

Good News and Bad News (Part 2)

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[0 : 00] Well, the church has a very important mission. In fact, it's the most important mission that there is, which is to go and make disciples.

As a church, we are to be on mission. And so today, we will conclude our study in John chapter 9, and then starting next week and the next few weeks after that, we are going to focus on missions. Now, we should always be focused on missions as God's people, but to spend the next four weeks really to hone in on the mission of the church, to encourage you all and us as a church to be involved and engaged in missions, both here in Bartlesville, in our community, in our nation, and around the world.

So next Sunday, we're going to have a panel discussion with some of our families who have recently returned from the mission field, the grassers and the caraways. And then we're going to have some people from our community come in and share about their missions that they're involved with and give you opportunity to be involved with those.

And we also have Nick's going to preach a Sunday. I'll preach another Sunday. And so it's going to be great. I encourage you to be a part of it. I encourage you to pray about it because, again, we have the greatest mission in all the world, to go and make disciples.

[1 : 36] And so for the next four weeks, we're going to focus on that. But right now, John chapter 9, verse 39 and 41 will be the verses that I preach on this morning. But let's back up to verse 35, and that's where I'm going to begin reading.

If you would stand with me as we honor the reading of God's Word together. Jesus heard that they had cast him out, referring to the man who was born blind, whom he healed.

And having found him, he said, Do you believe in the Son of Man? He answered, And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him? Jesus said to him, You have seen him, and it is he who is speaking to you.

He said, Lord, I believe. And he worshiped him. Jesus said, For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind.

Some of the Pharisees near him heard these things and said to him, Are we also blind? Jesus said to them, If you were blind, you would have no guilt. But now that you say, we see, your guilt remains.

[2 : 48] May God add a blessing to the reading of his Word. Please be seated. As a pitcher playing baseball, one of the things that you hope doesn't happen is that the coach will, at some point in the game, emerge from the dugout to take you out of the game.

There's various reasons why a coach might do that. You've pitched too many pitches to protect your arm. Maybe you're just not being very effective. You're getting tired.

You're getting hit. And so the coach takes you out of the game. I remember as a pitcher, I hated that. I hated whenever I would hear the coach call time and make his way towards the mound because I knew that that meant that my time in the game was coming to an end.

Recently, I've experienced for the first time in baseball a reversal of roles. Where now as one of the assistant coaches on Jack's team and helping the pitchers, I've been given the responsibility of going out to the pitcher's mound to take the ball out of a little boy's hand and put it in the hand of somebody else.

And I had to do that for the first time a couple of times a couple of weekends ago. And it was hard. It was really hard because I hate doing that because I hate having that done to me.

[4 : 16] And listen, we know that's a small situation, but in other situations, it's just not fun to be the bearer of bad news, is it? I'd rather not be the bearer of bad news.

The prophets of the Old Testament were tasked with being God's spokesmen. The prophets spoke on behalf of God to God's people and to the nations oftentimes.

And more often than not, that meant that they were the bearers of bad news, issuing warnings and decrees of impending judgment and doom unless the people turned in repentance from their sins and their rebellious actions that they had committed against God who is holy, holy, holy.

Oftentimes, as is still the case today, this bad news was not received well. We don't like to be the recipients of bad news.

And some news is so bad that we'd rather just ignore it because we don't want to change, especially when it comes to our sin.

[5 : 38] We don't want to repent. We don't want to think about the impending consequences and subsequent doom that is coming our way. And so what do we do?

Well, we seek out different messengers with a better message that we would rather hear. Early in the reign of Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, Jeremiah was serving as God's spokesman, as God's prophet.

And he spoke to them, God's word, that they, the Judahites, were going to be punished for their sin. The Lord told Jeremiah to perform a prophetic act, a sermon illustration, if you will, that would communicate to the people how they would save their lives.

God instructed Jeremiah to place a yoke upon his neck, a yoke, a wooden cross piece that was used as an instrument to attach animals to as they labored and as they worked.

[6 : 55] A yoke was an instrument of servitude. God told his people that because they had sinned, they would be taken over by the Babylonians, that Nebuchadnezzar would come with his armies, and that they must submit to him and serve underneath his yoke.

That they would serve his empire, and that they should not put up any resistance to that. And that if they didn't, God said, you'll stay in your home.

I will safeguard you, my people, and your lives, and your possessions, and your lands, your community. But if you don't, you'll be exiled to a foreign land.

God also warned them through Isaiah to resist listening to false prophets who would come to them with a different message.

A message that would encourage the people to act in a way that contradicted what God had said through his spokesman. That these false prophets would encourage the people to do what God had told them not to do, to fight, telling them that they would win, and that they would have peace as a result.

[8 : 19] King Zedekiah and his counselors rejected God's words spoken through Jeremiah, God's man, and gave preference to the words of false prophets instead.

They turned their attention to one named Hananiah. Hananiah had a better message in their estimation. He said that if the people resisted Babylon, that God would deliver them, thus breaking the yoke of oppression that they were under, or would be underneath.

And Hananiah then humiliated Jeremiah by taking a sledgehammer to that crossbeam and breaking it over his neck, saying, thus shall the Lord do for us as we fight back against Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon.

He claimed to speak for God. But in truth, his encouragement led the people further from God by denying him, by denying his spokesman, by denying his word.

The people judged Hananiah's message of success to be a better word than Jeremiah's. And they had reason, some reason to believe that it was true.

[9 : 40] Nebuchadnezzar at that time was occupied in battle with Egypt. And there was rumors that Babylon was weakening as an empire.

And so they determined that Jeremiah's warnings were not only less desirable, but less believable. Nebuchadnezzar's hands were full.

And he was losing his grip on his empire. Nebuchadnezzar's hands were full. So instead of submitting to God's word, they resisted it. They trusted in false prophets.

They trusted in themselves. And Judah fell. The people were led into captivity.

Jeremiah lived to witness and to experience his countrymen, his family, his neighbors being led off into captivity because they refused to believe the Lord their God.

[10 : 51] Hananiah's prophecy sounded like better news to the people. But his counsel was out of step. It was out of line. And it contradicted God's word.

Jeremiah, on the other hand, judged God's word to be true despite whatever he might have been feeling. He would not substitute what he wanted to be true with what he knew to be true.

He was the bearer of bad news. News that would cause people to revile him. But he would not substitute his truth or their truth for the truth.

The truth spoken to him by God, the source and author of truth. And so like Jeremiah then, God's people today must continue to communicate God's word.

They must continue to evaluate the messages of others who claim to speak for God with the message that he has revealed to us in his word.

[12 : 04] We must confront those who claim to speak for God but whose messages contradict what his word says. We must also warn those who claim to speak for God. We must also warn those who listen to them and those who deny Jesus as their only hope of salvation from God's impending judgment and wrath for sin.

We must not allow ourselves to pursue messages and messengers that appeal to our emotions and our intellects but whose counsel causes us to ignore or even deny what God has said in his word and revealed in his son, Jesus Christ.

The Bible says that destruction is the destiny of all who deny Jesus Christ.

So we've already gone through in chapter 9 the best news that anyone could ever hear. Recorded in verses 35 through 38.

There if you remember last week we saw how Jesus initiates and invites us to salvation from our sins. To have peace with God that he's purchased through the cross on which he was crucified making atonement for our sins.

[13 : 32] We can be saved forever by him by placing our faith in him. His sinless life, his sin atoning death, and his victorious resurrection over sin and death.

In Christ we are spared from God's wrath and judgment for our sins. That's good news. But that news is followed here by really bad news.

The worst news that there is. That all who do not believe in Jesus. Who do not trust in him as their Lord and Savior.

Are not only condemned, Jesus says here. But they are condemned already. And eternally. There is good news.

That is exceedingly great for those of us who have heard it and have received it. But there is bad news. That is exceedingly terrifying for those who reject the good news.

[14 : 43] And you know as we read our Bibles. We see consistently in the Gospels. Jesus always sharing this good news. But always sharing it.

By issuing a warning. Either before or after. John 3.16-18 for example. As Jesus was meeting with Nicodemus.

He told him. John 3.16. We all know that one so well. But we don't know 17 and 18. Nearly as well. For God so loved the world that he gave his only son. And only son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

For God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world. But to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned. But whoever does not believe stands condemned already.

Because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only son. Later on in the Gospel of John. John 12.46-48. Jesus does it again.

[15 : 49] I have come into the world as a light. So that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness. If anyone hears my words but does not keep them.

I do not judge that person. For I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. There is a judge. For the one who rejects me and does not accept my words.

The very words I have spoken will condemn them at the last day. In our text today, Jesus shares the bad news.

He's already shared the good news. Jesus has assisted the blind man who now sees to grow in his faith. If you remember, by asking him a question. The question was, do you believe in the Son of Man?

Now in these verses, we see the dark side of the matter. As Jesus declares judgment on those who reject the good news that he offers.

[16 : 58] Many people today claim to speak for God. They claim to represent Christ.

But they don't preach like he did. Seeking to please men, they actually deny Christ. Seeking to tickle the ears and grow a following, they leave out this warning of judgment.

That Jesus was always issuing. And they replace it instead with a false hope. A false assurance that God does not judge sin. And that he will not condemn sinners who reject their only hope of salvation.

Jesus frequently preached about hell. But so many teachers, so many pastors today, conveniently leave that out of their sermons, out of their books.

Listen, it's not biblical. And they are modern day Hananias. People accept their message because they want it to be true.

[18:06] No one goes to hell. Sin isn't that big of a deal. But their belief and their desire for that to be true does not make it true. Listen, it's not biblical.

It isn't Christian. It is not like Christ. Who they claim to speak for. But in truth, are denying Him. And are in danger of being those who will hear Him say to them on that last day, depart from me. For I never knew you. As believers, we are called to preach and to teach and to share the whole counsel of God.

All of it. Not leaving things out so that we'll be better received by sinful men, but warning them in the hopes that God will save them.

[19:19] That they will know God. Too often we seek man's approval. The Lord tells us, don't seek man's approval.

Man's disapproval cannot hurt you and his approval cannot satisfy you. We have a mission and we must be about it. For an unbeliever, if you're listening to this sermon this morning, there is bad news.

And I hope that you hear it, but I hope that you also see that there's good news. That you can be saved. If you place your faith in Jesus Christ, that you will not die in your sins.

But that you would be thoroughly warned that if you reject him, the outcome is to suffer eternally and hell apart from him.

Again, Jesus preached about hell and he described it in great detail. He preached about it more than he did about heaven and he described it in greater detail than he did about heaven.

[20:27] He said that it's a place of eternal torment in Luke 16.23. A place of unquenchable fire in Mark 9.43. A place where the worm does not die, Mark 9.48.

Where people will gnash their teeth in anguish and regret, Matthew 13.42. And from which there is no return even to warn loved ones, Luke 16.19-31.

He calls hell a place of outer darkness, Matthew 25.30. comparing it to Gehenna in Matthew 10.25 which was a trash dump outside of the walls of Jerusalem where rubbish was burned and maggots abounded.

Jesus talked about hell more than he talked about heaven and he described it more vividly. There's no denying that Jesus knew, believed, and warned about the absolute reality of hell.

And so, unbelievers, if you have not believed in Jesus Christ this day, I share this warning with you in love.

[21:36] And my prayer is that you would hear it. My prayer is that God will reveal to you the condition of your heart and lead you to repentance. Fleeing to Christ knowing that in him you are and can be forgiven.

You will escape the eternal fire of his wrath and his righteous judgment. So here's the main idea for this morning's sermon. It's the same as last week.

Those who receive Jesus see and are saved. Those who reject Jesus are blind and condemned.

Those who receive Jesus see and are saved.

Those who reject Jesus are blind and condemned. So in your bulletin notes, I've already provided you with the first point and the sub points from last week.

So let's move on to point number two in this two-part sermon with the bad news. The bad news, as Jesus explains it in verse 39 through 41, that those who reject him remain blind and condemned.

[22:52] Remain blind and condemned. There are four features here that Jesus speaks to about the condition of spiritual blindness.

And so as we go along here through the rest of our time together, I would like you to ask this question of yourself. Do these features characterize me?

Do they characterize me? And if so, be warned. And I hope that you will be saved. If they don't characterize you, then praise God.

But know that you are called by Him, commanded by Him to communicate the same truth with the unbelieving world. So the first feature that we see here of spiritual blindness is that it receives judgment.

Verse 39. Spiritual blindness receives judgment. Let's read verse 39 again. Jesus said, For judgment I came into this world that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind.

[24 : 05] Now, that statement not only sounds confusing, but it also sounds contradicting. Jesus said in John 3, 17, we've read it, For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him.

But then in other places like John 5, 22 and 27, Jesus says, The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son. And then verse 27. And He has given Him authority to execute judgment because He is the Son of Man.

So He's judging or He's not judging. He's condemning or He's not condemning. And we could be tempted maybe to think, well, maybe Jesus is just forgetful. He came in John chapter 3 and He still has hopes for mankind and He says, Hey, I think I can save you.

But then as He goes along into chapter 5 and other chapters, He says, No, no, you guys are way more vile. You are way more sinful than I thought.

It's just going to be judgment and condemnation for you. The reality is that these truths do not contradict one another but they actually complement one another.

[25 : 15] Because to reject Jesus' peace is to receive the opposite of that, which is punishment. To reject His grace is to receive His justice.

To reject His love is to receive His anger. To reject His forgiveness is to receive His judgment. You know, I've known people and maybe you have too who, they were ill.

Deathly ill. But they refused to admit their unhealthy condition because they had been taught by false teachers who claimed to represent Christ that to call out that disease, to give it a name, is to give it power over you.

And so you must deny it. That you must by your words speak a new and different reality into existence. And so they will deny what they know to be true in their pride and suffer for that.

Sometimes even dying when there was a cure that could have saved them from their illness.

There's a legend of two Roman wrestlers engaged in a wrestling match with one another with tremendous rewards at stake for the winner.

[26 : 53] These two men were equally matched and they wrestled and they fought for hours and hours and hours with neither gaining an advantage over the other.

Finally, they were so exhausted. Maybe we've seen in a boxing match where the two combatants will just rest on one another just trying to breathe and catch their breath.

They're just so exhausted and so these two wrestlers locked in a match where they were just leaning upon one another. Not wanting to give up, wanting to win, not willing to lose, but too exhausted to continue to fight.

Finally, one of the wrestlers tapped the shoulder of his opponent signaling that he was giving up, signaling that he acknowledged his defeat.

And as he did that, he released his grip from the other wrestler who collapsed to the ground, dead.

He had died towards the end of that match and, as strange as it sounds, was awarded the victory in his death because he was unwilling to give up.

[28 : 19] However, he died. The moral of that story is this. If you never give up, you can't possibly lose.

If you never give up, you can't possibly lose, which I say, that's stupid. That is dumb, isn't it? He lost his life for a wrestling match, for a perishable wreath.

For rewards that he would never claim because he was dead. He paid the ultimate price by refusing to submit in his pride.

In a similar way, unbelievers who persist in sin and reject Christ do so because they are too prideful to admit their need, their sinful condition, and acknowledge the fact that they are hopeless.

that wrestler gained the praise of men in death. But you wonder, were the consequences worth it? I would say, no, not at all.

[29 : 32] But people may go through their life, they do go through their life doing the same thing. You may be going through your life right now doing that very same thing, seeking to gain the affections of others and the treasures that this world has to offer.

But Jesus says that the person who lives their life that way is the person who ultimately will lose their life eternally.

Look, Mark 8, 35 through 38. For whoever, Jesus says, for whoever wants to save their life will lose it. But whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it.

What good is it for someone to gain the whole world yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when He comes in His Father's glory with the holy angels.

To reject Jesus Christ God's who is the light of the world is to live in darkness now and eternal darkness forever.

[30 : 53] To live for the pleasures of this world now is to forfeit the treasures of heaven forever. While Jesus came to save, not to condemn, those who reject His gospel, condemn themselves and subject themselves to His judgment.

Spiritual sight comes only to those who acknowledge Jesus as their Lord and Savior, who acknowledge that they don't see, who confess their spiritual blindness and their need for Him to save them, their need for the light of the world.

On the other hand, those who think they see are on their own, apart from Christ, and they remain blind. Second feature, spiritual blindness refuses to confess its condition.

Spiritual blindness refuses refuses to accept its condition. Verse 40, some of the Pharisees near Him heard these things and said to Him, are we also blind?

So, apparently, there are Pharisees present here as Jesus has this second meeting with the man who is blind but now sees. And the form of their question in the Greek expects a negative answer.

[32 : 31] Surely, they thought, Jesus could not be suggesting that they who were the spiritual leaders of Israel were blind.

They were confident that they saw. They were confident that they knew the truth. But in refusing to acknowledge the miracle that they had seen of Jesus perform and He healed this man who was born blind.

They had witnessed Him do this but they refused it and their hearts darkened towards Him. And with that, they increased in their hatred of Him.

Why? Well, Jesus has told us, John 3, 19, this is the verdict. Light has come into the world but people love darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.

It's like we are spiritually like a child whose mother has told it, you can't have any cookies.

[33 : 46] Don't take any cookies out of the cookie jar. You're going to spoil your appetite and I'm going to have to throw out your dinner, right? Don't eat the cookies. cookies. And the kid, you know, acts like they're busy, waits for mom to be gone and then sneaks in, grabs that cookie and takes that first big bite.

It tastes extra delicious because they are doing it in rejection of, in defiance of what mom has said. And what we're like spiritually is that kid who then mother enters back into the kitchen and stick that cookie behind our back, right?

Mom says, did you take a cookie? And we shake our head, no. Yet we've got cookie crumbs on our shirt, we've got chocolate smeared in the corners of our mouth, and we think we're going to get away with it.

We refuse to confess. we refuse to repent. We'd rather hide the truth of who we really are than have our true character exposed.

We're afraid. We're afraid of the consequences of there being a holy God and we being a sinful people. Afraid admitting that we are wrong.

[35 : 21] Afraid that with that we might be shamed. But let me tell you, for those of us who know Jesus Christ, who is the light of the world, that has been revealed to us, we have learned that God doesn't act in that way, does He?

He doesn't shame us like that. Whatever we uncover to Him, He covers up. But we know also that whatever we attempt to cover up, one day it will be exposed.

1 John 1, 9-10. This is what God is like. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will, not might, will forgive us our sins.

and purify us not from some or most, but all. Purify us from all unrighteousness. But if we claim we have not sinned, we make Him out to be a liar and His word is not in us.

And so now for you, as an unbeliever, now is the time for you to come to Christ and receive forgiveness from Him.

[36 : 47] Now is the time for you to run to the light, not away from it. Yes, your sin will be exposed, but yes, God will cover it up. How does He do that?

Through the blood that He shed on the cross for you to remove your sins, to clothe you with His righteousness.

Is God a father like this? Yes. The prodigal son. The parable Jesus told in Luke 15 11-32.

Remember that prodigal son feared his father's response.

He took his inheritance early, basically telling the dad, I can't wait for you to die, I want it now. He goes and he squanders it. He's living at rock bottom, feeding pigs, wanting to eat pig food because he's so poor and destitute.

He thinks if I could only go back to my father, maybe he'll be a little bit gracious to me and give me a job working as a servant in his household. I'll never be his son again. But at the very least, I hope that he'll give me a job to be a laborer in his fields.

[37 : 56] The son goes back to his father's house. And how does the father treat him? He sees him from a distance and he runs to him, runs to him, wraps his arms around him.

You're home. Let's celebrate. Here's the best that I have. I'm going to clothe you in my robe. I'm going to give you my ring. I'm going to have a sacrifice for you.

You were lost but now you're found in your back. That's what God is like. Praise God that that is what God is like. Confess your sins.

Ask him for forgiveness. You will be forgiven. You will be saved. You will have eternal life.

Difference between an unbeliever and a believer is that believers confess their sins but unbelievers deny theirs.

Confess your sins. Three, spiritual blindness rejects spiritual sight. Spiritual blindness rejects spiritual sight.

[39 : 09] In the beginning of verse 41, Jesus said to them, if you were blind, you would have no guilt. His point here is that the Pharisees would confess their need.

If they would, they would be cured. If they would admit their spiritual bankruptcy, they would have Christ's righteousness added to their account. They would have no sin.

by humbly confessing their inability to measure up to God's perfect standard. Those who reject spiritual sight refuse to repent of their sins.

This was Jesus' message from the beginning. As He went out declaring the good news, He urged people to repent, Matthew 4, 17.

From that time on, Jesus began to preach. What did He preach? This good news. What did that mean? Repent. Repent for the kingdom of God has come near.

[40 : 09] That word repent, metanoia, is the Greek word that is commonly translated in our English Bibles as repent.

This word literally means to change your mind, a change of mind. Fundamentally, repentance is a change of mind, a switch from an outlook that esteems sin to one that considers it abhorrent.

It is important that we remember, however, that Scripture understands a true change of mind to be one that includes more than just a shifting of intellectual categories.

To have metanoia, to have true repentance, involves feelings of regret and feelings of remorse.

Repentance means more than just to feel a little bit sorry.

We are truly sorry for something that we know that we have done. Not just sorry over the consequences of whatever we might be experiencing, but sorry for what we've done and a desire.

[41 : 10] We want to change. We want to change our behavior. A repentant life is a changed life.

Not in that perfection is ever attained, but that there is fruit in keeping with repentance that is born in our life.

A change in our attitude produces a change in our actions which become discernible to others. We see a great example of national repentance in the book of Jonah.

Jonah goes with a message of warning, but there is good news with that warning. If the people will repent, God says, He will spare them.

And they turn to God, and He forgives them, and they show their repentance by putting on sack cloth, covering themselves with ashes and fasting.

Did you know that story? Was Jonah happy to see the people repent? No. Not at all. In fact, He was angry that they would.

[42 : 30] I wonder. Well, I know one thing. As a church, and I've heard many of you say it, and I feel the same way, we desire, I hope we desire, repentance to take place in our country, in our nation.

God's I wonder if an I wonder if an attitude like Jonah exists within each of us. Do we really want to see them led to repentance?

Or are there some people, maybe even some groups of people, that in our mind and in our heart, that we may not speak it, we feel and we think, you know what? I hope they're condemned.

I hope that they die. I hope that they suffer. Think if we're honest, and I'll be honest with you, I know that that attitude has existed in me from time to time.

God, judge them. God, pour out your wrath upon them. Are we more desirous at times to see our nation condemned rather than spared?

[43 : 41] And if we really want it to be spared, then why aren't we sharing the gospel? Fourth feature of spiritual blindness.

Spiritual blindness results in eternal condemnation. The last part of verse 41, Jesus says, but now that you say we see, your guilt remains.

Those who like the blind beggar in Matthew 9 acknowledge their spiritual blindness, who return in repentance to the light, will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life, Jesus says.

But those who like the Pharisees persist in loving the darkness rather than the light will continue to lack spiritual vision. He says they are condemned, they will die, they die in their sins, they will suffer eternally because of that.

A couple more questions for you. Does that thought disturb you? Are we becoming so, oh, we hear this hell talk, we see it in our Bible, it's almost like, oh, yeah, they're condemned, almost like we yawn in indifference to the reality of hell.

[45 : 07] people we know who have rejected Christ and who will spend their eternity there. A quadrillion years from now, if they died in unbelief, they would still be there.

No hope to ever get out. Does it truly break our hearts? I was convicted of this early on in ministry. My first position was at the House of Prayer Rescue Mission in Chillicothe, Missouri.

The House of Prayer sought to feed people the Word of God and feed their stomachs. And so we had all different kinds of people coming there. But it was in a lost part of that community where there were no churches but the House of Prayer.

And so the director and I, what we would do after Sundays, after we had worship, is we would go throughout the neighborhoods there, knock on people's doors, doors, and just invite them to come to church, share the gospel with them, and you know, whatever you want to say about door-to-door evangelism, it was something that no other church was doing.

And I remember this one instance where we were walking down the street and we were about to turn into a driveway of a gentleman who was sitting on his porch, an older gentleman.

[46 : 27] And before we could step foot on his driveway, we heard him holler out to us, no, no. Greg said, well, we just want to take a couple minutes of your time.

In fact, we had a little something we wanted to give to him. Nope, I don't want it. Go away. And so we kept going. And I remember thinking, how rude, you know, for get you, man.

We were going to share some good news with you. All right. But I remember Greg just, you could see trouble on his face. He was just looking forward.

And he said it, and I know he said it to me, but it was almost like it wouldn't have mattered if I was there. And he just said, eternity is forever. And I could tell his heart broke for this man.

He rejected. two men who came to him with good news. Are we that troubled?

[47 : 38] Does our heart break that much for the lost? I want to share a couple of quotes from Charles Spurgeon with you about this very thing. First one, and he talks about what hell is like.

he said, on every chain in hell there is written forever. In the fires there blaze out the words forever.

Up above their heads they read forever. Their eyes are galled and their hearts are pained with the thought that it is forever. forever. Oh, if I could tell you tonight that hell would one day be burned out and that those who were lost might be saved, there would be a jubilee in hell at the very thought of it.

But it cannot be. It is forever. They are cast into utter darkness forever. Forever. Then he says to us who believe, if sinners be damned, at least let them leap to hell over our dead bodies.

And if they perish, let them perish with our arms wrapped around their knees imploring them to stay. If hell must be filled, let it be filled in the teeth of our exertions and let no one go unwarned and no one go unprayed for.

[49 : 00] Brothers and sisters in Christ, may we not yawn over this. May this be true of us.

That we share the good news. We share it with passion. We share it fervently. Knowing that God is sovereign in salvation, but we have a responsibility to share the good news of Jesus Christ.

May we do that with passion. that people would hear and be saved. And so I speak to you today, if you're hearing this and you're not saved, I'm telling you, it's not going to bother us in the least for you to come and say, I know I'm not saved, but I've seen the light of Christ today in these words spoken through God's word.

Or even if you say, I have questions about this. We want to know. That is our desire to see people being saved by Jesus Christ. And to disciple them.

And to encourage them to live their life for Him. And as a believer for you, I mean, we're going to have an invitation. And I just encourage you, if you want to pray where you're at, pray where you're up here, it doesn't matter to me.

[50 : 25] But I ask that you would be praying for the lost in Bartlesville, the lost in the world and the nations, and that you would ask God to use you to share the good news.

That collectively we would be known as a people with beautiful feet, messengers who come with the good news that Jesus Christ saves. Three questions of application. They are kind of lengthy, so you'll have a lot to talk about in your community groups tonight, but you only have an hour.

Question number one, and this goes back to last week, who is Jesus calling you to initiate a gospel conversation with? What steps will you take this week to do that?

And then I'm adding a part to that question from last week. How should the reality of their condemnation, apart from knowing Christ, motivate you to do that soon?

Question number two, why is it essential that you also include the bad news when you share the good news?

[51 : 31] Why is that essential, that you also include the bad news when you share the good news? And then finally, and I'll tell you community groups, community group facilitators, this is the question I don't want you guys to lose opportunity to talk about tonight.

So if you want to move that to number one or number two, I probably should have done that, but I hope and I want us to talk about this question tonight. If Christians do not share the gospel and aren't warning people about the consequences of rejecting it, what message are we communicating to them?

What message are we sending to our families, our neighbors, our world, if we know the gospel, but we don't care enough to share it with them? What does that say? Let's pray.

Heavenly Father, Father, it's clear to us in reading your word, Lord, that though you are sovereign in salvation, even you when you looked out on Jerusalem, your heart broke.

Your heart broke for them. They would reject you. God, I pray that likewise you would cause within us heartbreak, that our hearts would similarly break for our community, for our nation.

[53 : 07] Lord, that we would go, that we would share, that we would declare the good news of Jesus Christ, that we would do so passionately, boldly, lovingly, but not forgetting to issue the warning as well.

God, I pray that it would be true for us, that we would be servants who determine that if people are going to go spend their eternity in hell, they're going to have to jump over us to do so.

We're going to make sure that we share. We're going to make sure that we warn. And we're going to trust in faith that you will save, that you will lead people to saving knowledge of Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

You'll use us to do that. Lord, break our hearts for the lost and challenge and encourage us to let our light shine in declaring the good news that Jesus Christ serves.

We ask these things in His name. Amen. Thank you.