Epaphroditus, they send him off, they send him gifts, and he goes off on the long journey to Rome, from Macedonia through Archaia, across there through Greece, and he probably went to Corinth, which was a major port, and would have sailed across to the Italian peninsula, and then up through to Rome, and there he comes to Rome, and finding Paul in prison, as they've heard about him, bringing gifts, bringing help, and then Epaphroditus is ministering to Paul, helping him while he's in prison, and he does this on behalf of the church that is in Philippi.

[21:55] They are concerned about the apostle, they're concerned about this man who brought to them the good news of Christ, and they're helping him. We find this, they're cooperating in a great extent, and Paul can write in chapter 2, and verse 25, he says there, here, but I thought it necessary to send to you, he's now sending back Epaphroditus, he's the actual bearer of this letter, my brother and fellow worker, and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger, and minister to my need, servant to my need, he was serving me on your behalf, I'm sending him back to you, why?

Verse 26, because he was longing for you all, and was distressed because you'd heard that he was sick, he was ill, he got sick in Rome, and so now Paul is going to send him back, and Epaphroditus is the bearer of this letter, but there's this relationship between the apostle Paul and the church in Philippi, they are helping him, they're ministering to him through the man they've sent to him, and they are participating with him, because even in Rome they are concerned for him, this is what they're doing, yes, financial help, but not something just financial help, an actual member of their church being there to care for Paul, meet his needs, go out and buy things for him, to help him, provide for him, although then of course Epaphroditus gets sick, cooperation here in the widest sense, they knew he was in prison, they knew what that would really mean, difficulties, and that was their reason for sending Epaphroditus to him, but even here,

Paul encourages them, in this ministry to him personally, he's encouraging them, and because he wants to tell them in chapter one, he says, look at this, he says, I want you to know brethren, chapter one, verse twelve, I want you to know brethren, that the things which happen to me, have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel, might be in prison, is in turned out for the furtherance of the gospel, it's much, it's much, much, it has happened in this way, the gospel is progressing, even here while I'm in prison, so he's encouraging them, that's what they want to know, they want to know, they want others to know about the Lord Jesus, they want to see the gospel going out, and Paul is the great preacher of the gospel, and they are supporting him in his ministry, in his evangelism, they're with him, one in him, and so he writes to them, and he says this, that my imprisonment in the cause of Christ has become well known throughout the whole of the Praetorian Guard, the soldiers in Rome, the ones who they are the special elite force that guards the, the, the, the, well this would have been probably Nero at this time and everything else, and to everyone else, he's there, he's been, had these opportunities to preach to such men in that elite force of the emperor's guard, yes, but also, also something else has happened, he says this, and most of the brethren, even the Christians in Rome, they've now become, he says, trusting in the Lord because of my imprisonment, have far more courage to speak the word of God without fear, so he's encouraging them, encouraging them that the believers there are now beginning to speak out boldly, they're not fearful what might happen, they see Paul's not, not afraid, he's willing to suffer for Christ, he's willing to be laughed at and ridiculed and everything else, and they are also now becoming bold to speak out for the Lord

Jesus, because the gospel must go out, people must hear, boys and girls, old people, different people in all sorts of walks of life, every single person in this wicked world needs to hear about the Lord Jesus Christ, and they need salvation, they need the gospel of the Lord Jesus.

[26:23] We can be concerned, in some ways, can we not, but without any real participation. We can do things with not really much thought.

There may be someone standing with some, perhaps can, collecting for some charity outside some store, and we drop a few coins in the box, and that's it, and they say, thank you, they may give us a leaflet or do something, and we get home and we cannot even remember what they were collecting for.

We can even easily do that. There are all sorts of things that we do, we don't really participate, we don't really know, and I wonder even with the gospel, are we really concerned?

Do we really pray regularly in our own homes, that the gospel will go out? Are we praying for all sorts of people, people we know, people in our workplace, in our schools, our neighbours, our friends, who are not believers, are we seeking to tell them about the Lord Jesus Christ?

Are we concerned that others will come to know Christ as we know Him? Because they need to know Christ. We're all walking on a road, one road leads to life, the other road leads to death and condemnation and eternal damnation.

[27:51] And there are thousands, millions, thrusting down that road to a life without the Lord Jesus. Here in your great country of America, there are millions going to hell and you know it.

But are we concerned? Are we gripped by the great need of this wicked world? Are we participating in the gospel? They pray for Paul, these people in Philippi.

He's in prison and they're really prayer. And this is one of the great things we can all do, we can pray. In verse 19 of chapter 1, I know that this he says will turn out for my deliverance.

This is probably here in Rome, what was called his first imprisonment and he's released for a while and then we find him back in prison again. I know that this will turn out for my deliverance he says through your prayer.

They're praying for him. He knows they are this young church in Philippi through your prayer and the supply of the spirit of Jesus Christ. And he encourages them in this letter to pray, does he not? [29:02] That great verse in chapter 4 verse 6, be anxious for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving may let your requests be made known unto God.

We know those verses but there it is. He's encouraging them to pray because God commands us to pray. We are to be a praying people and here they are praying for the apostle Paul.

And in all his letters he encourages these churches which he writes to to pray. For example in Ephesians and chapter 6, which we believe is a general letter, a circular letter more that not just went to the Ephesians but to many churches there around that area.

He says in chapter 6, remember with the whole of the Christian armor but he adds to it the weapon we often call the weapon of all prayer. Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints and then he says and for me.

that utterance may be given to me that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel. That's the preaching and proclamation of the gospel of the Lord Jesus.

[30:27] Pray for it that the gospel will go out. Or again writing to the Colossians chapter 4 verse 3. Praying also for us he says that God would open to us a door for the word to speak the mystery of Christ for which I'm also in chains.

That I may make it manifest as I ought to speak. That I could speak out and preach Christ. Pray that I will be given opportunity. Pray for freedom, for liberty, for means to be able to communicate the wonderful news of the gospel.

That's what his prayer is. This little church, this young church of Philippi, here it is in scripture. We sometimes don't realize they were participating in the proclamation of the gospel.

There in Philippi, yes I'm sure, but through the apostle Paul concerned that there are preachers of the gospel, that there are people going out who are witnessing, who are telling others about the Lord Jesus.

There's an active participation in the gospel, in the life of this church. What about our experience? Do we witness and share to others?

[31:46] Do we tell them about the Lord Jesus? We tell them how we know that our sins are forgiven for the goodness of Christ, for his mercy to us. We know that we've been forgiven and we've been accepted however sinful we've been.

We marvel at the grace and mercy of God. Is that our experience? Do we want others to know, our loved ones, our relatives? Do we tell them? Do we make known about the gospel?

One John in his letter, in that first chapter, he says this, this is the message we have heard from him and announced to you that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all.

This is a dark world. But in God there's no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.

But if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus, his son, cleanses us from all sin. Do we know that?

[33:00] Do we rejoice this morning, each and every one of us, that we have the cleansing of our sin? We've been washed by God through the precious blood of Jesus.

Have we repented of our sins? Have we been forgiven? Do we know that we're accepted? Boys, girls, young ones, old ones, whoever you are, I don't know many of you, but have we been forgiven?

Are we rejoicing this morning in the gospel, good news because we have been accepted and been forgiven? Do we have a participation in the gospel?

Paul was commissioned, was he not, on that road to Damascus afterwards and that news that he was to be a light to the Gentiles. Paul gave his life, the challenge of such a man.

But there are others round through the history of the Christian church who have given themselves without end to proclaim the gospel of the Lord Jesus. Paul did everything for the gospel, did he not, to go out?

[34 : 09] He said, whatever state I am, he wants to be this to a Jew, he becomes the Jew to the Greeks, he becomes a Greek, he seeks to be all things that he can have opportunity to preach and teach the gospel.

Remember how when he came to Corinth, he said, he came there to know nothing before them, he said, except Jesus Christ and him crucified and that who he proclaimed.

Remember how he spoke to Timothy, Timothy he says, preach the word, be instant in season and out of season. Do all this, proclaim the gospel, preach the word.

This is what Timothy is to do. Oh yes, an ambassador reconciling people to God. I wonder if we are living for the gospel. Do we live to see others come to know the Lord Jesus Christ?

I wrote recently a missionary paper on William Carey. We have a yearly, what we call a reformed journal in the Philippines. We give a copy away of this at our pastor's conference which just took place in February and I prepared a paper on William Carey.

[35 : 21] And do you know William Carey went to India in 1795 and he never went back to England. He labored there in great difficult circumstances.

On one occasion the whole of his warehouse burned down, all the papers he'd done preparing particularly certain translations of the scriptures, he lost it all and had to start again.

longed that people would know the word of God and he labored there translating the scriptures into many languages in India and giving himself.

Oh yes, you get challenged by such things. We have it so easy today with men like him. But you think of Adoniram Judson when he went to Burma or Myanmar as we call it today.

Everything was against him. People were against him going there. What happened? His first wife died. How many children died there in such a place?

[36 : 23] Perhaps if he'd been back here in America, they wouldn't have died. But in such terrible circumstances, remember he was in prison for a year in a terrible jail there in Yangon which it's called today.

His second wife also died and finally he died on the boat, on the ship back to America. Oh yes.

Remember John Payton, he went to Vanatu in the New Hebrides to minister to cannibals.

He did not expect to live. He did. God spared him and he saw many come out of darkness into the marvelous lights of the good news of Christ.

But one of the things that challenges me, I have it so easy. I've got a car, I can get into and drive, I've got air conditioning in my bedroom, I've got all of these things even in the Philippines.

We're so comfortable, we're so easy as a missionary today. But do you know back in the early 19th century, in the 1800s, there were missionaries who went to West Africa.

[37 : 31] West Africa was called the white man's grave because of the terrible sicknesses that abounded there for which there was no medicine, there was no cure in those days.

And do you know what the life expectancy of a missionary to West Africa was? The life expectancy. Two years. Two years.

The life expectancy of a missionary. And men and women went to West Africa to preach and teach the gospel. would you and I go, knowing we only lived two years and some only live one or two months because they got sick immediately, they got off the ship there in one of those countries of West Africa and laid down their lives for Jesus.

That's some of our history. What's happened, people given themselves for the gospel and we today have it so easy, so easy.

May we be concerned. We get discouraged, do we not? Now here in America, I know you get discouraged, but let me tell you this, in the United Kingdom, I was there last year, and I know so many people are discouraged because the church is closing.

[38 : 53] I go to congregations in the United Kingdom. One congregation, I go to a little congregation where the numbers are no longer there because they're now in glory. The youngest person in that little church is 45.

And I know that many of the churches that I've been going to over the years when I go back to the United Kingdom in a few years time will no longer be there because they're not seeing anybody added to them for years, even though they're faithful.

And I remember a dear friend who is now in glory, he was one of the trustees of the Banner of Truth Trust, a man called John Marshall, dear man. I remember him telling me at a Banner of Truth conference, he said, Brian, I believe here in the United Kingdom we're under the judgment of God. And one of those judgment is giving a famine of the word, taking away the word from people. They don't want the gospel, okay, they will not have it. And he withdraws his spirit from and give people up to their own lusts and their own wickedness.

Perhaps he's beginning to do that here in America. Because we've rejected, so many have rejected the truth about God. And all the wickedness and filth that pours out of television and films and everything else, we know it's there.

[40 : 19] But dear friends, God is at work in this world. He has a people and he is calling them out. I had the privilege of being last year in the UK at the Banner of Truth conference when a man called Lindsay, I'll get his name right, Lindsay Brown.

He was speaking, he's involved very much in work amongst students throughout, particularly in the third world. And he was saying this, although in Britain and probably in the western nations, particularly Europe, things in black and dark, he's saying that since 1989, we've seen the fourth, he said, the fourth great movement of the gospel in the world since the time of Kerry.

Four great periods when there's been a movement forward in the gospel. And I got the CD and I listened to this message again and made notes of the things he said.

He said, before 1989, only six known Christians in the country of Mongolia. Now, today, there are many churches.

In Albania, which is really a Muslim country, but it was under communism, there was no known Christians before 1989. Now, there are about 8,000 Christians.

[41 : 43] The first church in Nepal, he said, was planted in 1954, just 50 years ago, he said. Now, there are about 800,000 professing believers in Nepal.

Why is this happening? And then he said, it's God's time for Nepal. And then what about Algeria? Muslim country, 20,000 converts.

God is at work, even amongst Muslim nations. China, a conservative estimate, he said, 80 million Christians professing Christians in China.

Now, we don't know how many of them are true believers and everything, but there is a movement on. And I know many men who are going into China, teaching theology and Bible schools and others and having tremendous opportunities.

Be very careful that God is at work. And I say that we have tremendous opportunities in the Philippines. I'm greatly privileged. You can speak to anybody about God and they're not going to laugh at you or do anything else because basically they all believe in God and there's an open, wide open door.

[42 : 58] And as I said earlier, we probably think there are now about a hundred churches holding the 1689 Baptist Confession now in the Philippines. And we get men coming all the time to our pastor's conference and they're rejoicing in the doctrines of God's sovereign grace.

Oh yes, God is at work. Don't be discouraged. But may we have fellowship in the gospel. May we all partake in the gospel. May we look to God to pour out his spirit and quicken people.

Here in your town, here in this state, may it be that God will come in great power because he is a great God. And we're to pray and witness and we should have a passion to see people come to know the Lord Jesus.

Oh, that we can have a passion like the men of the 18th century. Men like George Whitfield and the Wesleys who went out and preached even though they threw rotten eggs and everything else at them.

William Booth, although I wouldn't hold to all his theology, he said this, founder of the Salvation Army, give me a sight of hell that I would desire that no one would go there.

[44 : 21] Oh, that I could open a rescue shop, he said, within a yard of hell. May be true of us today. Let us pray. Our gracious God, we thank you for the wonder of the gospel.

Our Lord Jesus came into this world to save sinners like us. we thank you for your mercy, for your grace, for your goodness, for your love.

Oh, may it be that many thousands upon thousands may know, oh God, move in their hearts, draw them to yourself, use us, we plead, that we might be ambassadors for your glory.

Oh, Lord, we thank you that the gospel, by your grace and power, is still mighty today to the salvation of sinners. Bless us, we pray, for Christ's sake, Amen.