

# Mark Chapter 4 v 1 - 20

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 07 May 2017

Preacher: Peter Robinson

[ 0 : 0 0 ] Good morning and a very warm welcome to you, particularly those who are visiting us and we do trust that together we might know the Lord's presence and nearness, we might know that help of the Holy Spirit to worship and to praise our Saviour. And the verse to lead us into our worship is there on the screen from Ephesians chapter 2, this glorious declaration of Paul. For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith, this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God. Somebody has explained grace in this way, God's riches at Christ's expense.

Grace is God's wonderful goodness to us, not because we deserve it, we deserve quite the opposite, but through the cross, through the sacrifice of Jesus, we have entered into all the blessings of God's love and forgiveness. And we should never cease to be surprised by that. We should never cease to be astonished by the wonder that God should love us. Like Charles Wesley, who wrote in his hymn, why oh Lord such love to me? We should always find it amazing grace. So let's stand and sing our first hymn. It's a long one, but it's a wonderful one, 501. Oh how the grace of God amazes me. 501. Let's stand as we sing in praise and worship of our Saviour.

Oh how the grace of God amazes me. It loosed me from thy bonds.

And set me free. And set me free. Oh, and we need have consoled. T'was this will, this much I know. Set me as thou I show, and live as thee.

My God has chosen thee, the one of my saints. Amen. Let's pray together. Let us all pray.

[ 2 : 5 4 ] Forgive us, O Lord our God, that so often we take for granted the truths of which we've just sung. Forgive us, O Lord, that we take for granted the greatness of your grace and love and salvation to us. Forgive us, O Lord, that we can spend hours, perhaps even days, not thinking or remembering the greatness of the sacrifice of Jesus who bore our sin upon the cross, who died for us. How easy it is for us, Lord, to be able to go through a day busy busy with work, busy with family, busy with food, busy with bills and banking and so many other things, busy with TV and newspapers and magazines, busy with school. And yet, Lord, not a thought crosses our mind that we are saved, that we are yours, that we are grateful and thankful for what you have done for us. O Lord, we ask that you would cause us to be ever more mindful, ever more thoughtful, ever more thankful, ever more astonished, ever more surprised at the grace of God in Jesus to us, that you should ever have stretched out your loving arms to reach us in the mire and mud of our sin, that you should ever have stooped so low to raise us so high.

When we were in the very depths of death itself, when we were in the very grips of hell itself, when we were destined for that eternal place of everlasting sorrow, grief and punishment.

O Lord, you did not leave us there, but you yourself came down into the very depths yourself, Lord Jesus, to raise us, as it were, up upon your shoulders, to raise us up by taking our sin at the cross, by tasting and enduring hell in our place. O Lord, we thank you that this is such, that this is the God in whom we have put our faith. This is the God in whom we believe. This is the God who has become our Savior and our friend and our Father and our King and our Lord and our God.

This is the God that we come to worship this morning, the one who is everything to us, without whom we are nothing. O Lord, we pray that you would move our hearts this morning, that you would captivate us with that great love and grace again, and cause us not only to be those who delight in our salvation, but those who delight to tell of your salvation, those who long to tell the good news of Jesus to those around about us. So be with us then, help us now, send your Holy Spirit upon us again, that we may be focused upon you, and that our worship may be in spirit and in truth.

For we ask these things our God and Father, through him who is everything, through him who is our Savior and King, the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

[ 5 : 59 ] We're going to turn to God's Word together now and read from the Gospel of Mark. The Gospel of Mark and chapter 4. And if you've got one of the Church Bibles, the Red Church Bibles, that's page 1005.

Page 1005, Mark and chapter 4, titled there, The Parable of the Sower. We're going to read through from verse 1 through to verse 20.

Verse 1 through to verse 20. Again, Jesus began to teach by the lake. The crowd that gathered round him was so large that he got into a boat and sat in it on the lake, while all the people were along the shore at the water's edge. He taught them many things by parables, and in his teachings said, Listen, a farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up.

Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root.

Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants, so that they did not bear grain. Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up, grew, and produced a crop, some multiplying 30, some 60, some 100 times.

[ 7 : 43 ] Then Jesus said, Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear. When he was alone, the twelve and the others around him asked him about the parables.

He told them, The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside, everything is said in parables, so that they may be ever seeing, but never perceiving, and ever hearing, but never understanding. Otherwise, they might turn and be forgiven.

Then Jesus said to them, Don't you understand this parable? How then will you understand any parable? The farmer sows the word. Some people are like seed along the path where the word is sown.

As soon as they hear it, Satan comes and takes it away, takes away the word that was sown in them. Others, like seed sown on rocky places, hear the word and at once receive it with joy.

But since they have no root, they will last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear the word.

[ 8 : 57 ] But the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things, come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful. Others, like seed sown on good soil, hear the word, accept it and produce a crop.

Some 30, some 60, some 100 times what was sown. We thank God for his helpful word. If you'd like to turn back there to Mark and chapter 4, that we read just a few moments ago, page 1005.

We're going to be looking at this very familiar parable, probably the most familiar of all the parables that Jesus spoke, apart from probably the Good Samaritan, everybody who is a believer, a Christian, knows about the seed and the sower.

I wonder how much you agree or disagree with this quotation from William Shakespeare. He wrote this, Somebody else who wrote this, Expectations are resentments under construction.

Similarly, expectation is the mother of all frustration. I doubt if there are any of us here who would completely disagree with these statements.

[ 10 : 37 ] All of us have experienced something of the sting of having our expectations dashed or crushed. And whether this has happened at the hand of somebody else, or actually we've been the author of our own disappointment, it still was a very painful lesson for us.

Now so far in our series, Preparing for the mission that's taking place later this month, we've been looking at the sort of people that God has used and worked through to save others.

We're looking at them in the Bible. All sorts of different people of different ages, different backgrounds, all sorts of different lifestyles, but with one thing in common.

They trusted God. And it's been good, I hope for us, because when we've looked at these different people, we have seen that they are people that we can identify with. They were on the whole ordinary people, not exceptional people.

They were flawed people. They were people who got things wrong. They were people who had baggage. We thought particularly last week of that Samaritan woman. People with sin.

[ 11 : 52 ] People with fears. People with wrong attitudes. But in every case, as we've looked at each of these people, we've seen that without exception, each one of them was a success.

A person or persons or even occasionally whole cities were saved and brought to faith in God through these people.

And the example that I hope that we've been encouraged by in looking at them is to, the example is to trust the Lord. To work through us and in us as we witness to, as we invite friends, relatives, neighbours to hear the good news of Jesus Christ.

And I hope that some of you have already begun to do that, begun to speak to folk or at least pray for folk that you want to give invitations to, to particular evenings.

However, there's still further preparation that's needed. Remember, we are thinking about obeying the commandment of Jesus in Matthew 28.

[ 13 : 04 ] That commandment which is, go and make disciples. And we need to be prepared for what we're going to face. We need to be prepared for the reaction, the response of those that we will invite or those that we will speak about.

Jesus sent his disciples out before he sent them out with that great commission. He sent them out and he gave them a pep talk.

And I want us to look at that pep talk together. It's in Matthew in chapter 10. And so you need to turn back to page 975. If you've got a Bible, it's important that we read this because here is Jesus giving a very realistic assessment of what they will face.

Page 975, Matthew in chapter 10. And we'll pick it up from verse 14. Jesus giving them instructions about what to take with them as they go.

And then verse 14, this is what he says. We're going to read it through to verse 23. If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, leave that home or town and shake the dust off your feet.

[ 14 : 16 ] Truly, I tell you, it will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town. I'm sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore, be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves.

Be on your guard. You'll be handed over to the local synagogues and councils and flogged. On my account, you'll be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles.

When they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time, you'll be given what to say. For it will not be you speaking, but the spirit of your father speaking through you.

Brother will betray brother to death, the father his child. Children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death. You will be hated by everyone because of me.

But the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another. Truly, I tell you, you will not finish going through the towns of Israel.

[ 15 : 16 ] For the Son of Man comes. So is Jesus filling them, filling their heads with unrealistic dreams of great success? Is he telling them that everything is going to be fine?

Is he concealing from them the difficulties that they would face? Clearly not. It's not the sort of pep talk that usually football managers give to their teams before they go on to the pitch.

You're going to be slaughtered. You're going to be annihilated. You're going to be overrun. You're going to suffer. They were under no illusion that as they went, as Jesus sent them, that as they went with the message, Jesus calls the message, the kingdom of heaven has come near.

They were under no illusion that people are going to rush up to them and say, thank you so much. Oh yes, we believe everything that you're saying. We really trust and believe in this Jesus you've spoken to us about.

So with this most disappointing news ringing in our ears, and taking the words of Jesus here, should we expect this week of mission to accomplish nothing?

[ 16 : 30 ] Should we expect that as we go and speak and share that we will be shunned and hated by those that we invite? Or do we need to look back at Mark in chapter 4?

Because Mark in chapter 4, this parable that we read a little while ago on page 1005, tells us what we are to expect as we speak the gospel. Tells us what we are to expect as we seek to be faithful witnesses for Jesus.

Because Mark 4, though the parable itself is preached, we know to all these people, the crowds who long to hear the words of Jesus, the explanation of it, the meaning of it is only explained to Jesus' disciples later on.

And as we consider this parable, I believe it will help us. It will help us in our witnessing. It will help us to base our expectations upon God's word, rather than on our own optimism, if you're a half full glass sort of person, or upon our own pessimism if we're a half empty sort of person.

Because we'll be like that, won't we? Some of us here will be, yes, this mission is going to be fantastic and lots of people are going to be saved and we're really excited about it. And others of us are, yeah, well, probably nobody's going to listen.

[ 17 : 46 ] We're the Eeyore people, of course, aren't we, rather than the Tigger people. It's not, you know, nobody's going to be saved. We've done missions before. Yeah, we'll do it because it's the right thing to do. But, well, we're not expecting much.

And we're in those two camps. But I want us, rather than being simply optimistic or simply pessimistic to be biblical, in our realistic expectation of what God will do.

And this parable that Jesus explains to his disciples will help us with that. First of all, Jesus teaches us something statistically.

Statistically, most of those we witness to will not be saved. That's a reality. We see it here, don't we? Four occasions the word is shared, the seed as it's mentioned there, the word is spoken about the Lord Jesus Christ.

Out of those four occasions, three of them fail to produce any lasting fruit. Now, this isn't a precise parable. We're not to think that Jesus is giving us fractions and percentages.

[ 18 : 49 ] So, he's saying, well, you know, as you go and share the gospel, there's a 25% success rate. That's if you're optimistic. If you're pessimists, 75% failure rate as you take the gospel out.

No, it's not a mathematical solution. But rather, Jesus is warning us, he's telling us clearly that most of the people we speak to, we shall not see coming all the way through to saving faith.

He wants to prepare his disciples. He wants to prepare us for that. And we need to be prepared for that. So that we do not end in great disappointment or resentment or frustration. Well, why is that the case?

Why is it that as we share the gospel, as we speak to people of Christ, as we tell them the good news of a God who loves them and of a God who cares for them, a God who wants to give them eternal life, why is it that the majority of those people will not actually go on to saving faith in Christ?

And Jesus gives us three reasons. Three reasons why that will be so. And the first reason is because of Satan. We read that there, verse 15.

[ 19 : 54 ] Some people are like seeds sown along the path when the word is sown. As soon as they hear it, Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown in them. The reality is this, dear friends, as we obey the Lord Jesus, as we speak to people of Christ, we are immediately engaging in a battle, a spiritual battle in which Satan is our enemy.

He is opposed to us holding this mission. He is opposed to you speaking of Jesus. He is against everything that we are seeking to accomplish. He does not want men and women and boys and girls to trust Jesus.

He does not want God to be glorified in their lives. He does not want them to be set free from his rule over them. He wants them to stay in the darkness and blindness in which he has placed them.

Because the Bible tells us that Satan is the one that blinds the eyes of those who do not believe. Paul writing in 2 Corinthians, chapter 4, verse 4.

The God of this age, that's another title for the devil. The God of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

[ 21 : 04 ] So we are immediately up against a very forceful, powerful enemy. We are immediately seeking to win the people who are trapped, enslaved, blinded and controlled by a supernatural force under the influence of Satan.

And of course, one of the great things that he does, or one of the terrible things of course that he does, is that he is a liar. He lies and he distorts as well the things that we say so that people reject the good news.

Here's what Jesus said about Satan. Not holding to the truth. There is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language.

He is the liar and the father of lies. Why is it that people do not believe what we are saying about the Lord Jesus Christ, but they will believe almost anything else? They will believe that they have come from apes.

They will believe that this world is pointless and it came from nowhere and is going nowhere. They will believe that money will make them happy. They will believe that being successful and winning Britain's Got Talent, or whatever it may be, is the root to contentment and satisfaction.

[ 22 : 15 ] They will believe all those lies. Not because Satan is the one who is the master of lies. And even sadly, when we speak to them the truth of the gospel, he takes those words and he is able to twist them and distort them and make them out to be something else.

So we are in a spiritual battle. Therefore, dear friends, we must put on the armour of God. I am going to touch upon that just on the Sunday evening before we begin the mission, spiritual warfare.

But we need to be praying and recognising that we are in a battle. Secondly, we see that the reason that men and women do not come to Christ is because of sin.

Or rather the power of sin, the curse of sin, the influence of sin. You see, we are trying to reach people with the gospel who cannot save themselves. We are trying to reach people with the gospel who have no power in themselves to come to Christ.

There is no way that they can do that. Since power over people has rendered them powerless and lifeless. And I would liken them to those who receive the seed on the rocky ground.

[ 23 : 23 ] Some fell on rocky places where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched. They withered because they had no root.

And Jesus likens them later, verse 16. Others like seeds sown on rocky places, hear the word and receive it at once with joy. But since they have no root, they last only a short time.

When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. We read there with the children earlier on, Ephesians chapter 2, verse 5.

God who is rich in mercy made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions. Sin deadens people. It deadens them spiritually.

It deadens them so that they are unable to come and put their faith in Jesus. They are unable to seek him. They are unable to do anything. They are completely lifeless.

[ 24 : 22 ] And in one sense, it doesn't matter how attractively we present the gospel. It doesn't matter how we seek to share Christ. Unless there is that life supplying root of faith in Jesus as their saviour.

They shall never reach fruition. They shall never come through fully for Christ. And it's clear here that what happens is that people hear the good news. They hear, God loves you.

God cares about you. God has a purpose for you. This is great, they think. This is super. And so in their own strength in one sense, they respond. This is super.

But then, they realize that actually they need Christ. That they need him. They cannot do it by their own works. They cannot build themselves up or grow themselves up by their own strength.

And what they see is, of course, that there is a cost to following Jesus. To fully commit to Jesus as my saviour, there is a cost. People will ridicule me. People will look down upon me.

[ 25 : 24 ] People will laugh at me. People will think less of me. I like it when I can save myself. When I can save myself. But I don't like it when I'm told I cannot save myself.

And only Christ can save me. And I am weak and helpless and powerless. And that what was once a new found interest very quickly fades away.

Because it's just too hard. It is too hard. It's impossible. But until we recognize it's impossible. Until we recognize that we cannot do it.

If we respond only by emotion. And what has been so very sad over the generations. Particularly over our own generation. It's been that many people have seemingly come to faith in Christ.

Because they've heard the good news. They've heard the message of Jesus. And they've emotionally responded to it. But they've never come and placed their roots in Christ. They've never been born again of the Spirit.

[ 26 : 21 ] Never come and taken hold of him as their Savior. And him hold of them. And so very quickly they have drifted away. And we've seen that all of us. If we've been a Christian for any time. And how sad it is.

Sin you see. That's the power of sin. It's not to be trifled with. It's not just a bit of naughtiness. Sin is a awful evil. Which destroys, cripples people.

So we're in a battle with Satan. But we're up against. In one sense seeking to win people. Who are locked in with sin. And it's power over them. But then thirdly as well.

Jesus gives us the reason why people. Do not come to saving faith. Ultimately when we share the gospel with them. It's because of something spiritually. See what's happening when we share the gospel.

What's happening when we're speaking of Christ. We are telling people about spiritual treasures. But they are people who live in a world. Of visible pleasures.

[ 27 : 23 ] We're telling about invisible things aren't we. We're telling about Jesus. We're telling about things that are invisible. But they are people who live in the visible. The eternal blessings of knowing the Lord Jesus Christ.

Not things that people can see. Or smell. Or touch. Or hear. Or feel. Not until the Holy Spirit comes into their hearts and lives. When the Holy Spirit comes upon us.

When we are born again. Then our eyes are open. And we do see. And we do feel. And we do taste. Of the good things of God. But as we're sharing the gospel. We're sharing them with people who've only got one sense.

Hearing. And even then as we see here. Their hearing. Is damaged. As Jesus says. Ever hearing.

But never understanding. All we can do is promise them. That if they put their faith in Christ. There's blessings to be had. We can only promise them. What we know.

[ 28 : 21 ] And have experienced ourselves. But they cannot know or experience. Until they've come to faith in Christ. And so what happens. As Jesus says here. They see all around them. The physical things.

Whether they be the worries. Whether they be the deceitfulness of riches. Whether they be the. Whether they be the pleasures of life. And they say. I've got all these things. Why on earth should I.

Should I swap these things. For just a promise. Why on earth. Should I give up these physical things. I can see and touch and taste. Even though I know their passing. Even though I know that they do not fully satisfy. To swap them for that which is invisible.

That I cannot taste. Touch. See or smell. Is too hard. For me. So once again. These people. May begin with.

Interest in Christ. But before long. They. Are gone again. That's why dear friends.

[ 29 : 26 ] We have to be prepared for rejection. We have to be prepared for indifference. We have to be prepared that people. Will not. Come.

To Christ. As we speak to them. Of Jesus. Satan is at work. Sinners at work. Spiritually. We are. We are.

Dealing with spiritual things. In a. Physical world. And so. Now that I've thoroughly depressed you. How can anybody be saved?

How can anybody possibly be saved? Is it. Is there anybody. Who's going to actually come to faith in Christ. With such a. A force. An army against us. Of Satan and sin.

And the world. Can it be possible that anybody. Why don't we just give up. Let's just scrap the whole thing. It's not. It's obviously not worth it. Is it. It's pointless. We must not be discouraged.

[ 30 : 23 ] We must not be resentful. We must keep going. Why? Because that's not the end of the parable. Is it. There will be people who will be saved. Verse 8.

Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up and grew and produced a crop. Multiplying 30, 60, 100 times. Verse 20. Others like seed sown on good soil. Hear the word.

Accept it. And produce a crop. So 30, 60, 100 times. What was sown. And the reason why we are not to give up. And the reason why men and women will be saved.

Is not due to anything in and of ourselves. But rather it is all down to God's sovereignty. God's sovereignty. God's sovereignty. God's sovereignty. Again and again in the Bible.

We are brought back to this reality. To face this inescapable truth. That God is the savior. Jonah in chapter 2 verse 10. Salvation belongs to the Lord.

[ 31 : 21 ] It's God who saves. People are brought to faith. In the Lord Jesus Christ. Only when God chooses. And how he chooses. And because he chooses.

It's what Jesus says here to these disciples. If you read it clearly you can see. He makes it clear that the reason that they are followers of his is what? Verse 11. The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you.

You didn't work it out. You aren't cleverer than the rest of these crowds. You aren't the ones who are more godly or righteous or holy. No, God gave it to you.

It's like Peter later on in Matthew in chapter 16. Where Jesus says, who do you say I am? And Peter at the end of their throwing in various ideas says, you are the Messiah.

The son of the living God. And Jesus says to him, blessed are you. This was not revealed to you by flesh and blood. But by my father in heaven. In other words, Peter.

[ 32 : 20 ] You're a proud man. And you like to think you've worked. You didn't work this out. It's not because you're clever. It's because God revealed it to you. God did something sovereignly and graciously. And opened your eyes.

And so Jesus says again in chapter 6 of John. No one can come to me unless the father who sent me draws them. This is the incredible, wonderful, amazing truth of the Bible.

Which we often call election. The Bible calls it election. It means that God sovereignly saves those that he chooses to save.

In the way that he chooses to save. When he chooses to save. The Bible says that if we're Christians. It's because God chose us before the world was made. Ephesians 4 of chapter 1 verse 4.

He chose us in him before the creation of the world. It wasn't of our doing. It wasn't because there's anything good in us. We are no better than the people we're going to be sharing with and speaking to.

[ 33 : 22 ] We are no cleverer than them. We are no more godly than them. Or holy than them. Or anything else naturally. When the disciples after the day of Pentecost went out and preached the gospel.



We know that many came to faith. Many were converted. Why was that? Because they were such great disciples? Because they were such great apostles? No it wasn't. Acts chapter 13 tells us all who were appointed to eternal life believed.

All who were appointed. All whom God had chosen. All whom God had planned. All whom God had worked. All whom God had sought out with his own loving kindness. So the reality is this.

Dear friends. People will be saved. Because God has a purpose to save them. And wonderfully he uses us. And we're part of the means of that salvation.

But he is the one who does the work of that salvation. That raises another question doesn't it? Does that mean that when we speak to people about Christ.

[ 34 : 31 ] And they say no or do not come. That that means they're lost forever. Does that mean that they can never be saved? Does that mean that they are eternally out of God's grace?

No. Because God's way of salvation is unknown to us. We do not know what God is doing on the inside of a person's heart. Just because at one moment they say no.

Does not mean that God is not working in them. Bringing them to that place of faith. See when you speak to somebody. Or I share the gospel with somebody.

Or we invite them to something. That's part of God's machinery of salvation. Part of his engine of salvation. If we know anything about engines just ask Martin.

He'll tell you there's lots of bits. I'm putting together a motorbike at the moment. I've got lots of bits. I don't know exactly where they all go actually. But anyway.

[ 35 : 28 ] There's lots of bits that put it together. That make the whole. Becoming a Christian. Wonderfully for each one of us who's a Christian. We know there's lots of bits. Wasn't there along the way? It may have been our parents.

It may have been a Sunday school teacher. It may have been a friend at school. It may have been somebody in the youth club. It may have been. And we can see again and again. Somebody at work who spoke to us. Somebody that we heard in the street. It may be a leaflet we picked up.

All sorts of parts. And how many of us. Can honestly say that the very first time. Somebody spoke to us about Jesus. We immediately.

Wanted to know him and trust him and follow him. No we had to hear it lots of times didn't we? We're part of God's machinery. We're like links in a chain. Which God uses to draw a person to Christ.

God is at work in a person's life from their birth. As we see. Because he chose them before the world was made. We may be one of those links. We may be a link at the beginning.

[ 36 : 25 ] We may be a link at the end. But we're more than likely to be one of the links in the middle. Aren't we? This means that it may not yet be God's time for that person to be saved.

God has a time. All things. We know the chapter. Ecclesiastes 3. Everything under heaven. There's a time and a season.

There's a time and a season in God's plan. For people to be saved. All of life follows his timetable. All of. Things that happen in this world. According to his clock.

His clock. His great clock in heaven. If I can put it that way. Where all things run. And nothing is too late. Nothing is too early. Some of us here didn't come to Christ until we were adults.

Perhaps well on into our adult years. And perhaps we even thought. Why Lord did you wait so long? If only I'd been a Christian when I was younger. It would have saved me so much heartache. If only I'd trusted you before.

[ 37 : 24 ] I could have known the joy of sins forgiven then. Why did you wait? Why did you wait? Why did you wait? Why did you wait? Because God is wise. Because God knows what he's doing. Because God knows when the time is right.

You weren't ready then. You weren't. God hadn't done all the preparation needed to bring you to himself. There was such a lot to be done. And so it is with those that we share the gospel with dear friends.

We don't know what God is doing in their hearts. We don't know where along the chain we may be of that link to bringing them to Christ. May God by his grace enable some of us to be part of the near the end links.

Perhaps that very final link may be then coming here and hearing the gospel proclaimed and preached during that week. Wonderful. Praise God that that may be so. But in the meantime dear friends we keep sowing.

We keep sowing. We keep sowing. Because we are confident of this. That every single one of those that God has chosen to save shall be saved.

[ 38 : 38 ] Jesus himself declared it in John 6 37. All those the father gives me will come to me. Dear friends be encouraged.

Be prepared. But be expectant. Difficulty, opposition, rejection. Expectant too. God is sovereign.

God will save. Well let. Now to him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or even imagine.

According to his power that is at work within us. You and me. To him be glory in the church. His church.

This church. And in Christ Jesus. Throughout all generations. Yesterday. Today. Tomorrow. Next week. Forever and ever. Amen.

[ 39 : 39 ] Amen.