

“Don’t Forget the Intro”

How to Study the Bible

1 Corinthians 1:1-3

The Rev. Ted Wood

July 15, 2022

Ted: The Lord be with you.

Brave Men: And also with you.

Let us pray. Lord, we thank You and bless You for this fellowship that we have at this time, the study of Your word. Your word says that *“man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.”* So we will live by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. We ask You to forgive us for being simple and being easy in our study of Your word that You want us to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest—every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. So we thank You for the Word that You’ve given us; it’s our light and our path and our truth.

We especially pray for Bruce. We pray that You meet his needs and Becky’s needs as well. We pray for Kevin. Thank You for the encouraging spirit he has, even to those of us as we talk to him. We pray for Harvey Sr. who has just lost his wife, and pray that you meet him where he is.

And we pray for Jeff as he’s away. We thank You for the ministry he provides for us. And we pray that You strengthen him in his teaching and preaching and pastoral duties at his church, and especially for his wife and her physical and medical needs. And we pray these things in Your name. Amen.

Brave Men: Amen.

Ted: Good to see you all this morning. When Jeff is not here I don’t need to be the one that can teach; others can teach.

Sig Tragard: Can you name anyone that can teach?

Ted: Well, I mean that I think there are several people who are theologically trained here, so they could probably do that. Nonetheless, what I want to talk to you about this morning is what I’ve been teaching at my church. I’ve started a series on 1 Corinthians. I finished up a year-and-a-half in Exodus, and now I’m in 1 Corinthians; you may want to turn to it. 1 Corinthians chapter 1, verses 1-3 is at the top of your handout.

Now this will be the third Sunday at my church that we are dealing with those three verses. So there is just a lot in there, and I think I titled this “Don’t Miss the Intro.” I think I re-titled it “Don’t Skip the Intro.” And what we tend to do is, we do that. We get through that and we skip those first three verses of 1 Corinthians, and then we really get on to the meat of the matter, where Paul says in verse 4, *“I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus in every way,”* etc. And then he gets into divisions in the church. So we actually want to move beyond the introductory verses and get on to the meat of the matter.

But the intro has the meat. And it lays out the things that are most important, and that’s what I’ve found. And I want to talk to you about that today, because I’ve found nine things that the introduction in those first three verses talk about. Let me just read them.

“Paul, called by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus, and our brother Sosthenes, To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus,

“Don’t Forget the Intro”

called to be saints together, with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus, both their Lord and ours.”

Now here are the things I found that Paul addresses in those three verses. Paul. Called by the will of God—that’s #2. An apostle of Christ Jesus--#3. Sosthenes--#4. To the church of God in Corinth—that’s #5. Sanctified in Christ Jesus--#6. Called to be saints--#7. Together with all those in every place who call upon the name of the Lord Jesus—both their Lord and ours--#8. #9: *“Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”* So there are nine themes, nine important words that are worth getting into.

So I’m just going to dig into each one. And I probably could have done a better job coming up with some funny stories to tell in between the points. But I just had a dearth of funny stories this week.

Brave Man: They won’t laugh.

Ted: Right; they won’t laugh anyway. *(Laughter)* So did you hear the one about the rabbi, the priest and the minister? But the first point is that he talks about Paul. The question is, who is Paul? Well we all know him, but he is called. And that word in Greek means summoned by the will of God. And we know that he was called because of Ananias. Remember the incident on the road when Paul saw the vision of Jesus. Ananias, the man to whom Paul was sent in Acts 9:15—Ananias confirms this calling. He says, *“The LORD said to Ananias, ‘Go! For he’”—that is, Paul—“is a chosen instrument of Mine, to carry My name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel.”* And it says in Romans 8 that *“those whom God has predestined He has also called.”*

So Paul was called to be an apostle. Paul often repeats this expression; you find it simply stated: *“Paul, by the will of God.”* Rather than “called by the will of God,” you often find that he says, “I am Paul, by the will of God.”

But an apostle. And I apologize; I think I talked a little about this when I talked last time, so I may be repeating myself. So Paul is called; #3: he’s an apostle.

And who were the apostles? You know the answer to that. Who is somebody who can be called an apostle?

Bishop Rodgers: An eyewitness of the Resurrection.

Ted: Who said that? The Bishop. You should know that. The apostles were those who were eyewitnesses of the Resurrection. We know that because in Acts the first chapter and the 21st verse they are dealing with the issue of Judas the apostate, who was the twelfth apostle, and he betrayed Jesus. So he killed himself and they had to replace him. They replaced him with Matthias.

In Acts 1:21 Peter said, as he was addressing the other apostles, *“So one of the men who had accompanied us as apostles, during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day He was taken up from us, one of these men must become with us a witness to His resurrection.”* So the identity item that qualified you to be an apostle was that you had seen Jesus resurrected.

And we get that story in Acts the ninth chapter, starting with the first verse. It’s not there; it’s lengthy. But I’m going to read it. If you want to follow along you can go to Acts 9, starting with verse 1.

“But Paul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest in Jerusalem, and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so

“Don’t Forget the Intro”

that if he found any who belonged to the Way—men or women—he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus. And suddenly a light from heaven shone around him. And falling to the ground he heard a voice, saying, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?’

“And he said, ‘Who are You, Lord?’

“And He said, ‘I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. But rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do.’

“The men who were traveling with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one. Saul rose from the ground, and although his eyes were opened he saw nothing. So they led him by the hand and brought him to Damascus.”

Now verse 10. *“Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias.”* Verse 17: *“Ananias went to the house where Paul was staying. And laying his hands on him he said, ‘Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who has appeared to you on the road by which you came has sent me so that you may regain your sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit.’”*

Now that story of Paul’s vision—being a witness to the Resurrection, which qualified him to be an apostle—that vision is recorded three times in the book of Acts. But Paul never really records it himself. And what we have is not any autobiographical account of the vision of the Resurrection by Paul. But we have Luke’s description of it.

Now what qualifies Luke to do that? Well, in 2 Timothy 4:11 Paul writes, *“Luke alone is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is very useful to me for ministry.”* So we know that Luke was very helpful to Paul, and he alone stayed with Paul. In Colossians 4:14 Paul writes, *“Luke the beloved physician greets you, as does Demas.”* So it appears that Luke was part of the group that went with Paul.

Philemon 24: *“Mark, Aristarchus, Demas and Luke, my fellow workers.”* And it’s interesting that in the middle of the book of Acts the recorder of the story—Luke—starts writing in the first person plural. You start finding the word “we” rather than “they.” So it’s like Luke is writing about what he experienced in that section of Acts.

Also we have a number of testimonies to Luke’s relationship with Paul. There is something called the Muratorian Fragment. It’s probably written, we guess, about 180. And it’s the first listing of the Canon of the New Testament; it’s the first time that the books of the New Testament are listed. It’s a fragment of a larger document that we don’t have; we just have this one sheet. And in that fragment the writer of the Muratorian Fragment says, *“The third Gospel book, that according to Luke.”* So the writer is saying that the third Gospel book is according to Luke, which is the way we understand it today.

Paul had taken him with him as an expert in the Way; that’s an interesting testimony. And then Iraenaues writes in about 180: *“Luke was inseparable from Paul and his fellow labor in the gospel.”* So although we don’t have in any of Paul’s letters a specific and detailed description of his seeing the resurrected Christ, we do have Luke’s testimony to it three times in Acts, and the fact that Luke and Paul were very close companions in traveling quite closely together.

And you might say, “Ted, why are you going into all this detail?” Well it’s just critical, because without being a witness to the Resurrection you are not an apostle. You could be a teacher; you could be a church leader; you could be an elder. But you could not be an apostle.

“Don’t Forget the Intro”

Yet Paul insists on being an apostle throughout his letters. This is a big deal for him. In 1 Corinthians it’s mentioned many times. In 1 Corinthians 9 he says, *“Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen our Lord Jesus? Are you not my workmanship in the Lord? You are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.”*

So Paul is saying two things there. #1: he’s saying that he has seen the risen Lord. But he also has results in his ministry—of getting results in preaching the gospel, of people coming to Christ and becoming disciples and growing up into the faith. That is not enough to make you an apostle. You had to be a witness of the Resurrection. So basically he’s saying, “I’ve seen the risen Lord. And as a plus for my resume I have some great results. In my preaching.” But without that Resurrection witness then he really wouldn’t be able to speak.

In 1 Timothy chapter 2 verse 7 he says, *“I was appointed a preacher and an apostle.”* And then he follows that immediately with—and the modern translators put that in parentheses—(*“I am telling the truth; I am not lying.”*) So it’s almost like he’s saying, “You may not think I’m an apostle. But I was appointed an apostle, and I’m not lying about this.” This is very important to him. *“A teacher to the Gentiles in faith and in truth.”*

In seven of the nine letters to congregations that Paul wrote, Paul’s first words are *“Paul, an apostle.”* And we underestimate how important that is. I’ll just read these to you; it’s impressive.

Romans 1:1: *“Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel.”*

We’ve already seen it in 1 Corinthians. In 2 Corinthians 1:1: *“Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God.”* Galatians 1:1: *Paul, an apostle—sent not from man nor by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father.”* Ephesians 1:1: *“Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God.”* Philippians 1:1: *“Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus.”* Oh, that’s interesting; he doesn’t mention that he’s an apostle in Philippians. Interesting! We’ll come back to that.

Colossians 1:1: *Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God.”* 1 Thessalonians 2:6: *“As apostles of Christ Jesus we have asserted our authority.”* 1 Timothy 1:1: as he goes into the pastoral letters: *“Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus.”* 2 Timothy: *“Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus,”* and so on.

So of all the letters that Paul wrote to the churches, there is only one in which he does not claim to be an apostle right off the bat: it’s Philippians. And why do you think that was the case? Why might you suppose that Paul did not talk about being an apostle with the Philippians, when in every other church he asserts his authority and his reputation on the fact that he has witnessed the Resurrection? Do you have any thoughts about that? Yes, Rich; don’t hesitate.

Rich Clark: Since there was such a love between Paul and the Philippians, they probably knew it so well that he didn’t have to say it.

Ted: Yes, there was a great love. And not only a great love; he really didn’t have problems with the Philippians. He did not have to assert his authority with the Philippians. In every other church where he had a teaching or a hard saying or a rebuke or an encouragement, he asserted his authority. He said, “You must listen to me because I’ve

“Don’t Forget the Intro”

seen the Lord; I’m an apostle.” But with the Philippians he didn’t have to do that. That’s the only thing I can figure. Yes?

Ron Baling: I’m thinking that he’s addressing them both from himself and Sosthenes.

Ted: Oh, that’s an excellent point; right. Remember, in 1 Corinthians he says, “I’m an apostle, and Sosthenes my brother.” So he’s able to separate them off. But that’s an excellent point; that could easily be the case.

The Resurrection is so important. I’ve found that the Resurrection, more than the Atonement, was the leading evangelistic theme in the sermons and teachings in the book of Acts. If we think about what is preached from our pulpits,—and this is not a criticism at all; just an observation,—of maybe the five cardinal doctrines, the doctrine that you see emphasized most often is what, from our modern evangelical pulpits? What would it be?

Bishop: The cross.

Ted: Yes, the cross and the Atonement—Jesus dying for our sins, right? How often do you hear sermons about the Resurrection?

Rich: Easter.

Ted: Yeah. Easter; thank you. “Hail the festival day!” But it’s interesting. I asked myself this question a number of years ago. I said, “What were the themes that were preached in the Acts of the Apostles, the sermons and the teachings?” There have to be nearly twenty sermons and teachings in Acts if you go through it. What was the theme? What was the primary message that came forward in Acts that the apostles were teaching? I’ll grab it right here, if I can lay my hands on it. It’s the Resurrection, which I think is harder to believe than the Atonement, because the Atonement—that is, Jesus dying for your sins—you’re a sinner, and Jesus went in your place. He led the perfect life; He paid the blood sacrifice. Bishop, help me out. The term is—

Bishop: Propitiation.

Ted: Propitiation for our sins. We hear that all the time from pulpits. I can turn on the radio, and that’s the main idea. I almost never hear about the Resurrection.

Let’s look at this. I’m looking at the first sermon; it’s in Acts 2:23-36. And it goes on, and he’s talking about the Psalm where David was speaking. Peter is talking about a Psalm, and he goes on. David *“seeing what was to come, he spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, that He was not abandoned to the realm of the dead, nor did His body see decay. God has raised this Jesus to life; we are all witnesses to it.”*

And that theme keeps getting repeated. I’m looking in vain for a teaching on the blood sacrifice of Jesus on the cross in Acts in the sermons. I’m not saying it wasn’t taught; I’m not finding it.

I find a few passages. Even when Stephen was stoned in Acts the seventh chapter, Stephen is saying to those who are about to stone him—the Jews,—“You have betrayed and murdered Jesus.” And then, when he’s dying, he looks up to heaven and sees Jesus standing at the right hand of God. He said, *“Look! I see heaven open, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.”* The Resurrection and the Ascension—key ideas that were brought forward.

And I’m just wondering; anybody can receive this and I’d be glad to share it with them. But I’m finding it very difficult to find the Atonement talked about in the sermons and the teachings. But I find plenty about the Resurrection.

“Don’t Forget the Intro”

But why do you think that was so? I mean, there is plenty of Atonement in Paul’s letters.

Bishop: Yes.

Ted: Absolutely; I’m not saying that wasn’t preached. I’m just curious about why I’m not seeing it in Acts. Why was the Resurrection so important?

Bishop: It’s part of St. Luke’s’ theme; it’s part of his theology.

Ted: Yes, it is. Yes?

Brave Man: I would say that what would point them to Him, the prophesied Messiah, is that He did not see decay.

Ted: That’s correct.

Brave Man: The Resurrection said who he was.

Ted: Right. But there must be almost twenty teaching sections and sermons in Acts. And I find almost no reference to Jesus’ death. I think the message was that Jesus is Messiah and Lord, that you Jews and humanity as a whole, you killed Him; you murdered the Lord, the Messiah. And thirdly, God raised Him from the dead. Those seem to be the three things. Yes, John?

Bishop: The Atonement is taught in one part of the New Testament, and another case comes up, which is the gospel of the kingdom.

Ted: Yeah.

Bishop: Because the One who dies is also a King. And we can’t separate justification and sanctification and glorification. We’re saved to do good works.

Ted: Would you say that they all come under the same bailiwick?

Bishop: Yes.

Ted: Okay.

Bishop: I don’t know which part of the New Testament emphasizes that more.

Ted: Well, Matthew has a lot of that.

Bishop: Yes.

Ted: It’s interesting. Please, go ahead.

Don Bishop: I like to see Sig run. (*Laughter*) The Resurrection is the single thing that sets Christianity apart from all other religions.

Ted: Right.

Don: No other leader of a religion says, “I rose from the dead.”

Ted: I would say there’s one other thing that would set us apart, and that’s the Atonement, because they don’t have an atonement where you don’t earn it. It’s unearned grace. There’s no other religion that has unearned grace. I guess grace is not grace unless it’s unearned, right?

Don: One of the great things about the Resurrection is that it leaves historical signs and evidence. You can argue from the reality of resurrection to the nature of the Person and work of Christ.

Ted: Yes; thanks. I’ve talked about where I can’t find the Atonement for the most part, not explicitly in Acts. But here’s an interesting observation, too. If you look at 1 Corinthians 15 verse 3, you know how it starts off. “*For I delivered to you of first importance.*” What was “that of first importance?”

Bishop: That Christ died for our sins.

“Don’t Forget the Intro”

Ted: *“That Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures.”* Now starting in verse 4, and for the next five verses: *“That He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.”* Verse 5: *“And He appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve.”* Verse 6: *“Then He appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, although some have fallen asleep.”* Verse 7: *“Then He appeared to James and to all the apostles.”* Verse 8: *“Last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared to me.”*

So verse 3 deals with the Atonement. Verses 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 deal with the Resurrection and the witnesses to that. So it’s just something to think about. And the question I ask myself is: why don’t we talk more about the Resurrection if that was kind of the lead message that went out into the world? The lead message did not go out, as far as I can tell here, in most cases, saying, “You’re a sinner. You need to accept Christ as your Savior, and His blood will cover your sins so you can go to heaven.” Yes, go ahead.

Sig: This is a big question. John came all the way from the city for this question.
(Laughter)

John: I think it’s easier to believe in the Atonement.

Ted: Yes.

John: And it’s easy in theory to believe in the Resurrection.

Ted: Yes.

John: But only in my safer moments do I want to believe in the Resurrection, because that has implications.

Ted: Keep going.

John: If He’s alive, and is sitting in this room, that makes a difference. If something is done in a courtroom setting in my stead, and I can trust it, that’s easier.

Ted: Right.

John: If He’s here, as He is, that affects my behavior. These actions move to my behavior, not just what I think in my head.

Ted: Yeah.

John: But if He’s alive—and that was Paul’s point—if He’s alive, I’ve seen Him. This is 1 John, right? “This is whom we’ve seen and handled. We know that He is still here with us.”

Ted: Mm-hmm.

John: That has a greater implication than just something that I believe.

Ted: Right.

John: And I think that’s why we’re a little more hesitant to talk about the present reality—not a resurrection that happened before, but the resurrection that affects us now—that we have good news. I have to let that good news sink into me and change me.

Ted: Right, John; that’s good. But just as a point of clarification, Jesus is not here with us. He’s seated at the right hand of God; His Spirit is here. Just a theological cleaning up of the loose ends.

John: He said He was among us.

Ted: Yes, He’s among us in His Spirit.

Brave Man: I just wanted to say that I’ve never thought of it before. But the fact that He is resurrected speaks to that there is grace left over. He didn’t just die and that was all He had. The fact that He came back means there is grace left over for future generations.

“Don’t Forget the Intro”

Ted: Mm-hmm; okay. Sigmund Freud said that the greatest motivator in the human psyche is the fear of death. Death is huge; it’s absolutely huge. Go ahead, please, Matt.

Matt Kail: So when I think about Acts, there’s a lot of meat put in Peter’s first sermon, with emphasis upon baptism. And from what I recall, baptism is recapitulation. You go under the water—

Ted: Yeah.

Matt: And we’re raised again from the dead. And so I think there’s a lot of participation in the work of Jesus Christ throughout Acts. The suffering that was done was participation in His sufferings.

Ted: Yes, as in Romans 6: We’ve been buried with Him,. Raised with Him. Yes, John?

Bishop: The Resurrection is the eye-opening event.

Ted: Yes, it really is.

Bishop: Up to that point the apostles were still hiding.

Ted: Yeah.

Bishop: It’s only when they met the risen Lord that they had the courage to step forward.

Ted: Excellent!

Bishop: Secondly, Paul’s apostleship was from the risen Lord. He didn’t know the Lord in His flesh. And so if Christ is not risen and Paul is not an apostle, then it says that we’re still in our sins.

Ted: That’s right; excellent!

Sig: But also to John’s point, if we do talk about the Resurrection it’s uncomfortable in our age, because it means the other religions aren’t as important, because our Lord and Savior rose from the dead and conquered death. We try to make it that all religions are the same. Well, they really aren’t. So maybe that’s why we don’t talk about the Resurrection in the 21st century because it makes everybody else in the room uncomfortable. *(Unclear)*

Ted: Okay. A lot of conversation.

Jim Hamilton: I’m just reminded of singing “He is Risen. It’s a prominent song in my mind.”

Ted: Absolutely, yes.

Jim: So we do put emphasis on that.

Ted: We do on Easter. *(Laughter)* I’m just saying that it was a constant theme in the early church. Yes; go ahead.

David Miller: Lee Stroebel was an atheist who set out to prove that Christ didn’t exist and all this kind of stuff. He was challenged to investigate the Resurrection. And when his investigation centered on the Resurrection, that’s when he became a believer.

Ted: Yeah. You know, I’m remembering that in the 1980s I used to fly a lot all over the country at supervised campaigns. And I would get into interesting conversations. I was sitting next to a young Japanese man; I think he was in the country for business. And I asked him, “Do you know anything about Christianity?”

And he said, “Not really.

I said, “Do you mind if I tell you?” And we had a good conversation at this point. We started off, “Well, how ‘bout them Stillers!”, and it just went off from there. *(Laughter)*

But we got to talking and I laid out the gospel message to him. You know, “We’re sinners.”

“Don’t Forget the Intro”

“Okay, mm-hmm.”

“And God expects us to meet His standard. And when we don’t we need Someone to do that for us in substitution for us—the life I did not live, the sins I committed that need to be paid for, and that Jesus died for me.”

“Okay; that’s interesting.”

“And this Jesus who died on the cross, three days later He arose from the grave.” And that young Japanese man looked at me and he said, “What?” I mean, the thing that shocked him he had me repeat. “What did you just say?”

I said, “This Jesus, you know, you’re probably thinking of Him as a religious leader. He was killed and then He was brought back to life forever.”

At that point the conversation almost stopped happening because it was not that he was rejecting it; it was too big of a thought for him to wrap his head around. And it’s the same way with John. I think it’s John, right?—the beloved. And I love you, too. It’s what John was saying. With the Atonement I almost think of it almost like bookkeeping; it’s a divine bookkeeping exercise. This is on your debit side and this is on your credit side. The debit is me; the credit is Jesus, and it clears the books out.

Okay, I get that. It’s almost like an intellectual concept you can get your arms around once you accept that you have a debit side that cannot be covered. But when you get to the Resurrection—

I was reading this book by David Rohl, who has done the work on the new chronology for Exodus. And there’s a question about where the Israelites crossed the Red Sea. And after reading his book I now believe that Mount Sinai is not in the Sinai Peninsula; it’s in Arabia. But the crossing places are quite deep, unlike the Sea of Reeds which is up near Goshen. Gary is going to check on my facts because he put me on to David Rohl.

(Laughter)

And I thought, gee whiz! We’re talking about a depth of about a thousand feet at one of these crossings! How is that possible that God could have moved the water back? I mean, Ted, can God move a thousand-foot depth of water? Of course He can, theoretically. But I’m thinking about it in real life.

And then Rohl raised the question. If God could raise a man from the dead, He certainly could move that much water. That is true! All of a sudden I began to believe that God could move that much water if He could raise somebody from the dead.

Brave Man: One of the things that David Rohl teaches from this book is that it wasn’t the Red Sea. It was a body of water that was located in the Swiss Alps.

Ted: Right; yeah. I mean, that’s the identification; where is it? Is it the Red Sea?

Brave Man: And it’s actually fairly shallow; it was about ten feet or something like that.

Ted: At the Red Sea.

Brave Man: It’s recorded in history that it was parted by wind.

Ted: Yeah.

Brave Man: One reason I agree with that and am in favor of that is because it says in the Bible that He parted it by the wind.

Ted: Yes.

Brave Man: I don’t believe the wind could part a thousand feet of water.

Ted: But then how could anything part a thousand-foot depth of water?

“Don’t Forget the Intro”

Brave Man: Yes.

Ted: And then Rohl says,--and I’m amazed because Rohl is not a Christian!—“Of God could raise somebody from the dead, couldn’t He move a thousand-foot depth of water?” I said, “Well, I guess so.” Yes, John?

Bishop: Even more marvelous is the fact that the Resurrection is not just being raised from the dead; it’s the victory over death itself.

Ted: Right, yes.

Bishop: In other words, there are other people who were raised from the dead. Jesus raised a little boy; He raised Lazarus. But they had to die again.

Ted: Yes.

Bishop: With Christ, death has no more dominion over us. He actually destroyed death.

Ted: Right. Actually, modern research has found that Lazarus continued to live and actually works in the garment district of New York City. *(Laughter)*

Sig: He has an apartment huh? *(Laughter)*

Ted: That’s right, exactly. Well that’s true; he did very well and he keeps coming back.

Brave Man: Is that where the Jehovah’s Witnesses came from?

Ted: What?

Brave Man: Wasn’t it a guy that worked in downtown Pittsburgh?

Ted: Yes, Russell. But that’s another lecture completely. Just know that you can go and see the founder of the Jehovah’s Witnesses’ tombstone on the North Side of Pittsburgh. I think it’s at the Redeemer Catholic Cemetery. It’s interesting; it’s shaped as a pyramid. It’s not a tombstone or a cross; it’s a pyramid. But anyway, that’s totally unrelated.

Let’s move on. Okay, verse 2. *“To the church of God.”* This is item #5; I’m going to mix up 5, 8, 7 and all of them now. *“To the church of God that is in Corinth: to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours.”*

Okay. It’s to the church; he’s writing to the church in Corinth—the *ecclesia*, the called out. So God is calling us out. He called the church, people of Corinth, he called them out of what to what? What was the calling out of and the calling into? What was it?

Bishop: Under His Lordship, as over against the world.

Ted: Okay, He called them out of the world and into Christ. What else?

Rich: From darkness to light.

Ted: From darkness to light, right! *“He called us from darkness into His marvelous light,”* right? So that’s what they are called to. So the folks that are in Corinth who came to believe, they are called to come out of the world and to God. Okay.

But he goes on to say. This; it’s not just the Christians in Corinth. *“Together with all those who in every place call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ—both their Lord and ours.”* So it’s not just a congregational church of God in Corinth. He’s simply not addressing only the church of God in Corinth, the congregational church—but the church of God in every place and at all times—the body of Christ.

So he’s making a statement there—that the congregations we have—Elfinwild Presbyterian, Christ Church at Grove Farm, ACAC—all of those can be identified as the

“Don’t Forget the Intro”

church of God in a particular area. But more critically they are a part of the church of God in every place and at every time.

It’s a thought that is practically lost in practicality in folks’ minds, because when they talk about the church they mean my congregation. And they don’t think about the greater church. But we’re really part of that greater church—not just as a nice thought or theoretically—but in fact. And this is one of the drum beats that I have. I failed the drum in junior high school. But we are the body of Christ.

And there is that amazing section in Ephesians 5:31-32, where we are really talking about the bridegroom and the bride. It seems like we’re talking about the husband and the wife. *“A man shall leave his father and mother, and hold fast to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.”* In theory spiritually, physically, all those things; I mean, it’s a very vivid image. *“This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to or speaks to Christ and the church.”*

So Paul has this whole section in Ephesians 5 about husbands and wives. And you will have preaching series on husbands and wives, and they’ll draw from Ephesians the fifth chapter. But he gets down and says, “But I’m really talking about not husbands and wives; I am talking about a big mystery”—in Greek *mega musterion*. You get it: *mega musterion*. It comes from the Greek; we can hear it—a big mystery. And what is that mystery? “I’m talking about Christ and the church.”

So there is something that happens when we’re regenerated. Yes, we’re born again. Yes, we receive the benefits of Christ’s life and death and resurrection. But we are also incorporated into Christ Himself, as intimately as a husband and wife are. It’s something to meditate on because it’s all but lost in most of our thinking today.

And this goes on. Not only that, but *“called to be saints.”* Now the saints, as you know, are those who have been made holy, who have been set apart. The word is probably better translated “holy ones.” So it says that we’ve been *“called to be saints.”*

Now when I think about holiness—and you know, if you do a year-and-a-half on Exodus it gets pounded into your head!--but I asked the question. And this is something I’ve always struggled with and continue to struggle with. How is Leviticus 19:2, (which is a summary statement of everything else you get in the first five books of the Bible), how is Leviticus 19:2 accomplished?

Transcriber’s Note: Leviticus 19:2, NKJV. *“Speak to all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy.’”*

Ted: How is that accomplished? *“Be holy, because I, the LORD your God, am holy.”*

Transcriber’s Note: Another translation.

Ted: How is that accomplished in me and in my life? How does that happen? I’ve told you the story before about the Jehovah’s Witnesses couple who came to my door, and they had their script. And I apologize for those of you who say, “Ted, we’ve heard this story too many times.” *(Laughter)*

But they had their script. And I knew I had to get them off the script if there was going to be any conversation, because, you know, they knew what I was going to say and they had an answer for it. So I said to the woman, “The Bible says, *‘Be holy, for the LORD your God is holy.’*” I said, “How are you doing?”

“Don’t Forget the Intro”

That threw them completely off of their script. I found in the next minute that they had no answer for it, because they stumbled around trying to find a way in which they could establish their holiness and meet that standard.

She said, “Well, we’re trying, you know? Have a little pity; we’re trying to be holy.”

I said, “Yes, I know you are. But it doesn’t say that! It says, ‘You must be holy as God is holy.’”

And every time she came back with something I said, “Wait a second. This is what the Bible says. How are you doing?” She’d say something. “This is what the Bible says. How are you doing?” And she was really getting irritated with me. (*Laughter*) And she said, “You’re probably going to say that happens when you’re born again.”

I said, “Well, that’s a pretty good start.” (*Laughter*)

And then she finally said, “Well, do you know what? Christ has His millennial reign.” This is a big doctrine with the Jehovah’s Witnesses; Christ is going to come back and reign. And then all those who are the 144,000, plus the other sheep, all have a chance to reign with Christ—all the Jehovah’s Witnesses followers. And she said, “You know what? During that thousand-year reign of Christ I’ll have a chance to work hard and become holy.”

Sig: Wow!

Ted: I said, “You’re deluding yourself; that will never happen. Your record is not good, and it’s not going to get any better.” So that ended that conversation. And we decided to part company because she didn’t have an answer for that.

So I don’t know. Here we go: Leviticus 19:2. How do I accomplish that? Ephesians 1:4 says, “*He chose us in Him before the creation of the world, to be holy and blameless in His sight.*” So it’s interesting that “*He chose us.*” It doesn’t just say that He chose us before the creation of the world to be holy. It says, “*He chose us in Him.*” So somehow my holiness must be accomplished in Him.

And then it goes on to say, “*those sanctified in Christ Jesus.*” 1 Corinthians 6:11: “*You were washed, you were sanctified*”—that is, made holy. “*And you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.*”

And then it goes on in Hebrews, the second chapter and the eleventh verse; a very interesting statement. It says, “*The One who makes people holy.*” Now who is that? Who is the One that makes people holy?

Bishop: God.

Ted: Yes. God, and the work of Jesus, right?—the life and work of Jesus; the One who makes people holy. “*Both the One who makes people holy and those who are made holy are of the same family.*”

Did you see that there? Did I put that in the outline? I think it should be D2. “*Both the One who makes people holy and those who are made holy are of the same family.*”

Now what does that mean? The One who makes people holy—God, more specifically His Son, Jesus Christ—“*and those who are made holy*”—that’s us—“*are of the same family.*” What does that mean? And what is the implication of that? Jesus is holy; I have been made holy. And we’re—What? Go ahead.

John: We’re adopted. And also, as you pointed out, I guess we’re one flesh.

Ted: Yes, that’s right. This is going back to Ephesians the fifth chapter, where “I’m talking about Christ and His church.” We’re pulled into that. I receive the holiness of God

“Don’t Forget the Intro”

because I’m pulled into the family of God. I have the same holy essence that God has. I’m not going to get into the details of what that may or may not mean.

So that is where I stand. Now how can I accomplish Leviticus 19:2? I can accomplish Leviticus 19:2 only because I’m of the same family of the holy God.

So the question is Ted, are you a holy person? And I would say, “I sure am, because I am of the holy family of God.”

But there is this kind of “now, but not yet.” Remember that Jesus prayed, “*on earth as it is in heaven.*” So I’m in one place where I am holy and I am part of that family, united with Him in the heavenlies. It says that “*my life has been hidden with God in Christ.*” My life is hidden with God and His holiness. But I have yet to act all of that out. Now that’s what John talked about. And John, you talked about living out the life, doing what we’re supposed to—that holy life.

Sorry; I’m almost done here. I just want to make one more observation because I’m going way down; I’m under EV.: Colossians 1:21-23. “*Now He has reconciled you by Christ’s physical body through death.*” That’s where the Atonement is—“*by His physical body through death, to present you holy in His sight, without blemish and free from accusation.*”

Okay. That’s what it means to be part of that holy family. But it’s “*if you continue in your faith, established and firm, and do not move from the hope held out in the gospel.*”

I believe that I am holy in God. But I believe that holiness is experienced by me continuing in my faith, established and firm, and not moving from the hope held out in the gospel. I’m just very much instructed by what Jesus said three times in the Gospels: “*He who endures to the end will be saved.*” And I must endure to the end; that is my job in this life. And boy, I could have spent a whole session on what it means to endure.

But I heard a broadcast the other day that I found provocative. And I’m going to wrap up with this. I listen to podcasts when I go walking. Elise Childers; do some of you know Elise Childers? She’s an apologist for the faith. She usually has really good guests on. They have a podcast for about an hour, and as I’m walking I’ll listen to it.

But she had a guest on. And it dealt with the question of why we are seeing so many of our young people leave the church for good—actually not leaving the church but leaving Christianity. I have a situation in my own family that causes me pain about that all the time. And maybe a number of us have children or grandchildren who not only don’t come to church; they don’t care anything about the God of the Bible.

So this fellow has developed a system whereby he’s able to re-engage young people. And I’m always very nervous about systems; you come on with the most recent thing. And he made an expression and he talked this way. He said, “You know, we want kids to be on fire for Jesus.”

That bothers me, because the Christian life is enduring to the end. It’s like a marathon; it’s not a sprint. I’ve never seen a marathoner described as “on fire.” But you’ve seen some 100-meter dash guys that are on fire. The jets are on and they move down the track.

Mike Horton, who is a Reformed writer and has done “The White Horse Inn” wrote a book and I bought it. It was called *Ordinary*. And it came against this kind of thinking that we need to be on fire for Jesus.

We’ve lost our first love. But I think that in reality most of the Christian life is like a marathon race. You’re just trying to hit every mile at the time at which you need to hit it.

“Don’t Forget the Intro”

And I’ve shared with you that I used to run marathons about forty pounds ago. *(Laughter)* They would pin on the number, and on the other side of the number I would put down my splits for all 26 miles. So you know you go by the first mile, and the guy reads out your time. At the fifth mile the guy is reading out your time. And I’d flip the number over. The first time I did it I put it in the wrong direction. *(Laughter)* You know what I mean. I learned that if you did it the opposite, then you could review and re-do.

And I didn’t want to be on fire. But I ran with a guy once in a marathon. When we came to the halfway point there was a big stand and everybody was cheering. This guy just took off and sprinted through the midway point. And then I caught up with him about three- or four hundred yards later; he was staggering. I said, “What are you? An idiot doing wind sprints?” And he said some obscene things to me as I said it. *(Laughter)*

But the thing is, in a marathon it’s hitting the time at every mile. And that will get you the kind of results you want, rather than sprinting through the whole thing. So *“He who endures to the end.”* You just stay firm to the faith. And that’s all I really want to talk about today. So *“grace and peace to you,”* as it says in the third verse of that chapter. *“Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”* “Thanks, guys. *(Applause)*