

I Have Many People In This City

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[0 : 00] Let me pray for the reading and preaching of God's word. Heavenly Father, we confess that sometimes just a day-to-day grind and the realities of this world push aside ultimate concerns of eternity to the periphery.

And so we return again with a posture of humble submission before you and your word that you might address us, call us back to your purposes and priorities.

We pray this morning that you would comfort those who are fearful, humble, embolden those who have been afraid or ashamed of the gospel.

Exalt the name of your son, Jesus. Show us how precious he is. Amaze us anew with the sacrifice he made for us on the cross and his resurrection.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. Acts chapter 18, verses 1 to 23. After this, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth, and he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome.

[2 : 01] And he went to see them, and because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and worked, for they were tent makers by trade. And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath and tried to persuade Jews and Greeks.

When Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia, Paul was occupied with the word, testifying to the Jews that the Christ was Jesus. And when they opposed and reviled him, he shook out his garments and said to them, Your blood be on your own heads.

I am innocent. From now on I will go to the Gentiles. And he left there and went to the house of a man named Titius Justice, a worshiper of God. His house was next door to the synagogue.

Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord together with his entire household. And many of the Corinthians, hearing Paul, believed and were baptized. And the Lord said to Paul one night in a vision, Do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent.

For I am with you, and no one will attack you to harm you. For I have many in this city who are my people. And he stayed a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

[3 : 29] But when Galileo was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews made a united attack on Paul and brought him before the tribunal, saying, This man is persuading people to worship God contrary to the law.

But when Paul was about to open his mouth, Galileo said to the Jews, If it were a matter of wrongdoing or a vicious crime, O Jews, I would have reason to accept your complaint.

But since it is a matter of questions about words and names and your own law, see to it yourselves. I refuse to be a judge of these things. And he drove them from the tribunal.

And they all seized Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and beat him in front of the tribunal. But Galileo paid no attention to any of this.

After this, Paul stayed many days longer and then took leave of the brothers and set sail for Syria and with him Priscilla and Aquila. At Santrea, he had cut his hair for he was under a vow.

[4 : 27] And they came to Ephesus and he left them there, but he himself went into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. When they asked him to stay for a longer period, he declined. But on taking leave of them, he said, I will return to you if God wills.

And he set sail from Ephesus. When he landed at Caesarea, he went up and greeted the church and then went down to Antioch. After spending some time there, he departed and went from one place to the next through the region of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.

This is God's holy and authoritative word. Since chapter 13, we've been following the missionary efforts of Apostle Paul.

And it's easy as we're following his missionary journeys to think that he was an untiring missionary, unfazed by persecutions, gladly enduring slander, beating and stoning for the sake of Jesus Christ. However, we also should remember that, you know, even though that was true to an extent, that Paul was still just another mortal man, like the rest of us.

[5 : 36] He did gladly endure persecution for the sake of Christ, but that doesn't mean that the persecutions that he endured in and of himself was pleasant. Even the Apostle Paul was not immune to pain or fear in his ministry.

In his first letter to the Corinthians, after saying that God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong, Paul recalls in 1 Corinthians 2, 3, regarding his time with them, that I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling.

That was what was happening to Apostle Paul when he was ministering to the Corinthians. And we see a glimpse here while he is in Corinth, a glimpse of that weakness and fear and much trembling. Move back.

Is that better?

Hopefully. Yeah. I wonder if the sound is bouncing up the screen. No?

[7 : 04] I don't know anything about these things. Yes. I don't know anything about these things. I don't know anything about these things. So despite all the weakness and fear and trembling that Paul had while he was with them in Corinth, Paul persevered in his proclamation of the gospel.

And this passage is really a clue, key to how he was able to do that. It teaches us that God's presence and God's people appointed for salvation spur us on to persevere in our proclamation of the gospel.

So first, we're going to talk about God's presence, his promise, I am with you. And second, we're going to talk about God's people when he says, I have many people in this city. Even though he was waiting for Silas and Timothy to rejoin him in Athens, it seems that Paul concluded that it was time for him to leave Athens because he leaves and he arrives in Corinth.

And after he's, when, at the time he arrived there, Corinth was a Roman colony, which was refounded by Julius Caesar at 44 BC after having been destroyed by the Romans earlier.

And there in Corinth, Paul has an unexpected encounter in verses two to three. It says, and he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome.

[8 : 23] And he went to see them. And because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and worked for they were tent makers by trade. So Aquila and his wife Priscilla had recently departed Rome and arrived in Corinth.

This was because Emperor Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. This is corroborated by other historical sources that had happened in 49 AD. And most scholars understand this reference by Suetonius, a Roman historian.

He puts it this way, since the Jews constantly made disturbances at the instigation of Christus, Claudius expelled them from Rome. Most scholars understand that reference Christus to be a reference to Jesus, to Christ, which shows that Christian Jews were bearing witness throughout Rome and among the Jews and making an impact all throughout the Roman Empire.

And that, and the resulting turmoil within the Jewish community, the upheaval there, caused the emperor to expel the Jews. Amen. I keep hearing the ringing from behind me.

I'm sorry. I'm sorry. In God's sovereign providence, the expulsion of the Jews from Rome actually led to Paul meeting Aquila and Priscilla.

[10 : 17] And this is amazing because Claudius would have never known, the emperor Claudius would have never known that Aquila and Priscilla, whom he expelled from Rome, were tent makers by trade, the same trade as the apostle Paul, and that they would be able to partner, form a dynamic partnership, and they'd be financially viable while they are proclaiming the gospel all over the place.

Claudius would have never known that Aquila and Priscilla would accompany the great apostle to Ephesus, as it says in verses 18 to 19, and there serve as the hosts, the home base for the Ephesian church.

Claudius would have never known that Aquila and Priscilla would risk their necks for Paul's life, as Paul says in Romans 16 verse 4, so that all the churches of the Gentiles who had benefited on Paul's ministry owe their thanks to Aquila and Priscilla.

Claudius would have never known that Aquila and Priscilla would not only offer indispensable help to the apostle Paul, but that they would also enlighten Apollos, who was already described in Acts as eloquent, competent in the scriptures, fervent in spirit, and accurate in teaching, but then they helped Apollos to understand the way of God more accurately so that they would go on powerfully to refute the Jews in public, showing by the scriptures that the Christ was Jesus.

Claudius would have never known any of these things, but that's the difference between man and God. Unlike Claudius, God sees and knows all things.

[11:54] God is able to do all things, and God is present in all places. And so even the seeming bad news of getting kicked out of the center of the Roman Empire, the center of influence, played right into God's sovereign hands.

Even through these history-altering political upheaval, God was with Aquila and Priscilla, and he was with Paul. And there in Corinth, Paul does what he always does in every city he visits.

He says in verse four, and he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath and tried to persuade Jews and Greeks. And verse five tells us that when Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia, Paul was occupied with the word, testifying to the Jews that the Christ was Jesus.

The word occupied is the word that Luke uses in various places to refer to being seized by something, to be surrounded by something.

Paul was a man who was seized by, captured by, surrounded by the word of Christ. He was absorbed in proclaiming the word of Christ. That was what was foremost on his mind, that there are many things in life, in our lives, that we can occupy ourselves with, that we do occupy ourselves with.

[13:07] But we must take care to remember that as God's people, we are to be occupied with the word of Christ. We are no longer just fishers of fish.

We are fishers of men. Paul was so invested in the proclamation of this word and so desirous of his Jewish compatriots to repent and believe in Jesus, that when they oppose and revile him, it says he shook out his garments and said to them, your blood be on your own heads.

I am innocent. From now on, I will go to the Gentiles. Paul's strong reaction shows how deeply he cared about his Jewish brethren. In Romans 9 verses 1 to 3, Paul says, I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart, for I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh.

That's how badly he wanted the Jews to come to faith in Jesus. And that's why he reacts so strongly when he is rebuffed. Paul says, your blood be on your own heads.

I am innocent. That's an expression that comes from Ezekiel chapter 33, which says that when the watchman sees the enemy army approaching, but then neglects to blow the trumpet to warn his people, then when the city is destroyed, God says, their blood will be on the watchman's head.

[14:35] However, if the watchman does blow the trumpet to warn his city of the coming enemy, and if they refuse to act, they neglect to flee, then their blood will be on their own heads.

Paul's washing his hands clean here. I warned you. I preached the gospel to you, but you refused to listen, so your blood be on your own heads.

I'm innocent. Nowadays, many people in our society are increasingly preoccupied with, you know, ethical consumption. We recognize that how we buy and what we buy and how we dispose of what we've used all have implications.

We try to leave a smaller carbon footprint by driving Priuses, electric vehicles. Lucy just got a Prius. We recycle and try to avoid single-use products for the sake of our environment.

We try to buy fair trade products to make sure that farmers and artisans and other laborers who produce them were paid fair wages and not exploited. Some of us even try to eat ethically sourced foods, looking for free-range eggs, grass-fed beef, and so on.

[15:57] Some of us are very concerned about being unwittingly involved in treating people, even animals, unjustly. In short, we don't want blood on our hands.

But do we also think about the urgency of evangelism in this way? God has already fixed a day when he will judge the world with righteousness by the man he has appointed and he's given proof of this by raising him from the dead.

Judgment day is coming and we Christians are the watchmen. Are we blowing the trumpet? Are we sounding the alarm?

Are we sharing the gospel? Are we innocent in this matter? Or do we have blood on our hands? Do we really believe in the coming judgment?

Do we really believe in heaven and hell? If we really believe that this is a matter of life and death and if we really believe that people's eternal destiny is at stake, how can we not be occupied with proclaiming Jesus who alone can save them?

[17 : 20] I've shared this once before, but 20th century American pastor Lee Rutten Scarborough says this, if we could only have a five minute glimpse into hell, our evangelism would be changed for a lifetime.

People being tormented in hell for eternity are not going to be impressed that we were too busy doing other important things.

They're not going to be thankful that we were too polite and considerate to warn them of this sobering reality. This is why Paul faithfully sounded the alarm to his fellow Jews, but because they rejected the gospel, Paul says, from now on, I will go to the Gentiles.

This doesn't mean that Paul will never again preach to the Jews. He's just saying that while he's in Corinth, he is turning his attention now to the Gentiles and he's turning his attention to the Gentiles. In verse 7, he goes to the house of Titius Justice, who was a Gentile God-fearer who had apparently listened to Paul in the synagogue and converted.

And as Paul leaves the Jews, he shakes out his garment, which is a similar gesture as shaking off the dust from your feet. That's what Jesus taught his disciples to do when a town or city rejects their message.

[18 : 46] It was a common practice among the Jews to shake off the dust from their feet when they were leaving Gentile territory. It was their way of shaking the uncleanness off of their feet, saying in effect that they don't want anything to do with the Gentiles.

What's remarkable about Jesus' teaching was that he was sending his disciples to Jewish towns. And he was saying, if they reject you as you're leaving these Jewish towns, you should wipe the dust off of your feet.

That's a shocking message because what he is saying is it doesn't matter if you are Jewish. If you reject the Messiah, if you reject Jesus, you cannot be saved.

And so Paul here, leaving the Jewish synagogue, shakes his garment off. That means it doesn't matter what your ethnic or racial background is.

Doesn't matter what your ancestry or spiritual pedigree is. If you yourself do not pledge allegiance to Jesus, you will not be saved. The ground is level at the foot of the cross.

[19 : 57] And only those who bow the knee before King Jesus enter into the kingdom of God. Though most Corinthian Jews, it seems, rejected Christ, not all of them did because verse 8 tells us that Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord together with his entire household.

And many of the Corinthians hearing Paul believed and were baptized. So now you can imagine what's about to happen if you've been with us through this series in the book of Acts.

The Jews have effectively kicked Paul out of their synagogue, preventing him from teaching there so that Paul had to get a new venue. But one of their own, the ruler of the synagogue, the person in charge of their religious, administrative, and political affairs, believed in the Lord.

This is remarkable. It's also a cause for deep shame among the Jews. They were making a concerted effort to oppose and revile Paul. They were trying to contradict his teaching and they were impugning Paul's motives.

They were maligning his character, trying to prove that his teaching that Jesus is the Messiah is contrary to the Old Testament Scriptures. But as they are effectively opposing Paul, their most learned and respected member converts and joins Paul.

[21 : 16] This significantly undermines their effort and it's embarrassing for them. And not only that, not only Crispus, but many of the Corinthians hearing Paul believed and were baptized. And if you follow the pattern in the book of Acts, fruitful ministry for Paul always spells trouble for him.

It's followed by suffering and persecution. When Paul was in Pisidian Antioch in chapter 13 verses 45 to 47 when the Jews saw the crowds that were gathering around Paul that he was popular a lot of people wanted to hear him.

He says they were filled with jealousy and began to contradict what was spoken by Paul reviling him. And then they incited the people and they drove Paul out of the city. When Paul was in Iconium in chapter 14 verses 2 to 7 similar things the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned

their minds against the brothers.

And they tried to stone Paul. In Lystra in chapter 14 verse 19 the Jews came and persecuted him and they actually stoned him and left him for dead even though he survived.

In Thessalonica in chapter 17 verse 5 the Jews were again he says jealous and taking some wicked men of the rabble they formed a mob and set the city in an uproar and attacked the house of Jason where Paul was staying.

[22 : 31] And then these Jews followed Paul into Berea and there agitated and stirred up the crowds again so that he had to flee once again. he just can't catch a break. So imagine being in his shoes.

Don't you think you'd be just a little bit afraid? A little bit afraid of your own ministry success? It's not that Paul was unwilling to suffer for Christ's sake.

He says later in chapter 21 verse 13 I'm ready not only to be imprisoned but even to die for the name of the Lord Jesus. He was a Christian soldier who was ready to lay down his life in the battlefield but that did not make the violent persecution that he endured pleasant.

And Paul was weary and apprehensive. His missionary journeys have been long and arduous and he had many battle scars to show for it and we know that Paul was afraid of being attacked and harmed because the Lord appears to him in a vision to reassure him in verses 9 to 10 to not be afraid but go on speaking and do not be silent for I am with you and no one will attack you to harm you for I have many in this city who are my people.

Verse 9 contains two commands and verse 10 supplies the two grounds the reasons the basis for those two commands. The first command is the first half of verse 9 do not be afraid and the reason for this is in the first half of verse 10 for I am with you and no one will attack you to harm you.

[24 : 15] Paul is commanded not to be afraid because of God's protective presence. God has personally guaranteed his safety in Corinth from the attack. The second command is in the second half of verse 9 but go on speaking and do not be silent and the reason for that is given in the second half of verse 10 for I have many in this city who are my people.

Paul is to continue proclaiming the gospel because there are many in that city whom God has appointed for salvation. We'll look at these promises in turn but first let's look at the promise of God's presence.

Do not be afraid for I am with you and no one will attack you to harm you. This is an amazing kindness of God if you think about it. God didn't owe Paul anything.

Paul was a rebel who was persecuting the church of God but he was saved by God's mercy and grace alone from the fires of hell. Paul often describes himself in his letters as a slave of Christ, a servant who is completely disposed to the will of his master.

God could have had Paul endure another round of beatings and stonings in Corinth. It would have been totally within God's rights as Paul's Lord to do so.

[25 : 41] But God doesn't do that. Instead, the Lord personally appears to Paul in a vision. He doesn't send a messenger.

He doesn't send an angel. He comes himself to Paul. The Lord himself says, do not be afraid for I am with you and no one will attack you to harm you.

What kindness of God. this is the kind of gentle and patient Lord that we serve. There have been many times I've been discouraged in my old ministry and yet in those times my Lord has never been harsh with me.

Never. He's never said, Sean, just put your act together. Stop being such a wimp. He's always patient, gentle, kind.

And that's how he is. He's a master who knows when his servant is weary. He's a general who knows when his soldier is fearful.

[26 : 57] He's a father who knows when his child needs his comfort. And so in this moment of Paul's weakness, in the moment of fear and much trembling, the Lord comes with assurance and encouragement and consolation.

Do you know that God is not a rigid taskmaster over you? That he knows your weaknesses and he sympathizes with you?

That you can draw near to his throne of grace with confidence because he is such a gracious and compassionate Lord? As a father shows compassion to his children, so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear him for he knows our frame.

He remembers that we are dust, it says in Psalm 103. In the same way that earthly parents show grace to their children, we often find parents find themselves saying, they're just kids. Give them a break. They're just four years old, seven years old. They're children. In the same way our father knows our frame, he remembers that we are dust.

[28 : 11] He says, often, oh, they are but dust. They are weak. And he shows us compassion. And when God is with us, we have nothing to fear.

In Exodus 3, when God commands Moses to go to Egypt and free his people from slavery, Moses responds, who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt? This is a very sensible objection from a human point of view. Moses is no king. He has no army at his service. He's a nobody.

And who is he to go to Pharaoh, one of the most powerful kings in the ancient world and demand that he free all of his labors? But God's response to him is quite simple.

I will be with you. Similarly, in Jeremiah chapter 1, when God commissions Jeremiah to be a prophet to the nations, Jeremiah responds, oh, Lord God, behold, I do not know how to speak for I am only a youth.

[29 : 32] That too is a very sensible objection. Jeremiah is no Cicero or Demosthenes. He's no Abraham Lincoln or Frederick Douglass.

He's not eloquent. He knows it. And he's only a youth. He's inexperienced. But again, God's response to him is very simple.

Do not be afraid of them for I am with you. God tells Paul the exact same thing here.

Do not be afraid for I am with you. If God is for us, who can be against us, brothers and sisters? Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.

Why? Because you are with me. Paul believes God's promise.

[30 : 37] And so in verse 11, it tells us that he stayed a year and six months. That's a long time for Paul. He teaches the word of God among them. And as Paul anticipated, the jealous Jews do make a united attack on Paul starting in verse 12.

When Galileo was proconsul of Achaia, this is around 51-52 AD, you know, from inscriptions.

Sometime in that window, verse 13, it says, this man is persuading people to worship God contrary to the law.

They bring this charge to the proconsul. So since this charge is being made to a Roman proconsul, this is not about the Jewish law. They're saying that he's violating Roman law.

It's possible that the accusation is similar to the charge of the Thessalonians in chapter 17, that he was acting against the decrees of Caesar by saying that there's another king, Jesus, undermining the worship of Caesar, the cult of the emperor, or perhaps teaching a religion that was not sanctioned by the emperor.

they're trying to get Paul expelled, Christianity stamped out. But look at what the proconsul says in verses 14 to 15.

[31 : 53] If it were a matter of wrongdoing or vicious crime, O Jews, I would have reason to accept your complaint, but since it is a matter of questions about words and names and your own law, see to it yourselves.

I refuse to be a judge of these things. In essence, Galileo's verdict is that no serious crime has been committed. That the matter at hand is not an infringement of the Roman law, but that it's actually a discussion, a debate within the Jewish law.

So he says, go discuss it among yourselves. He's kind of, he seems like he's a little bit impatient with them. He summarily dismisses them and he says that he drove them out of the synagogue. Not synagogue, sorry, drove them out of court.

This is shocking, actually. It has huge implications for the fledgling church because this is the first time that a Roman official issues a legal verdict concerning Christians.

And he has essentially said, Christians have every right, every bit of right to worship as you, the Jews. He has said they have legal right to gather.

[32 : 59] He can continue to proclaim the gospel with impunity. You could tell, I mean, you could imagine why the Jews were infuriated. They wanted Christians forbidden from practicing their religion, but instead the Jews ended up tying their own hands behind their back with this, with this legal decree from Galio.

And so, because they were so mad, look at what happens in verse 17. They all seized Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and beat him in front of the tribunal.

But Galio paid no attention to any of this. Remember in verse 8 that Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord. So, it seems that becoming a Christian was not acceptable from the perspective of the Jews, so either he resigned or he was forced to leave his position, so they appointed someone else.

So Sosthenes is a new ruler of the synagogue and he's new to this position and he's been thrust with this responsibility of bringing this legal charge against the Christians and he's doing his part but then he loses the case and this poor Sosthenes gets beaten up by his own fellow Jews.

God has said to Paul, do not be afraid for I am with you for no one will attack you to harm you. Isn't that amazing?

[34 : 25] He fulfills that promise in a spectacular way. Paul didn't, look at it, Paul didn't even have to utter a word in court. Before Paul even opened his mouth, Galileo summarily dismissed this case.

Before he did anything, God defended Paul and no one could touch him. And the second command and the promise that God, that the company did in verses 9 to 10 is also fulfilled.

The Lord said to Paul in the vision, go on speaking and do not be silent for I have many in this city who are my people. Paul was seeing this reality in verse 8 when Crispus and his entire household came to faith and it says many of the Corinthians hearing Paul believed and were baptized.

It's similar to what Acts 13 verse 48 says. It says there that when Paul and Barnabas preached the gospel to the Gentiles, quote, as many as were appointed to eternal life believed.

God's sovereign prior appointment, his divine election is what is in view in this verse. And God commands Paul to proclaim this gospel not in spite of his election but because of his election.

[35 : 47] But because there are many in Corinth whom he has chosen for himself. It may seem somewhat counterintuitive to some of you but according to this verse knowing that God has preordained some people for salvation does not make us complacent evangelism.

It actually provides a reason to go on speaking and not be silent. Because God has sovereignly ordained to broadcast his saving news through his people the fact that God chooses some for salvation from before the foundation of the world does not obviate our evangelistic efforts.

Instead knowing that there are people that God has already predestined for salvation and knowing for that reason that they will respond to our proclamation of the gospel with repentance and faith that actually motivates us to keep on speaking about Jesus.

Because we know that our proclamation will not be in vain. there are many in the city of Corinth that God had chosen to be his people. In 1 Corinthians 1, 14-16 he mentions Crispus and Gaius and the household of Stephanus.

And get this in 1 Corinthians chapter 1 verse 1 Paul mentions as one of his co-workers who is sending this letter with him our brother Sosthenes.

[37 : 10] you wonder if Paul names him specifically and Luke mentions Sosthenes the ruler of the synagogue specifically because it's the same Sosthenes that the believers knew.

Even he maybe came to faith in Jesus Christ. That's not reason to go in. treat people in that way.

The many in Corinth where God's people came to faith and for that reason in verse 18 it says Paul stayed many days longer in Corinth to continue to speak of Christ. Notice Paul doesn't say well since God has chosen many people in Corinth to be saved and they will be saved with or without me so I guess there's no need for me to stay here after all.

No that line of reasoning is totally alien to the scriptures. It would have been totally foreign to Paul's mind. Paul stays and proclaims the gospel for many days longer precisely because God has said I have many people in this city who are my people because they need to hear the gospel because they've been appointed for salvation because they will respond to the gospel.

Even of Cambridge and Boston I believe God says I have many in this city who are my people. Remember Jesus said the harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few.

[38 : 48] What we lack in our city is not people who are willing to believe what we lack is people who are willing to share the gospel. And that's a strange thing because everyone loves being a herald of the good news.

I don't know if you remember last year at the beginning of the pandemic at the end of March 2020 for about two month time actor John Krasinski hosted a home YouTube channel entitled Some Good News.

You guys remember that? Obviously it's all good news that he thinks is good but the people like him he concluded that other people like him were all desperate for some good news because there's so much bad news in the world.

And so he created a news channel entirely dedicated to good news. Everyone loves hearing good news. Everyone likes telling people good news. Why not should we herald far and wide the best news of all?

Every single human being in this world has sinned against God and is destined for bloodshed, for death, eternal damnation. As Romans 6.23 says the wages of sin is death.

[40 : 08] Hebrews 9.22 says without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sin.

Someone's blood had to be shed and it was going to be ours. Except that Jesus interposed his own blood.

That we might be forgiven. That we might be reconciled to God and have eternal life. some people it's true in this world want nothing to do with that good news.

But there are many in this city who are God's people. They are longing. They are waiting. Let's pray.

God show us how good the gospel is.

Help us to not merely believe it, know it in our heads, but to believe it with all of our hearts. Help us to know in the marrow of our bones.

[41 : 18] How good your good news of salvation is. How kind and gracious you are. So that we would not hesitate.

So that we would not be ashamed of the gospel. In Jesus name we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.