

Don't Fall Asleep - Acts 20:1-16

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[0:00] Acts 20, tonight's message, if you give a title, is Don't Fall Asleep. It's a lot more dangerous in the early church to fall asleep in church.

We've come with Paul through Corinth and Ephesus. He's just encountered the, what was his name, Demetrius, right?

Demetrius, the silversmith of Diana. And they had that riot in the town. Paul really didn't get involved in that, and that's ended, and that's where we're going to find him now.

In his life, if you look, our red box is slowly moving across his timeline. We are now at the end of his third missionary journey. I guess you could say right at the end.

And so you can see the books of the Bible that would have been written, 1 and 2 Corinthians.

There's actually like four letters to the Corinthians, because 1 Corinthians, he says in there, he's responding to their response to a letter that he had sent them.

[1:00] So we only have the two, 1 and 2. That's the only one that's scripture and the only one we have. And so he has written those. Actually, I think as we read, we can kind of see probably where that happened.

And then we're going to find out that while he goes to Corinth in chapter 20, he'll write the book of Romans. In verse 1, That's a very quick description of that whole trip right there, traveling back up through Macedonia and down into Greece.

When it says he went into Greece, that's Corinth. He's down into Corinth. So he calls the disciples to him that are in Ephesus. And he departed for to go into Macedonia.

He's like, I'm going to go back through Macedonia. I'm going to end up in Corinth. I'm going to go check out what's going on with these Corinthians. We see there the familiarity that he had with his disciples, that he embraced them. Paul has just witnessed this entire uproar in Ephesus.

This entire city had been in an uproar. Psalm 1-4 tells us that the ungodly are not so, but are like the chaff which the wind drives away.

[2:17] So the uproar's over, the mob disperses, and it's like they never even existed. But Paul is still here. Isaiah 52-12 says, For you shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight, for the Lord will go before you, and the God of Israel will be your reward.

And that's Paul. After all this is done, here's Paul. One man with the truth has a greater effect upon the community than the entire population that had come together in error. They just fizzled out, faded away.

For Paul, he's still here. And you see the effect that he's going to have and his hat on Ephesus. And this whole region is being just changed for the gospel by this one man and his faithfulness to God. And there he abode three months. And when the Jews laid wait for him, so he's in Corinth, he's there three months. And this is when he writes the book of Romans while he's in Corinth for these three months.

The Jews, they laid wait for him. And as he was about to sail into Syria, so he wants to head from Corinth. He wants to start his journey back, back to Syria, which is where Antioch is. Where his kind of home base was, where he'd been sent from originally.

[3:25] On all these missionary journeys. And he was about to sail into Syria. He purposed to return through Macedonia. So he's like, you know what, I'm just going to go back through Macedonia. Okay, praise the Lord, I get to go see all my homies again.

And so the plotting of the Jews, because that's what that word means where it says that the Jews laid wait for him. It's literally to plot. It's just one more step that God was using in Paul's life.

He just used that to push him on the next step that he wanted him to take. So 1 and 2 Corinthians have already been written at this point. Paul will write the book of Romans while he's in Corinth.

And then Aquila and Priscilla, they are now in Rome as well. In the beginning of Romans, Paul says, Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated under the gospel of God. To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints, grace to you, and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.

[4 : 26] For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers, making request. If by any means now at length, I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you.

This is in Paul's heart. He wants to get to Rome. For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end you may be established. What's the purpose of spiritual gifts? Establishing and maturing the body for edification. That is, that I may be comforted together with you by mutual faith, both of you and me. So Paul wants to get to Rome.

This is the letter he's writing to them. He says, hey, I've heard of your faith in the whole world. At the end of Romans, in Romans 16, he says, Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my helpers in Christ Jesus, who have for my life laid down their own necks, unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.

Likewise, greet the church that is in their house. And then where it says there, who for his life, for Paul's life, laid down their own necks. That could have been, they were the ones to hold him back from going in and rushing into that mob, where it says that certain of the chief of Asia, which were his friends, sent unto him desiring he would not avenger himself.

[5 : 36] That could have been Priscilla and Aquila. They're like, don't go. But anyway, they're in Rome and they have a church in their house. Now we're going to cover that. Tonight we're going to look at house churches and church houses.

And, you know, that idea of where should the church meet? What should it look like? And then next week, not next week, next time we gather, we get to cover another fun topic. Elders and pastors and bishops and all of that in the church, church leadership.

What does the Bible say about that? We won't get that far. That's what I want to do the whole chapter, but there's just no way. Verse four. And they're accompanying him into Asia. So he's heading back from Macedonia.

He's been heading back from Corinth. And as he goes back up through, he has a sopater, sopater, whatever his name is, of Berea. And so if we look on our map, we can see as he's traveling back up through, he's kind of like collecting these guys.

Oh, sorry. Sopater of Berea. And of the Thessalonians, so from Thessalonica, he has Aristarchus and Secundus. And then Gaius of Derb.

[6 : 44] He comes in another place where Paul says, and I thank God that I have not baptized any of you except Gaius. And Crispus are one of those. But Gaius, this is probably that same one.

And Timothy, and of Asia, Tychicus, and then Trophimus. Trophimus will show up in the next chapter, chapter 21.

He's the one who kind of triggers the whole uproar in Jerusalem. Remember, Paul's going to go to Jerusalem. He's going to go into the temple with these guys that he's like a sponsor of, these Jews. And there's some Jews there from Asia because he's trying to get back for the Feast of Pentecost. And so some of these Jews have traveled back there for that feast as well. They see him and they're like, he brought Greeks into the temple.

And the whole thing explodes because it says that they saw Trophimus with him throughout the city. So they assume he goes with them. So here's Trophimus, the troublemaker, him and Tychicus, who would have been from Ephesus.

[7 : 44] So why are they going? What's the purpose of this? Well, the company with Paul, they were chosen specifically by their representative churches to deliver the offering from those churches to Jerusalem.

They're the ones carrying it back. Paul will tell us in Acts 24 eventually when he's standing before Agrippa and Festus. I'm not sure which one. And he's giving his narrative of what happens. He says, now after many years, I came to bring alms to my nation and offerings. So that's part of what he was doing with his missionary journey was to go and collect from the Gentile churches an offering for the church in Jerusalem because they had it pretty hard.

They were not allowed to really work or be part of society being cast out because they were no longer part of the Jewish faith. Proverbs 13:20 says, He that walks with wise men shall be wise, but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.

And here you see Paul's companions, right? Those with whom we choose to accompany tell much about who we are. And Paul chose these men who are highly esteemed in their churches, men of good repute, who were taking back this offering to the church in Jerusalem.

[8:57] In 2 Corinthians, Paul kind of addresses to the Corinthians. So remember, the 2 Corinthians has already been written. And when he gets back, it says in verse 3, There he abode three months, and when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria, he purposed to return through Macedonia.

So he's come back to Corinth after he's written the letter because he's like, Hey, I'm going to be coming, guys. Do what you said you were going to do. You said you were going to give this offering. Do it. Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia. So he's comparing them to the churches of Macedonia, Philippi and Berea. How that in a great trial of affliction, the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.

For to their power I bear record, yea, and beyond their power, they were willing of themselves, praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.

So here's this. He's saying these churches, they were under suffering. They were in poverty, and yet they recognized that it was more blessed to give than receive. They scraped together an offering.

[10:08] And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord and unto us by the will of God. In so much that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also.

So he sends Titus ahead of him. Therefore, as you abound in everything, in faith and utterance and knowledge and in all diligence and in your love to us, see that you abound in this grace also.

I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others and to prove the sincerity of your love. So he's saying, look guys, do what you said you're going to do. Put this offering together.

I don't want to have to come and beg for money, but you need to be faithful to the word that you've already promised. And you can just imagine when he then shows up in Corinth and he's like, hey guys, told you I was coming.

Verse five, these going before tarried for us at Troas. And so we go back to our map. We see that Luke is writing here saying us, these who went before us, they tarried at Troas.

[11:10] So whether Paul is kind of like collecting these guys or he's written head or whatever, as he hits each church, he's like, hey, go on ahead of me to Troas. Go, I'll meet you at Troas. They're not all traveling together.

Paul and Luke are. These going before tarried for us at Troas and we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread. So after Passover and came unto them to Troas in five days where we abode seven days.

Okay, so Paul, what's the word, recognizes or keeps the Passover, the unleavened bread, the day of unleavened bread.

We're going to find out he wants to get to Jerusalem pretty bad. He wants to be there before the feast of Pentecost. It's like, well, Paul, wait a minute. I mean, we know from another place you tell us that you withstood Peter face to face when he dissembled and went to eat with the Jews instead of the Gentiles.

And he said to him, Peter, if you being a Jew live after the manner of Gentiles, then why would you require the Gentiles to live like Jews? And Paul, you tell us not to keep the law. What's going on here?

[12:12] And I think for Paul, Paul kept the commemorative feasts, but not the law or any aspects of it. You don't see him ever keeping the law or promoting the law. And that's what I think is going to get him in trouble in chapter 21, because they're going to say to him, the apostles, they're going to say, hey, Paul, the Jews here are very devout and they don't think you keep the law.

And we want to assure them that you do. And I don't think Paul should have gone to the temple with those guys to prove that he keeps the law. He should have said something like, no, I don't keep the law and I'm not gonna. But anyway, Paul did keep the commemorative feasts.

Does he ever prescribe that for the church? No, he does not. But it's part of his heritage. He's a Jew. If I was Jewish and I grew up with that heritage and became a Christian, I'm sure I would keep those as well.

But it is not something prescribed to the church. Speaking of prescription, let's get into verse 7. So he's at Troas. And upon the first day of the week, when all the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow, and continued his speech until midnight.

And there were many lights in the upper chambers where they were gathered together. So Paul has traveled on the Sabbath. Remember, we said he didn't keep the law. Well, obviously, he's traveling on the Sabbath. If he's here the first day of the week, he's been here one week, and then he traveled for five days before that.

[13:35] Well, that means he traveled on a Saturday. He was traveling on the Sabbath. So he's not trying to keep the law in any way. He shows up and it says that on the first day of the week, so Sunday, all the disciples came together to break bread.

They were all there. It doesn't say that Paul went to one of the house churches and then to another house church. It says all of them. They were all gathered there. And Paul preached unto them. And it's going to tell us he goes long into the night. And I was thinking about that. And this is not, you know, necessarily the case. But I bet Paul didn't start in the morning and go long into the night. I bet he started in the afternoon church. I bet he started in the afternoon and then went long into the night and preached all night. I mean, there's no way he's going to start at 10 in the morning and just go all day and then all night.

At one time, I might have thought this was really hard to do. But having just come back from teaching nine hours of Luke, you can do this. Teaching long is not the issue unless your voice goes. Preparation is the issue.

[14:31] I've been preparing since the middle of December with Luke, just trying to plug away at it. At first, it was like, this is so fun. And I got about to chapter six.

And I'm like, I'm not done yet? And didn't finish studying through 12 until like the week before we left. It was a blast. It was so fun teaching that.

But then it kind of just felt like it's over. All that work and preparation and poof, it's gone. And here's Paul. Paul, he obviously had many legs up on me or anyone today, the knowledge he had of the word.

I'm sure he could just open it and just start teaching. And granted, you can. You can open your Bible to a well-known passage and just start teaching. But, you know, we're supposed to study to show ourself approved.

So there is a part of that that's not just like, yeah, I'm just going to read my Bible and see what comes out. I know when I've studied well and I know when I haven't. And usually I talk a lot more when I haven't studied as well to try and fill in things.

[15:39] Anyway, so here's all of them. So the question is, as they come together and Paul's speaking, is this a house church or is this a church house? Which is this? They're all together.

They all came together in one place for the purpose and priority of preaching the word. Why is that an issue? Because today you'll hear within the church these winds of doctrines. And one of them is that we need to return to the purity of the early church.

The problem in America is because of this, that someone's on a stage, people are watching them, they've elevated man. It's like, no, we have not. You go back to Nehemiah. They built a platform, a giant platform in the middle of Jerusalem so that they could stand up on it.

And the people all could hear them. And it was a lot higher than this because there's a lot of people. It's nothing to do with elevating anyone. But they say, if we go back to home churches and maybe keep it no more than 30 people, maybe, and then you'd have a pastor over each home church or an elder or whatever.

That's what it needs to be because that's what the early church did. Now, look, many of you have been, some of you have been with us the whole time we've done Acts. Where did they start? Okay, they were in an upper room, right?

[16:47] And the Holy Spirit comes. They were there because they were scared. The door was locked. They were up there. And then it says they continued daily in the temple. They're in the temple because there was rooms in the temple that you could use or rent out or whatever.

They're daily in the temple. Paul's going to eventually tell us here that he taught from house to house and in public. We know Paul was in the school of Tyrannus for like three years or two and a half years.

So the idea that the early church was always in a house, I don't think holds water. We have to distinguish between what is described and what is prescribed.

There's never any prescription for a location for a church. It's not the form. That's what counts. It's the substance, right?

We could have a home church and it could be empty of substance. You know, we did community groups at times. We've done small groups at times. I've been in community groups where I left thinking, well, that was like two hours and 15 minutes of edification, you know, because someone just kept talking.

[17:56] And you want to be like, what you are saying is not sound doctrine. I can show you the verses and would that be rude to jump in? So I'm just going to sit here. So, you know, they can have their benefits. If you have someone who's able to steer that and bring out discussion around the word, that's great.

But the Bible scribes house churches, but it does not prescribe them. The interesting thing is people will say, well, there was no house church. I mean, there was no church gathering outside of homes until Constantine.

Constantine comes on the scene. He legalizes Christianity, makes it the state religion. And then you see these church buildings and that they're all corrupt because they have to do with being involved with the government.

And so we should go back to home churches. That's not really true. The first Christian congregations worshiped in private houses, meeting at the homes of wealthier members on a rotating basis.

By the second century AD, 200 AD, Constantine was like three or three something. There's evidence that some of these houses were donated to the congregations and converted into churches.

[19:00] Such a conversion took place at Dura Europis in approximately 240 AD. Where is that located? It's that blue blotch on the right. So we see where Israel would be.

It's to the right a little bit off into, what would that be Jordan today? Okay. That's where they've uncovered this house. So at the time in Israel, in this area, houses looked a little bit like this. There are about four rooms is all they were. They're pretty tiny places. You didn't live at home like we think of it. It's not the place of comfort and refuge. Your home was a place you slept.

You kept some animals in it. Here's like a cutaway view. This kind of fits with what we're talking about at Christmas. That the cataluma, the upper room, and then the lower section where the animals are kept, there'd be a manger there.

Essentially your garage. Jesus was born in their garage, not in a cave. But how many people are you going to fit in that place? Right? You're going to fit a few, but not a lot. And if you're under persecution, whether you're in Jerusalem or in the Roman Empire, you've got to fit into homes.

[20:05] You can't create visible locations. Roman houses were bigger. That's like a typical Roman house. Much bigger. So you think, oh, they met in, you know, Aquila and Priscilla had a house, had a church in their house.

Well, we know they had their own business as well. And we know in Ephesus that they were part of the church there. So you, my guess would be they were probably one of the wealthier ones that had a larger space.

You could fit a lot of people into a place like that. But here is the place that was uncovered in this, what was it called again? In whatever it was, Europa.

I can't remember now the name. But anyway, that is the place that was uncovered. It was a house that was donated and they renovated the inside. From the outside, it still looked just like a house. So anybody passing by would think, oh, it's just someone's house. They had to do that because they were under persecution. What you can see there is there's on the far right where E, that's a baptismal. That looked like that.

[21 : 07] They actually excavated and then restored it. It was a baptismal. And then the courtyard and then on the left was where they would meet.

And then they even had like an area for Sunday school or something. But this was inside this building. So you think, well, wait a minute. Home church. Okay, this is more than you would think maybe 10 or 15 or 30 people.

And there's like a rendering of it. So what is the point of all that? If I can get back to where I was in my notes, I'll show you. So the format is not the important aspect of our gathering.

It's the substance. The other thing is you never see anywhere in the scriptures where we are told to limit the size of our gathering. We're told not to forsake the gathering together of one another.

But you never see anywhere where we're told to artificially limit the size of our gathering because of some supposed spiritual aspect or whatever. So when we see that they were meeting in homes, they were. They were meeting in the biggest homes they could find.

[22 : 03] Now a problem arose because you had so many poor people. And like the one or two wealthy people who they allowed them to use their homes. The issue with that was you had people that owned the home that were wealthy that maybe were not in a place of spiritual leadership and maturity.

Who are now being looked to because they could fund the Christian movement. And so people would try and, you know, get in good with them. And you had people that were in positions that they shouldn't have been just because they were able to facilitate a place of meeting.

So here's Paul meeting in this place. Everyone's there. It's an upper room. We're going to find out it's three stories because Eutychus is going to fall a long way. And it's probably more something like that. So it's like a Roman three-story house.

A lot of room there. They're all meeting in the upper room. And it said all. So here's the entire gathering in Troas. The entire church gathers together. They're not trying to artificially keep the church holy or more holy by being in houses.

Right? And then what we see? We see, what? One voice. It's Paul. Paul teaching and preaching long. The movement that usually goes along with the house church movement is the idea that we should have many, many voices.

[23 : 10] There should be many people talking. We should have lots of open discussion. And we should have, you know, a multiplicity of elders. And I agree that discussion is good around the scripture, that more elders are good.

But when your church has about 30 or 40 people, you don't need five elders. That God will provide those in his time. We'll look more at those next week. But suffice it to say, you know, it's not something that we take to ourselves.

That it is a calling that God has to do. You know, I was 18 when I started school of ministry. Turned 19 that fall. And then was 20 when I graduated and got married.

And I wanted to go into ministry. 22 years later. And I got to pastor a church. You know. If I had decided to take that to myself, by golly, I'm going to go and be in ministry. It was the Lord's timing. I was not even planning on pastoring anymore. I was good. Being the number two guy where I was. Lord, that's what we're going to do forever. Leave the responsibility to fall to someone else. Let him take the fall.

[24 : 14] But the Lord has his timing. And I bear that responsibility heavily. Like, man, whatever comes from this pulpit, I'm responsible for. Like, I remember the first time someone said to me, you know, not one of you guys, but like someone that we had not known before in the church and said, like, yeah, well, that one thing you said, and then I did this.

And it was like, whoa. Someone's basing their life decisions off things I say. Yikes. I better be careful what I say. So to just take that and turn that over to anyone and say, well, just talk about something.

You know, it's like, man, no, I'm responsible for what comes out of this pulpit. What comes from this ministry? It's not my ministry. It's the Lord's. I did not choose this.

Paul tells Timothy, when he's writing to him in 1 Timothy, he says, till I come in chapter four, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

Take heed to yourself and unto the doctrine. Continue in them. For in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee. Saying, Timothy, it's on you. It's your responsibility.

[25 : 23] As the pastor, Timothy, of this church in Ephesus, keep preaching doctrine. Read, speak. It's on you to do that. 2 Timothy 4, 2 and 3.

Preach the word. Be instant in season, out of season. Reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. Not discuss the word. Not ask opinions about the word. He said, preach the word. And I didn't put it in here, but Paul, another place, says that God chose by the foolishness of preaching to save them that are perishing. And so here's Paul teaching long.

And then in verse nine, and there sat in a window, a certain young man named Eutychus. You know, his name means fortunate. You gotta love the Bible.

The Bible is not to be used for entertainment, but the Bible is entertaining. It has many entertaining things in it. There sat at a window, a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep.

[26 : 21] And as Paul was long, that word means in time and in quantity. He was saying a lot, and he was saying it long. Paul was long in preaching. He sunk down with his sleep and fell down from the third loft and was taken up dead.

So here's Paul preaching. You know, it says that, it says there that there was, is that the place where it says there's many lights? What verse was that?

There's one before that. Yeah, seven. Eight. And there were many lights in the upper chamber, and they were gathered together. And here people say, well, so because of the fumes and the, I don't know. Nobody else has fallen asleep, it tells us.

I think it was more just the fact that it was late, that there was lights on. That usually, we're used to lights, right? Back then, you go down when the sun goes down. You go to bed. So this meant they had to light a lot of lights to make enough light for this.

This guy's sitting in the window. Somebody notices. I think I just saw feet go out that window. They look, and there's Eutychus. He's gone.

[27 : 27] And so poor Eutychus, he's taken up dead. But what happens next? And Paul went down, verse 10, and fell on him.

And embracing him said, trouble not yourselves, for his life is in him. Whoa, Paul. Wow, how'd you know to do that, Paul? How'd you know to go and throw yourself on this guy?

You know, we've looked all through here. We'll say Paul purposed in the Spirit, and Paul had heard by the Spirit, and Paul had heard from the Spirit. And Paul will tell us. He said, I came not to you with wisdom of man's words, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.

Just like when Jesus taught, and they said, man, we've never seen anybody teach with such authority. For he commands even the unclean spirits. And he commanded the lame to walk, and the deaf to hear, and the dead to be raised.

And so Paul, under the inspiration of the Spirit, goes down and says, trouble not yourself. His life is in him. You see, in Christ, death is not a big deal.

[28 : 27] We think of it as a big deal. Like, oh, I don't want to die. In Luke 8, 51 through 54, we have the end story of Jairus, who has come to Jesus because his daughter was sick.

If you remember, then Jesus gets kind of like sidetracked because of the woman with the issue of blood. And so by the time he's done talking with her, people come from Jairus' home, and they say, hey, don't trouble the master.

She's dead. It's too late. And Jesus turns to him. It's one of my favorite sections in Scripture. And just says, do not fear. Only believe. You just picture this big crowd.

He's talking with the woman. And the guy's like, hey, hey, Jairus. I'm sorry, your daughter's dead.

And Jesus just turns to him and says, do not fear. Only believe. And so they all go back, and they come into the house, and Jesus suffered no man to go in except Peter, James, and John.

Right? The ones that were in the special class. Not because of their holiness. They couldn't be left alone, I'm sure. You know, James and John, like, how do we get the fire down from heaven so we can smoke this town?

[29 : 26] Come with me, boys. Peter's sitting over there sharpening the only sword they have. What are you doing with that sword again, Peter? And James and John, and the father and the mother of the maidens.

So you have Jesus, Peter, James, and John, and her parents. And all wept and bewailed her, the people who were there mourning. And he said, don't weep. Don't weep. She's not dead, but sleeps.

And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead. They knew it from their perspective. She was, but from his. And he put them all out, and he took her by the hand and called, saying, maid, arise.

And then she stands up, and he says to them, hey, give her something to eat. Because, you know, her parents are standing there going. So he's like, no, she's not some ghost. She's not some special angel. She needs food. She's just been risen from the dead.

But death is no big deal in Christ. It's just sleep. For him, it's like, oh, it's no big deal. It's just sleep. So here we have for Eutychus, our young man who is very fortunate.

[30 : 24] The church at Troas, what do we see? They prioritize the gathering together to hear God's word above their natural comfort and need. They're going all night. They're tired.

They're hungry. But they're there. They prioritized that they had an opportunity to hear God's word. And by golly, they were going to be there, and they were going to hear. In Matthew, Jesus is praying in the garden.

And he takes with him again his special class of disciples there, the three. And he came to the disciples after he'd gone off and prayed, and he finds them asleep. And he said to Peter, could you not watch with me one hour?

Watch and pray that you enter not into temptation. Peter, I don't need you to pray for my sake. You need to pray for yours. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

This is not that for Eutychus. This is not an indictment against him that, oh, Eutychus, you should have stayed awake, buddy. I found this quote. There's also some evidence that Eutychus fought the sleep as best he could.

[31 : 26] The tenses of the Greek verbs portray poor Eutychus as being gradually overcome despite his struggle to remain awake. He's sunk down. And Eutychus, eventually, right, he falls from the window.

Was it a failing of his flesh? Should he have paid more attention? Should he have some caffeine? Not at all. Look at our natural abilities can only take us so far. But Eutychus lost his life in his pursuit of God's word.

And then we see God's response to that. He's like, oh, no, no, no. You know, and he raises him up again. And when Paul went down and fell on him and embracing him, said, trouble not yourselves, for his life is in him.

When he therefore was come up again and broken bread and eaten and talked a long while, even until break of day, so he departed. So he grabs Eutychus. They all go back upstairs. And he begins to teach again.

And it's like, wow. Man, Paul, what in the world is going on? If one of you dropped dead and we prayed for you and you popped back up to life, I don't think we'd be like, well, where were we?

[32 : 32] Let's keep going. I think we'd kind of be like, I think we need to just pray and thank the Lord and spend some time doing that. Paul goes back up and he's like, man, I'm hungry. That took a lot out of me.

Eutychus is like, took a lot out of you, Paul. And they go back and eat. And Paul begins to teach again. And you think, Paul, who do you think you are?

You just keep talking and talking and talking. Well, I think Paul had no confidence in himself. We know that. He said, I'm not sufficient of myself to think anything of myself. But he had absolute confidence in his message.

He knew what he had for these people. We're going to find out he's going to say to them that I withheld nothing from you that was good for your edification. He knew the message he had. He knew he wasn't going to see them again. And he was going to make sure that they got the best meal they could.

So we have one man, one voice with one message. So what will we fall for is the question. What is it we're going to fall for? Timothy tells us in 2 Timothy 4.

[33 : 36] He says, I charge you, therefore, before God. I think we read. Did we already read part of this? Yes, we did. Verse 13 and 16. But this is in the beginning of the chapter. He says, I charge you before God, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead that is appearing in his kingdom.

Preach the word. Be instant in season and out of season. Reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine. But

after their own lusts, they shall heap to themselves teachers having itching ears. And they shall turn away their ears from the truth. I shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, and do afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of your ministry. Timothy, the time is going to come where they're going to fall. They're not going to fall for the word. They're going to fall for anything that's entertaining and interesting. Eutychus fell asleep. He wasn't being entertained. He was being taught the word of God. And he was tired and he fell asleep. But he was there. Jude 1.24 tells us that we can be kept from falling. Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.

[34 : 39] Obviously, it's not the same falling as Eutychus. But the Lord is able to keep us from falling away from the word. I guess you could say Eutychus fell away from the word. About three stories away.

And Paul went down and embraced him. Right? He fell on him. And then they came up and they continued to eat until the break of day. Or teach, I'm sorry. And so he departed. The miracle, while amazing, did not become the focus or take the place of God's word.

Which is just amazing to me. A true miracle of God should always point people back to the word of God. And that's what happened here in this situation. And they brought the young man alive and were not a little comforted.

You know the church at Troas would never forget this night. And they would never forget what they were taught. And you know Eutychus won't either. You know the rest of that message with Paul, he was, the rest of that night, he was just there locked on.

And I remember on 17, we were talking about this a little bit beforehand. When I went to that Christian camp, very strange Christian camp. Doctrine wasn't all right on. But the Lord used it to get me out of my comfort zone. And just to speak to me and break me off.

[35 : 43] Well, one of the first times he broke me off myself. There's many more after that. Just ask my wife. And just turned my heart towards him. He baptized me in his Holy Spirit. And man, after that rest of that camp, I was like supercharged for Jesus.

Couldn't get enough. Like give me some more teaching. Came home. I was like, yes, let's go to church whenever we can. Let's get more teaching. It was great. It was amazing because of the work that God had done. It was a true work of God because it turned my heart to the Lord.

The story of Eutychus is not just the remarkable account of a young man raised from the dead. That is remarkable. Extremely. But that of a young man who prioritized being at church at the cost of his own life.

Eutychus gave his life to gather with the saints. Matthew 16, 25. Whoever will save his life shall lose it. Whoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. And that was a direct application of that scripture.

He lost his life for the sake of the word. And he found it again. A couple more verses. And we went before to ship and sailed unto Asos. There intending to take in Paul.

[36 : 50] For so he had appointed, minding himself to go on foot. So Paul's going to travel on foot briefly. While he sends everybody else ahead, including Luke. And if you look under the top red arrow, you see Asos right there.

And so Paul is walking from Troas. I'm sorry. He's walking to Asos. Yeah. So Paul decides to take a walk. We're going to find out that he's going to tell the Ephesian elders that he's like, you will see my face no more because the Holy Spirit witnesses to me that in every place bonds and persecution await me.

So it's possible that he had received a word from the Lord that, hey, Jerusalem, this is what's going to happen. And so maybe he's walking. He's alone. He wants to process this. For whatever reason, Paul needed some alone time.

So he decides he's going to walk it from here. Paul was minded to go afoot. There is no question of Paul's leadership. Nobody else said, Paul, I'm taking charge of this. There was no question of that. Paul's leadership was not in doubt, but Paul's leadership was not to lay heavy burdens on people or to lord it over them.

Jesus said in Matthew 23, call no man, your father upon the earth for one is your father, which is in heaven. Neither be called masters for one is your master, even Christ, but he that is greatest among you shall be your servant and whosoever shall exalt himself.

[38 : 11] She'll be a base. He that shall humble himself. She'll be exalted. So he's saying, hey, how do you find a leader? Look for a servant. Look for somebody humble. That's how you find your leaders.

And so Paul, his priorities, they were not about his whims, feelings, or moods. He was purposed to go to Jerusalem. He was purposed to get there. And that's where he's going. But I was thinking about this scripture here where it tells us all these places that he went.

Verse 15, where it says that, And they sailed since they, and we sailed thence and came to the next day over against Chaios. And the next day we arrived at Samos and tarried at Troglimum.

And the next day we came to Miletus. And Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus because he would not spend time in Asia for he hasted if it were possible for him to be at Jerusalem for the day of Pentecost.

Here we see that Paul didn't just go off of whims. So I'll go see my friends. He's like, no, I have a goal and I need to get there. But you read all these places and it's like, okay, they're just these places, you know, whatever.

[39 : 20] But it made me think that ministry is more than the final product. I was thinking about that with just having gone out to Calvary Bible Institute and had the privilege to teach out there. And for the students, they got all of that at once, you know, two days, a day and a half.

Boom. And it's like, oh, wow, that's great. Then they get, the next day they get another teacher. The next week, another one. So for them, it's like, they just get that final product. That's great. But there's a lot of prep. There's a lot of legwork that goes into that.

And so here you see with Paul, it's not just about the final product. He traveled to all these places and we have no description of what he does there. But you know what he did there. You know, he met with any of the church that were there. You know, he preached the gospel.

And you know, this is all part of God bringing him to a final destination. But ministry is so much more than the final product. And we all know that, right? And we've all been around with planting a church, with helping another church.

And just, there's always so much that goes on. It used to make me laugh when we were at Riverbend. I'm sure it's still the same for you guys. You know, we'd get there at like dark o'clock. You set up.

[40 : 20] You get the chairs all set up. You get the heat on. Everything's going. The coffee's going. People show up and you hear them go, I just love it that we can just come here and like, just be outside and sit and hear the word and go home.

It's like, oh, I'm so glad you're blessed. That's wonderful. Or you get the people that want to give you suggestions. Well, I think you should do it this way. This, this, this, this. That's a great idea. You know, why don't you meet me here and we'll do that?

They never show up. I was like, well, then we're doing it my way. But there's a lot more to ministry than just the final product. So as we end, what will we fall for, right?

Peter tells us in 1 Peter chapter 2, verse 20, he says, For what glory is it? If when you be buffeted for your faults, you take it patiently. But if when you do well and suffer for it, man, if you're seeking the Lord and you fall out a window or get run over and die, this is acceptable with God.

For even here unto where you called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that you should follow his steps. And here's Eutychus. He's tired, probably hungry. Maybe he'd worked all day.

[41 : 27] That was a thought too, that on Sunday was a work day. It was not a day off at this time. And that's why they met in the afternoon and into the evening. Man, but he was there. He was there. Paul will tell the Corinthians when he writes that second letter in chapter 12, verse 15, he says, And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you.

A just man falls seven times and rises up again, but the wicked shall fall into mischief. No matter how many times she pulled the football away, how many times Charlie Brown fell, he was back to kick it again.

So it doesn't always mean a just man will fall into sin seven times, right? We do not always fall into, have to fall into sin. Eutychus fell, but not from sin. That wasn't the reason he fell.

Eutychus understood how fortunate he was to hear God's word spoken by the apostle Paul. He pushed himself to the limit of his natural resources for the sake of God's word. It was only after those resources failed, and he fell, not into sin, but because of the weakness of a sinful flesh, that

he was able to then experience God's resources that went far beyond his own abilities. Yes, he fell, but not into sin. And as we read in Jude, now unto him that is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. And if you do fall, for whatever reason, just like Eutychus, you just get back up and you keep going. [42 : 51] So Lord, thank you so much for your word. Thank you for this time of just looking at this funny story, Lord. Again, the Bible cannot be used for entertainment. You cannot strip out the message from the Bible and turn it into something it's not.

You cannot turn it into entertainment. You cannot turn it into just an academic exercise or lecture. The message is always there. It's contained therein. And Lord, we are never given the freedom to separate that out from your word.

But Lord, the Bible sure is entertaining. There sure are some funny things in there, Lord. But they're beautiful because they show us your grace, your love. Lord, they show us the way you see things. They're so different from us, Lord. Lord, death is nothing to you. It's like sleeping. If we didn't know what sleep was and we saw someone just laying there asleep, you would think they're dead, especially the way some people sleep.

You know, you might think, that guy's dead. He's not moving. Look at him. But we know, no, he's just sleeping. Let me show you how this works. And we wake him up and he gets up. And well, Lord, that's what death is to you. You're like, why are you so upset about this? It's just an awakening.

[43 : 51] Man, but we don't wake up, Lord, in the same place. We wake up in eternity. Look forward to that day, Lord. Lord, we pray you'd come and get us because we know we'll be resurrected, Lord.

At the last trump, Lord, the dead in Christ shall rise first. And then we which remain shall be caught up together with him. Lord, we'll all be resurrected. We'll all be transformed. We want to go, Lord, while we're still alive.

But either way, Lord, whether you come and get us from sleep or whether you come and get us when we're awake. Help us to be watching, Lord. Help us to be like Eutychus, recognizing how fortunate we are that we can come.

We can gather together with the saints. No matter how big or how small, where it is, we can hear the word of God. And Lord, help us to push past when our flesh isn't in sin.

It's just affected by the fall. And I don't want to read or I don't want to pray. I don't want to go in fellowship. Lord, help me to push past because, Lord, maybe that night is the night we're going to get to experience an amazing miracle.

[44 : 52] But Lord, help us to recognize that every time we hear from your word, it's a miracle. Because we have the Holy Spirit. We love you. We thank you. In Jesus' name, amen.