



People and the Word

Acts 20:1-16

1. Travel (verses 1-6)

2. Teaching (verses 7-12)

I was at a wedding yesterday of a close family friend. I had an opportunity at the reception to talk with the pastor who led the ceremony. He's a young man, who is going to seminary right now online at Southern Seminary. He grew up in a pastor's home, so he knows a thing or two about Christian ministry.

Over the course of our conversation, one of the things that he said really struck me. He said, "Ministry is really about two things: people and the word." That is, ministry is about taking God's word and applying it in the lives of people. He went on to say how much he is a people person, getting energized by those around him. He said that he has a friend who is taking all of the same seminary classes with him, which helps as they process through everything that they learn together. Anyway, he said how much his friend loves theology. He loves the word of God and will talk theology with anybody and everybody.

Rightly, he discerned his own weakness and the weakness of his friend. He said, "I need more theology. My friend needs more people." Now, from what I observed, his comments during the wedding ceremony were very appropriate and filled with the word. Also, what I know about his friend, he is a good people person as well. But he was exactly right in his understanding about the practicals of Christian ministry. It's about two things. It's about people and the word. bringing the word of God to people, with enough understanding and love of people that it has its effect upon people.

D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones said it well in his book, "Preaching and Preachers." He said, "You cannot read the history of the Church, even in a cursory manner, without seeing that preaching has always occupied a central and a predominating position in the life of the Church."^[1] There it is. It is the word of God proclaimed that has an effect upon people. The ministry of the word is super-important in ministry.

But Lloyd-Jones also said, speaking to fellow pastors, "To love to preach is one thing, to love those to whom we preach [is] quite another.' The trouble with some of us is the we love preaching, but are not always careful to make sure that we love the people to whom we are actually preaching. If you lack this element of compassion for the people you will also lack the pathos which is a very vital element in all true preaching."^[2]

The title of my message this morning is, "People and the Word" because that's what we see in the apostle Paul. We see him loving people, and bringing the word to them. We see this in the first 12 verses of Acts, chapter 20.

Acts 20:1-12

After the uproar ceased, Paul sent for the disciples, and after encouraging them, he said farewell and departed for Macedonia. When he had gone through those regions and had given them much encouragement, he came to Greece. There he spent three months, and when a plot was made against him by the Jews as he was about to set sail for Syria, he decided to return through Macedonia. Sopater the Berean, son of Pyrrhus, accompanied him; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy; and the Asians, Tychicus and Trophimus. These went on ahead and were waiting for us at Troas, Acts 20:6 but we sailed away from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread, and in five days we came to them at Troas, where we stayed for seven days.

On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul talked with them, intending to depart on the next day, and he prolonged his speech until midnight. There were many lamps in the upper room where we were gathered. And a young man named Eutychus, sitting at the window, sank into a deep sleep as Paul talked still longer. And being overcome by sleep, he fell down from the third story and was taken up dead. But Paul went down and bent over him, and taking him in his arms, said, "Do not be alarmed, for his life is in him." And when Paul had gone up and had broken bread and eaten, he conversed with them a long while, until daybreak, and so departed. And they took the youth away alive, and were not a little comforted.

This passage breaks nicely in half. In the first half (the first 6 verses), we see Paul traveling from place to place, ministering to people along the way. In the second half (the last 6 verses), we see Paul in Troas, teaching the disciples who are there, that is bringing the word into the lives of people. These two points form my outline this morning. We see (1) Travel (verses 1-6) and (2) Teaching (verses 7-12). So, let's begin by looking at Paul's ...

1. Travel (verses 1-6)

In these verses, we see Paul leaving Ephesus, traveling to Greece. traveling back through Macedonia, through Philippi, and then to Troas. This is merely the latest leg of Paul's missionary journey.

I trust that you know that in Acts 20, Paul is on his third missionary journey. In Acts 18:23, we saw him depart from the great church in Antioch to travel on his journey. First he headed north through southern Galatia. Arriving in Ephesus at the beginning of Acts 19. (Acts 19 records what took place in Ephesus.) He first encounters some disciples of John, who had never experienced the coming of the Holy Spirit. he preached to them, laid his hands on them, and the Holy Spirit came upon them (Acts 19:6).

Then, for three months, he brings the word to the people in the synagogue in Ephesus (Acts 19:8). When he had worn out his welcome there in the synagogue, he rented out the hall of Tyrannus, where he brought the word to people for 2 years (Acts 19:20).

God was doing some extraordinary miracles during his days in Ephesus (Acts 19:11). so much so that his sweaty work clothes were being "carried away to the sick and their diseases left them and evil spirits came out of them" (Acts 19:12). Paul wasn't even present for these miracles. His clothes were enough to bring healing to many. As Paul continues on in Ephesus, "The word of the Lord continued to increase and prevail mightily" (Acts 19:20).

Just as Paul had worn out his welcome in the synagogue, he also wore out his welcome in the city of Ephesus, as scores of people were coming to Christ, and turning from their magic arts to turn to Jesus. they were also turning from the worship of Artemas of Ephesus, the big idol temple of the city. Those who made idols to sell felt threatened, that many were believing that "gods made with hands are not gods at all" (Acts 19:26). So, to protect their livelihood, they formed a mob against Paul and the message that he brought. (We looked at that last week).

This week, we find ourselves in Acts, chapter 20, when Paul is saying goodbye to his friends in Ephesus, where he had remained for three years and formed a close bond with these people. The goodbye is particularly difficult here, because most, if not all of them, had come to faith in Christ through his ministry. There is nothing like a close friendship with people who God saved through your bringing the word to them. When you have known people who were living in their sin, when you have been the means of sharing the gospel, when they have embraced your words, repented of their sin, believed in Christ, and came to experience the blessings of following Jesus, and when you have helped them walk through the hard times of what it means to follow Jesus, there is nothing like the strong bond that you have with such people. Saying goodbye in such circumstances is particularly difficult.

Our family was able to witness this yesterday at the wedding we attended. During the ceremony, after the father walked down the aisle with his daughter, he was given an opportunity to say a few words to those who came. And he gave a tender speech about what it means to give away his daughter. sort of, saying goodbye to his daughter as he had known her, as the relationship of marriage forever changes the relationship that a father has with his daughter. Such goodbyes are difficult. [\[3\]](#)

After he says his goodbye, we read (in Acts 20:36), Acts 20:36 And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. Acts 20:37 And there was much weeping on the part of all; they embraced Paul and kissed him, Acts 20:38 being sorrowful most of all because of the word he had spoken, that they would not see his face again.

I'm sure that many of the same emotions were coming out here, especially after three years ministering to people in Ephesus. What can you do? What can you say? to make the sorrow of leaving less. We don't know exactly what he said. All we have in verse 1 is that he "encouraged them." Look at verse 1 again .

Acts 20:1

After the uproar ceased, Paul sent for the disciples, and after encouraging them, he said farewell and departed for Macedonia.

That's about all you can do when times are tough, and you are saying goodbye. All you can do is say encouraging things such as, "The Lord will sustain you." "The Lord will be your strength." "I will continue to pray for you." "You will never leave my heart." "Continue on trusting Jesus!" "He is faithful." But this is ministry. It's people. It's encouraging people to press on!

Well, after the encouragement, Paul began his travel. We read in verse 1 that he "departed for Macedonia." This is merely the first part of his planned travel. Back in Acts 19:21 we read that "Paul resolved in the Spirit to pass through Macedonia and Achaia and go to Jerusalem, saying 'After I have been there, I must also see Rome.'" It's a simple plan: Macedonia, Achaia, Jerusalem, and Rome. This is what we will see throughout the rest of the book of Acts. We will see him travel to Macedonia and Achaia in our text this morning. In Acts 21, Paul will arrive in Jerusalem. In Acts 28, Paul will arrive in Rome.

In our text today, first Paul heads out to Macedonia. He does so by way of Troas. We know this because Paul writes about this journey that he took. He said, "When I came to Troas to preach the gospel of Christ, even though a door was opened for me in the Lord, my spirit was not at rest because I did not find my brother Titus there. So I took leave of them and went on to Macedonia" (2 Corinthians 2:12-12).

Again, you see Paul's ministry heart for people. Apparently, he was planning to meet Titus in Troas, but he was not there. So Paul's spirit had no rest. He would have loved to continue with some ministry in Troas. In fact, an open door for the gospel was there. But Titus wasn't there, so, he went on. He went on into Macedonia.

And again, if you read 2 Corinthians, you find out that Paul met up with Titus there in Macedonia. The meet up was super encouraging for Paul, because Paul was going through some difficult times. But as Titus gave him good news about the church in Corinth, he was comforted.

2 Corinthians 7:5-7

For even when we came into Macedonia, our bodies had no rest, but we were afflicted at every turn—fighting without and fear within. But God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus, and not only by his coming but also by the comfort with which he was comforted by you, as he told us of your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced still more.

These sorts of verses show the heart of Paul for people. During his travels he always had people and ministry on his mind. I remind you, these travels weren't vacation for Paul. In fact, if anything, he travels were difficult. But Paul's heart is always to serve other people. That's

what we see in verse 2 of our text.

Acts 20:2

When he had gone through those regions and had given them much encouragement, he came to Greece.

"Greece" is another name for "Achaia." We don't know how Paul got to "Greece" (or "Achaia") or how long his journey was, but all the way down to Greece, he was ministering to people. he was serving them. He was giving them "much encouragement" on his way to Greece.

When you put things together from the other portions of Scripture, it seems as if this part of his travels actually took a while. One commentator said, this, "However we visualize the movements of Paul and his colleagues during this time, we are doubtless not far wrong in concluding that this ministry in Macedonia lasted for a year or more."^[4]

When you pull together some other Scriptures, you realize that this journey from Macedonia to Greece was a fund-raising tour. Not for Paul as a missionary. But for the poor Christians in Jerusalem, who were facing hardships due to their poverty. In Romans 15:25-27, Paul described this journey through Macedonia and Achaia with these words.

Romans 15:25-27

At present, however, I am going to Jerusalem bringing aid to the saints. For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make some contribution for the poor among the saints at Jerusalem. For they were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have come to share in their spiritual blessings, they ought also to be of service to them in material blessings.

Surely, this took some time, going to the churches in these regions, telling them of the need of the poor Christians in Jerusalem, taking up a collection. In all of the churches, he was certainly giving them "much encouragement," like any missionary would. Certainly he was telling stories of the working of God (say, in Ephesus and other places), telling stories of how people came to Christ, telling stories of the generosity of others churches, and proclaiming the gospel of grace to the people.

Well, finally, he came to "Greece" (as verse 3 says). He probably spent most of his time there in Corinth, a church that he knew well. Acts 18 tells the story of how he planted the church, and remained for a year and a half.

Acts 20:3

There he spent three months.

Again, when you tie the Scriptures together, you realize that Paul wrote Romans in Corinth! I would encourage you, in your Bibles to write "ROMANS" in the margins next to verse 3. If anything else this tells us what Paul was thinking about during his days in Corinth. He was thinking upon the great themes of the gospel. He was thinking of how we all have sinned and have fallen short of the glory of God. That's true of Jews and Gentiles alike. In fact, none of us have done good. We have all turned astray. As a result, God's wrath is upon us! (Romans 1-3).

But God, in his love for us "while we were still sinners," sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins. It's all of God's grace. So that we can be saved from our sins through faith alone. not our works, not our efforts, But simply by believing in Jesus Christ, we can have our sins forgiven. just like Abraham who looked to God in faith, and he was considered righteous in the eyes of God. So also we, as we believe in Christ, God credits that to our account as righteousness (Romans 4-5).

When we are saved from our sins, God changes us. He sanctifies us through a slow and (often) painful process (Romans 6-7). Though we have ups and downs in our lives, we are secure. We are secure in God's forgiveness of us. There is no condemnation for us who are in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1). We are secure in God's love for us. In fact, nothing in all of creation "will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:39).

God is sovereignly working in our lives.

Romans 8:28-30

And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

This is Grace! God's choosing of us. God extending his mercy to us, ot because we deserve it in any way. But because of his choice. "He says to Moses 'I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion'" (Romans 9:15). And God's mercy drives us to serve him! "I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship" (Romans 12:1).

These great themes of Romans were the sorts of things that were on his mind as he was in Greece, staying mostly in Corinth. But after 3 months in Greece, it came time for him to leave. It was time for him to take the next stop of his plan. He had been to Macedonia, and Achaiah. Now he is set set to go to Jerusalem (and then to Rome) (see Acts 19:21).

I do believe that he was trying to get there for the Passover, that is the "Feast of Unleavened Bread" (Acts 20:6) when the Jews in Jerusalem would remember Moses, and how the Lord brought the people of Israel out of slavery. There were often "pilgrim ships" that would make the voyage to Jerusalem, on ships filled with Jews, who were heading to Jerusalem for the big national feasts. Paul was ready to board the ship and head out. That is, until, he heard that there was a plot against him.

Acts 20:3

There he spent three months, and when a plot was made against him by the Jews as he was about to set sail for Syria, he decided to return through Macedonia.

Somehow, Paul concluded that it was safer for him to travel by land, rather than voyage by sea. It makes sense, when at sea, there is no law, but whatever can be enforced by those upon the boat. On a boat it is majority rule. A plot against Paul could easily have been pulled off while at sea. So, that's why Paul went on his way, back through Macedonia by land.

Remember also, at this time, Paul had a bunch of cash with him, contributions that were raised by the churches to give to the poor Christians in Jerusalem. It was safer to bring it by land, in the hands of many. The many are listed in verse 4. These are those who accompanied him on the trip through Macedonia, on his way back to Jerusalem.

Acts 20:4

Sopater the Berean, son of Pyrrhus, accompanied him; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy; and the Asians, Tychicus and Trophimus.

It is of note here that they are all Gentiles from different places all across Asia and Macedonia and Achaia. I wouldn't be surprised if these men were from various churches to help insure that the funds given for the relief of the saints in Jerusalem, actually got to Jerusalem.

Anyway, they arrive in Philippi during the Passover feast (that is the days of Unleavened Bread). Had they taken the ship, they would have probably reached Jerusalem in time for the feast. but travel by the land is slower. and they arrived in Philippi at the time of the feast. Paul, being the only Jew in his traveling group felt the need to stay and celebrate the feast. But he sent the others on to Troas, where he met up with them. This is what we are told in verses 5-6.

Acts 20:5-6

These went on ahead and were waiting for us at Troas, but we sailed away from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread, and in five days we came to them at Troas, where we stayed for seven days.

I doubt that those in Philippi much minded another visit from the apostle Paul, especially as he was able to be with them to celebrate the Passover with them! This holiday was like spending the Thanksgiving or Christmas holiday with them! It would have been a time of great joy, as they reflected upon God's redemption of Israel, and God's redemption in Christ.

Well, there are Paul's travels.

Paul's travels Macedonia and Greece and back again show the dynamics of a traveling ministry. Lots of moving parts. Lots of change in plans. But through it all, Paul had a heart for people. He loved the people of the churches. He loved stopping and taking time with the people, visiting and encouraging them. Further, he loved the Christians in Jerusalem. as he raised the funds to bring them relief. This is ministry. It is people. It is loving people. It is caring for people. What Paul did on this trip is what all of us are called to do. We are all called to love and care for other people.

Well, for the rest of our text, we find ourselves in Troas. And there, we find Paul teaching those who were there. This is my second point:

2. Teaching (verses 7-12)

Acts 20:7-12

On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul talked with them, intending to depart on the next day, and he prolonged his speech until midnight. There were many lamps in the upper room where we were gathered. And a young man named Eutychus, sitting at the window, sank into a deep sleep as Paul talked still longer. And being overcome by sleep, he fell down from the third story and was taken up dead. But Paul went down and bent over him, and taking him in his arms, said, "Do not be alarmed, for his life is in him." And when Paul had gone up and had broken bread and eaten, he conversed with them a long while, until daybreak, and so departed. And they took the youth away alive, and were not a little comforted.

This is one of the most unique stories in the book of Acts, indeed in all of the Bible. The story is of a young man, desperately trying to stay awake during Paul's long sermon, only to fall out of the window and die. Yet, he was raised from the dead. And after this, Paul continued on speaking! Perhaps Luke (the author of Acts) decided to include it because it was so unique. Perhaps it has to do with the fact that Luke was actually there to see and witness this.

I'm not sure that you noticed the change in tenses that took place in verse 5. "These went on ahead and were waiting for *us* at Troas." This is another one of those "we" sections in the book of Acts. Where Luke stops talking about Paul and what he did. and talks about Paul and what we experienced. That is, Luke was with Paul. Luke will continue with Paul on his journeys until he gets to Jerusalem (Acts 21:17). Luke was there in Troas when Paul came. So, Luke experienced this event first hand. He was there in the upper room when they were breaking bread together. Luke witnessed Eutychus fall out the window. Luke saw him dead. And Luke saw him rise from the dead. Luke includes the story for us.

It is significant here, also that Troas is the same spot where Paul had come early in his journey, looking for Titus. But Titus wasn't there. So Paul continued on into Macedonia, even though there as an open door for ministry, to preach the gospel of Christ (2 Cor. 2:12). But now, Paul is back in Troas. Finally, he has the opportunity "to preach the gospel of Christ" in Troas (2 Cor. 2:12).

So, let's work through the story together.

Acts 20:7

On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul talked with them, intending to depart on the next day, and he prolonged his speech until midnight.

Here we get a glimpse into an early church worship service. Now, of course, this isn't a typical service, because it was a sort of "farewell" service to the apostle Paul. Paul was leaving the next day. That accounts for the length of the meeting.

However, I do believe that it is significant here to note that they met "on the first day of the week." That is, they met on Sunday. This has been the pattern for churches down through the centuries: to meet on Sunday. The significance of this is that it seemingly would have been most natural for Christians to meet on Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath. Yet here, we see the church meeting on Sunday. So, something changed between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. I think with many that it was the resurrection that changed everything. Christ was raised from the dead on Sunday morning. Surely, it took such a momentous event to change the meeting days from Saturday to Sunday.

Now, that's not to say at all that we are commanded to gather on Sunday mornings. Churches in Nepal gather on Saturdays. Some churches in Muslim dominated lands meet on Fridays, as this is a typical gathering day for Muslims. (But note here that they met on Sunday evening that they met, not in the morning. This is because Paul was leaving the next morning. So, to try to form a pattern here about our worship means that evening worship would be the pattern.)

Anyway, they met on the first day of the week, "to break bread."

Acts 20:7

On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread,

That's probably an allusion to the Lord's Supper, which we will celebrate soon, at the end of my message this morning. It may also include the simple idea of eating a meal together. Often in the early church, they would gather and eat meals together. and at those meals, they would remember the Lord celebrating the Lord's Supper.

Then comes the tragedy of Eutychus. (How ironic it is that the meaning of the name, "Eutychus" is "lucky" or "fortunate"). Anyway, verse 8 sets the stage for the tragedy.

Acts 20:8

There were many lamps in the upper room where we were gathered.

I can only surmise that Luke included this because of the atmosphere that many lamps in the room produced. It was an atmosphere in which sleep would have come easily. Not only were the many lamps sucking the oxygen out of the room, but also the "hypnotic effect of the flickering flames"^[5] may have added to the drowsiness of Eutychus. Then, we read of his downfall (pun intended).

Acts 20:9

And a young man named Eutychus, sitting at the window, sank into a deep sleep as Paul talked still longer.

I have compassion for Eutychus. I know what it's like to be in an auditorium, listening to a speaker while feeling sleepy. In fact, some of you right now might be having compassion for Eutychus, as you are struggling to stay awake yourself. Yvonne and I have a word for this phenomenon. We call it "hurting." There have been times when we haven't had enough sleep the night before, and find ourselves in a church service, and struggling with sleep. During those times, we often whisper to each other, "Are you hurting?" Because that's what it is. It is painful. It is painful to try and stay awake when a preacher is droning on and on. Some of you may be experiencing that pain right now.

I know that some of you are more prone to this than others. You don't see what I see when I preach, but I know that there are some of you who struggle with this. There are people in our congregation who experience this week in and week out. I know who you are because I see your eyelids get heavy. You usually don't fall asleep. But still, your eyes are often heavy.

There are many practical things that you can do to help. You can bite your tongue to startle yourself. You can pinch yourself. I find it helpful to get up and stand. Perhaps even a little break to get a sip of water helps. So, if this is you, if you are sleepy right now or if you have tendencies to be sleepy, I would encourage you to fight it in whatever way you can.

Now, it's not all upon you, as the hearer of God's word. It's also upon me as a preacher. I know that there is a book on preaching entitled, "Saving Eutychus." The subtitle of the book is "How to preach God's word and keep people awake."^[6] I don't have the book. I have never read the book. But I appreciate the title. Because, as a preacher myself, I understand the need to keep people engaged and listening, because it is of no profit for you be sleeping when I am talking.

In fact, I remember hearing one preacher that I respected saying, "The Cardinal Sin" of a preacher is to be a boring preacher. I try not to be boring. I try to engage you with enthusiasm and passion and content that is interesting enough to engage your attention. But I am encouraged that even the apostle Paul was guilty of droning long, and seeing a young man fall asleep during his sermon. Perhaps Paul needed to read this book!

We read in verse 9 what happened to Eutychus.

Acts 20:9-10

And being overcome by sleep, he fell down from the third story and was taken up dead. But Paul went down and bent over him, and taking him in his arms, said, "Do not be alarmed, for his life is in him."

Now when you hear this story, it sounds like Elijah and Elisha, both of whom raised children from the dead. Elijah raised the son of the widow

of Zarephath. Here's that story:

1 Kings 17:17-24

After this the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, became ill. And his illness was so severe that there was no breath left in him. And she said to Elijah, "What have you against me, O man of God? You have come to me to bring my sin to remembrance and to cause the death of my son!" And he said to her, "Give me your son." And he took him from her arms and carried him up into the upper chamber where he lodged, and laid him on his own bed. And he cried to the LORD, "O Lord my God, have you brought calamity even upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by killing her son?" Then he stretched himself upon the child three times and cried to the Lord, "O LORD my God, let this child's life come into him again." And the LORD listened to the voice of Elijah. And the life of the child came into him again, and he revived. And Elijah took the child and brought him down from the upper chamber into the house and delivered him to his mother. And Elijah said, "See, your son lives." And the woman said to Elijah, "Now I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in your mouth is truth."

Elisha raised the Shunammite's Son who died of a headache. Here's that story:

2 Kings 4:32-37

When Elisha came into the house, he saw the child lying dead on his bed. So he went in and shut the door behind the two of them and prayed to the Lord. Then he went up and lay on the child, putting his mouth on his mouth, his eyes on his eyes, and his hands on his hands. And as he stretched himself upon him, the flesh of the child became warm. Then he got up again and walked once back and forth in the house, and went up and stretched himself upon him. The child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes. Then he summoned Gehazi and said, "Call this Shunammite." So he called her. And when she came to him, he said, "Pick up your son." She came and fell at his feet, bowing to the ground. Then she picked up her son and went out.

Paul must have done something like this. Stretching himself out upon Eutychus, mouth to mouth, eye to eye, hand to hand, body to body, until life was restored in him.

Now, what's significant here is the it wasn't Luke who raised the boy. It was Paul. If this would happen at Rock Valley Bible Church, certainly, one of our medical professionals would have been the first ones on the scene. Certainly not me. But such was the case with the apostle Paul. He raised the child from the dead! Luke took one look at Eutychus and said, "I can't help him." But Paul looked at him and said, "I can." And Paul saved him from the dead. Such is the power of Christ.

Regarding the time frame, it was after midnight by now (verse 7). Paul had been going for 5-7 hours. It gets to be midnight. Somewhere around this time, Eutychus falls out of the window. Afterwards, we read the following:

Acts 20:11a

And when Paul had gone up and had broken bread and eaten.

This is probably a meal afterwards, a late-night snack, if you will. Then, ...

Acts 20:11b

he conversed with them a long while, until daybreak, and so departed.

So here it was, midnight when the event with Eutychus happened. And Paul continued to speak until daybreak. In those regions, it was about 6am. That's another six hours that Paul continued to speak with those in Troas!

Acts 20:12

And they took the youth away alive, and were not a little comforted.

"Not a little comforted" means that they were "greatly comforted" in Eutychus being raised from the dead.

All of this really demonstrates Paul's heart for the word. He could go on and on and on about God's word. My message today has been long by intention. I want for you to feel a bit of what it's like to hear a longer sermon. Because, I want you to feel the weight of the word. Do you desire to hear the word? Is a long sermon a burden to you? Or, are thinking of how you need to get home.

But think about it. How can Paul speak for five or six hours, unless you know your topic really well. Do you now that sports fans can talk about their teams for hours and hours? They can talk about this guy's injury and that guy's trade and the coach's bad decision. They can talk about the bad play of the defense all and the amazing catch and the referee's botched call. How can they talk about this for hours? Because their minds are saturated with these things.

So likewise, the apostle Paul had his mind saturated with the word of God. He spoke on and on. Apparently, the people loved to hear the word of God. Do you love the word of God? I know that you do.

It is the word of God that grows people. It is so important to hear it preached.

This sermon was delivered to Rock Valley Bible Church on September 18, 2022 by Steve Brandon.

For more information see www.rockvalleybiblechurch.org.

[1] D. Martyn, Lloyd-Jones, *Preaching & Preachers* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1971), 11.

[2] *Ibid.*, 92.

[3] We will look at this next week when looking at Acts 20:18ff, when Paul comes back to Ephesus to say goodbye to the elders there, never to see them again.

[4] Richard N. Longenecker, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: The Acts of the Apostles* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 506.

[5] *Ibid.*, 509.

[6] See <https://www.amazon.com/Saving-Eutychus-Gary-Millar/dp/1922206253>.