



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

6420 Churchill Way | Dallas, Texas | 75230 | t 972.239.5371 | believerschapeldallas.org

The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Acts 18:18 - 19:17

“Great Lion of God - Paul’s Third Missionary Journey - I”

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] Father, we are grateful to Thee for the privilege to open again the Scriptures and we thank Thee for the power of the word of God and for the way it ministers to us and to our needs. We thank Thee for the privilege of having the Johnsons here with us, and we particularly pray for them and their ministry in Bartlesville and Thou wilt supply the needs that exist there and may the testimony to the grace of God there be blessed by Thee. And Lord if it should please Thee may a number come to find the Lord Jesus as their own personal savior, and may the saints of God be strengthened and edified in the things of the Lord.

We commit [names redacted] to Thee and their family, all of their children. We pray, Lord, Thy blessing upon them, supply their needs, and minister through them to the strengthening and increasing of the body of Christ. For Jesus’ sake. Amen.

[Message] We are going to tonight begin reading at Acts chapter 18, and verse 18. Remember in our last study together the apostle had been in Thessalonica, he had then come down to the city of Athens. He had ministered in Corinth and taught in the synagogues, and now in Acts chapter 18, and verse 18, Luke continues,

“And Paul after this tarried there yet a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila; having shorn his head in Cenchrea: for he had a vow. And he came to Ephesus, and left them there, (so in other words he made the stop in Ephesus on the way down to Syria,) but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews. When they desired him to tarry longer time with them, he consented not; but bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus. And when he had landed at Caesarea, and gone up, and saluted the church, he went down to Antioch. And after he had spent some time there, he departed, and went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples. (Now you recognize that he is beginning his third missionary journey here, for he has come to Antioch and Syria. He has reported to them but now he is making his way back over again some of the territory that he went over in his first missionary journey. And in verse 24 we read,) And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus. This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly. (Now some of you may have a translation in which the order of those words is reversed and not Aquila and Priscilla, but Priscilla and Aquila. And that is likely the wording of the text that Paul wrote. Verse 27,) And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace: For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ. And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, he said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye

believed? (Now again, let me say that no doubt those of you who have a New American Standard Bible have something like this before you, ‘Did you receive the Holy Spirit, or Holy Ghost, when ye believed,’ not, ‘Have you received the Holy Ghost since you believed.’ But, ‘Did you receive the Holy Ghost when you believed.’ So the question was not whether they had after their belief in Jesus Christ at a later time received the Holy Spirit, the question was, ‘Did you, when you believed in Christ, receive the Holy Spirit.’ It’s evident from that that Paul expected that believers should receive the Holy Spirit when they believed in Christ, not afterwards. Now they answer and say,) We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost, (now we’ll talk about that statement which seems rather strange if you remember that John the Baptist who was their leader and teacher, at least ultimately their teacher from what they say, was a person who did speak often about the Holy Spirit. So they say, ‘We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.’) And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.”

This is the first of our studies in the third missionary journey of the Apostle Paul and as you can see Ephesus becomes a very important place in this third missionary journey. As we shall learn, he spent three years in Ephesus. Some of you who have traveled around the East and have traveled where Paul has been know that when you come to Ephesus there are rather extensive ruins in that city today. And this is the place in which Paul carried on his ministry many times, but of course this time particularly. For three years he engaged in the exposition of the word of God.

The incident that occurred when Paul came to Ephesus on his third missionary journey is one of the most interesting in the Book of Acts, in my opinion. It certainly indicates that a great dispensational change in God’s program when Jesus Christ came and when the cross transpired. When the ministry of John the Baptist was finished and the new age began a great change did take place. The new age, we know from the remainder of the New Testament, is an age that brought greater gifts. The gift of the Holy Spirit as a permanent indwelling presence was something that the old covenant age did not know. The enablements that the Holy Spirit provides, so far as we can tell, are more universal in character than they were in the Old Testament. We don’t want to say, for example, that a New Testament saint because of the presence of the Holy Spirit is able to live a greater life than Abraham or Jacob. But certainly the manifestation of the gift of the Spirit is universal indwelling, is universal enabling power, among believers is great in extent than existed in the Old Testament.

And furthermore, there is a greater assurance of the possession of the blessings of God through the things that have come when Jesus Christ has died on the cross and the Holy Spirit has come. And all of the saints of God are now indwelt permanently by the Holy Spirit. It affords us, also, an insight into one of the essential evidences of Christianity. And that is, the possession of the Holy Spirit. There was something about these disciples of John that caused the apostle to doubt whether they really had an understanding and possession of what one has when he believes in Jesus Christ today. Because he asked them when he saw them, “Did you receive the Holy Ghost when you believed?”

Now there must have been something about them that caused the apostle to ask this question. What it was, of course, we are not told. We do know this, that the apostle himself says in the epistle that he wrote to the Romans, “He that hath not the Spirit of Christ is none of his.” And so he expected fully that every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ would manifest that fact by some evidence of the possession and working of the

Holy Spirit in his life. It’s rather an interesting thing, too, I think that he asked them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” He did not say to them, “Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?”

Now that is characteristic of the creeds. They say, “I believe in God the Father, I believe in Jesus Christ his Son, I believe in the Holy Ghost.” But the apostle asked them not, “Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?” but, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?”

Now I don’t want to make the point that some men have made, like James Denny made. James Denny made the point that it was entirely foreign to the New Testament to ask the question, “Do you believe in the Holy Ghost?” And he made the point that the relationship to the Holy Spirit is an experiential relationship and that’s the way we ought to leave it. That the church creeds, in effect, have distorted the New Testament when they affirm of those who affirm them that one should believe in the Holy Spirit. That’s perfectly alright to believe in the Holy Spirit. But, of course, it is also important that we should know and experience the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. We do not want to oppose these two things; to believe in something and to experience something. That is to fall into the kind of error that many of the charismatics have fallen in today in which they judge truth by the Christian experiences that are not necessarily weighted to the words of the Scriptures. But the apostle expected that when a believer in Jesus Christ appeared and lived in the midst of the people of his day that there would be some evidence of the faith that he had. “He that hath not the Spirit of Christ is none of his.”

Now of course, that is true of us. We should be amenable to the examination of ourselves. Is there evidence that we truly do possess the Holy Spirit? Could one see some evidence of the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives?

Well if I were talking just purely theoretically it’s possible for me to say, and I would say, it’s not necessary that I see that in you, but there does have to be the manifestation of the salvation that God has provided. Either solely to him or in the midst

of the saints there has to be an issue from the fact of salvation. Salvation must issue in some Christian work, visible or invisible. In fact, as we have said more than once, when a person, having been regenerated by the Holy Spirit, turns to the Lord and says, “Lord I believe I accept the saving work of Christ,” that’s response to the work of God in the heart.

So the apostle here, I think, lays stress upon the fact that an essential evidence of Christianity is the possession of the Holy Spirit. If you want to know how to distinguish a Christian from a non-Christian it’s in the possession of the Holy Spirit. All Christians possess the permanent indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. All non-Christians do not. That’s the dividing of the Christians from the non-Christians.

It’s natural that John the Baptist should depart the New Testament scene here. Of course, John was a noble man. He was the last and greatest of the Old Testament prophets, mistaken for the Messiah. He stirred the nation very deeply by the preaching that he was given by God. He won some of the choicest spirits in the New Testament, for remember Andrew, and Philip, and John, and James were converts, so far as we can tell, of the preaching of John the Baptist. And so to minimize John the Baptist is to minimize the one who followed him and he one to whom John the Baptist pointed. So we don’t want to minimize John the Baptist when we look at what happened in Ephesus but we do want to put his ministry in its proper dispensational setting.

Now again, there is nothing wrong with the term dispensational providing we use it properly. That’s what I think we are doing. We are talking about the significance of John the Baptists’ ministry in the ongoing progressive revelation of God. Well now, coming back to chapter 18, and verse 18, Luke describes the Apostle Paul’s journey from Corinth on back to the city of Antioch. And he prepares for a description of the Ephesian work by the entrance into the account of Apollos. Apollos is one of those very important men in the New Testament and Ephesus is one of the very important cities.

Remember, not only did the apostle write a letter to the church at Ephesus, our Lord also wrote a letter to the church at Ephesus in the Book of Revelation. And if one reads the Book of Acts then, of course, you know how important it is in the work of the Lord there.

Now in verse 24 through verse 28, Luke describes this very interesting little incident in which Apollos comes to Ephesus instructed in the way of the Lord and fervent in the Spirit and spoke diligently, knowing only the baptism of John. It’s a lovely picture of the patron saint of Christian evidenced societies. In fact, all of our apologetic societies, I guess, should take their name after Apollos because that’s what he was. He was one of the great apologists for Christianity.

Notice the thing that Luke says about him. First of all, he’s a Jew. And then notice that he came from Alexandria. Now Alexandria was a center of learning. Alexandria had been founded by Alexander the Great. It was the place where there was a great building dedicated to the muses and called the museum and we know it from our history books as the great library at Alexandria. It contained five hundred thousand volumes so it was an exceedingly large library for libraries of that time. But this man Apollos is a man who is a Jew and from Alexandria, and in addition we read he is mighty in the Scriptures.

So we can just imagine him as being a very eloquent man, a man who spoke very beautifully, a man who also was acquainted with the learning of the East. On top of that, being a Jewish man he had an understanding of Judaism. A man who perhaps knew some of the things that all of the Alexandrians knew. Euclid, for example, was an Alexandrian and his theorem had its origin there. Philo, one of the great Jewish teachers was from Alexandria. And when you think about Apollos you realize how rich the early church was in unusual men.

As you might expect, Apollos came something of a divisive force in the church at Corinth, when he left Ephesus and went to Corinth not by his will but simply because he

was a man of unusual skills. And so in the church at Corinth which was a relatively carnal church it’s not long before, as we read in 1st Corinthians, Paul has to write to them. And he says, “I hear that some of you are saying, I am of Paul, I am of Cephas, I am of Apollos.” And then there were some who wanted to be more scriptural and so they would say, “I am of Christ.”

Now some people say they were saying that wrongly and were just as sectarian as the others. Perhaps so, but it’s not certain. They really may have honestly thought that the thing to do is to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, but at least men were saying, “I am of Apollos.” Apollos didn’t have anything to do with that, it was the people in Corinth who responded in the wrong way.

You know, you can see something of the value of variety in the work of the Lord. The Apostle Paul came on the scene in Corinth and he spoke very plainly. He did not use excellency of speech or special eloquence. He said he didn’t do it for a particular purpose and the purpose was that men might see that conversion takes place by the power of God. He said, “I want your faith to rest in the power of God and not in the power of excellency of speech.” So there is Paul who spoke in plain speech, there is Apollos who was a brilliant orator, there was Peter who was connected so closely with the Lord Jesus Christ, and others no doubt. But it is an illustration of the fact that there is value in variety. I think also in Christian church it’s good to have this, too. Some people want some things, others want others. Some like the security of a large organization and so they’d love to have a church that is large with many members. Some like a church that conforms to other churches, they don’t like to be different and so they like to go to a church that is essentially the same kind of church that their friends are in. And then there’s some who like to go to a church to have friends and fellowship. And some like to go to a church in order to avoid people who want to hang on them that way. They want to study the word of God, as they say, and they want to leave and not be pestered by

people who pat them on the back. I think it’s one of the great things in the Christian church that there is variety and personally I like variety.

And it must have been an unusual early church with men like Paul, men like Peter, men like Apollos. And then there were many men that we don’t even know about who were unusual men, such as the man who wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews. No one knows anything about this man and yet he wrote that magnificent epistle. It gives you an indication of some of the great minds and hearts that existed in the local churches of the days of Paul.

It is said of Apollos here that he was instructed in the Lord, in the way of the Lord. In other words, he knew accurately the message of expectation. But he did not know what the apostle knew because he evidently had not yet heard of the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. He knew the prophecies. In fact, the expression, “The way of the Lord,” is an expression that comes from Isaiah chapter 40, in which the Prophet Isaiah spoke about the forerunner who would come before the Lord came. And so John the Baptist knew that and Apollos, one of his disciples, had been taught in the way of the Lord.

So he knew the baptism of John and he came into the synagogue and he began to preach. You know, Apollos was preaching just as if Peter and John would have preached if they had left the land of Palestine during the ministry of John the Baptist. If they had just simply left and if they had gone off to the west somewhere and then for several years had been there and then not heard about the things that had happened in the land, well then they would not know much more than just the baptism of John the Baptist and the announcement that the king was soon to come. These individuals, evidently, had a similar experience.

So he came and he began to preach in the synagogue in Ephesus and when Aquila and Priscilla had heard I can just imagine them coming Sunday after Sunday, or Saturday night after Saturday night, or Sunday morning after Sunday morning, whenever

the church in Ephesus met. And I can imagine them leaving and saying, “You know, this young man has great skills but he doesn’t seem to know anything about the Lord Jesus Christ and the cross. And he doesn’t seem to know anything about the coming of the Holy Spirit. And so they listened to him some more, they were impressed by his knowledge of the Old Testament and how the Old Testament prophesied that there was coming someone who would be the Messianic King, but still that missing note.

And finally they did, of course, a whole lot differently from the way we would have done it. We would have done it differently. We would have started criticizing immediately and saying, “The fellow doesn’t know any biblical doctrine.” And we would have had the church in an uproar before long because they were having this fellow in who is just an amateur fellow.

But they did the right thing. They said, “Apollos, why don’t you come home and have Sunday dinner with us,” and so they took him unto them. And the text says, by the way, “Priscilla and Aquila took him unto them.” So they evidently ask him if he would come and have a private conversation with them. And as you know, I mentioned a moment ago that the text does apparently say that it was Priscilla and Aquila and not Aquila and Priscilla. And some have suggested that the reason for this is that Priscilla was probably the better taught of the two and that’s why Luke mentions that she came first, and therefore she took the lead in the conversation that ensued.

Well I don’t know whether that she really knew more than Aquila or not, although I’m willing to grant that she did take the lead in the conversation. But whether she knew more or not I just wanted to see if you were awake [laughter] and some of you are. No, it’s likely that she was, perhaps, the better instructed of the two. And they sat down with Apollos and they said, “Look Apollos, we’ve noticed that there is something missing in your message. You seem to know only the way of God, and you don’t seem to know anything about the fact that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah.” I can imagine him saying,

“Jesus of Nazareth? Who is he?” And then they unfolded to him the things that they had learned from the Apostle Paul with whom they had lived.

And so we read, “They expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.” So now this great expositor of the Old Testament Scriptures, mighty in the Old Testament, has had that which in a sense completes what he has come to know so far. They don’t denounce him, they instruct him. And in kindly counsel these two old tent makers, around fried chicken no doubt [laughter]. You preachers would understand. Around fried chicken brought him into a deeper knowledge of the word of God. And we read, “And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, (that is to go back to Greece,) the brethren wrote.” Notice by the way, they use letters of commendation. In those days it was particularly useful because it was true that many of the ancients preyed on the Christians because they’re a gullible lot. And one only has to know what’s happening in evangelicalism today to know how gullible evangelical Christians are. They’re supporting many works that are really operated by conmen under the name of Christianity. So they had commendation letters. And they wrote, “And they wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive Apollos: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace.”

You notice, by the way, that again faith is seen to be the gift of God. They believed through grace. “For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ.” I can just see how Apollos came and how for them it was such a magnificent thing to listen to this great man, now having come to understand the things that the Old Testament pointed forward to and to be able to tell them that they have now transpired in the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ, and to see him magnificently refute the false teaching that was taking place in the synagogues. It must have been one of the great moments in the ancient history of the church of Jesus Christ.

Well it came to pass about that time while Apollos was in Corinth doing those great things Paul, having passed through the upper coasts, came to Ephesus. And of course, he came to Ephesus and Aquila and Priscilla were there, they were his old friends, they had lived together in Corinth, and there he found certain disciples.

Now evidently some of these individuals were still around in Asia Minor who had been disciples of John the Baptist and had still, like Apollos, not yet come to understand that Christ had come. So Paul found these certain disciples and he said unto them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” So sensing that something was missing he asked them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” He didn’t say to them, “Do you love the Lord?” Everybody will answer usually in the quote Christian unquote west, “Oh yes, we love the Lord.”

He asked them a very specific, theological question, “Did you receive the Lord, the Holy Spirit, when you believed?” And, of course, they reply, “Why, we have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.” Now obviously that should not be taken in its literal sense because all of John the Baptist disciples heard of the Holy Spirit. If you turn back to the Book of Matthew and the Book of Luke where the ministry of John is unfolding in a bit of detail he mentions specifically the ministry of the Holy Spirit and lays stress upon it. He says, “I baptize you with water, there comes one after you, he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.” So that was a prime point in John the Baptist’s message. What they mean when they say, “We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Spirit,” is, “We have not so much as heard whether the Holy Spirit has been given.” That is, he has come in the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecy. So the apostle explains to them the significance of the ministry of the Lord.

He said to them, “Under what were you baptized?” They said, “Unto John’s baptism.” He said, “Ah, now I see the problem.” And so in the 4th verse Paul says, “John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him that should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.” So he said the reason

that John baptized was people came to John to confess their sins, they confessed that they had repented, and they were baptized in confession of their own need of the forgiveness of sins, and they were baptized in token of the fact that they not only had confessed their sins but they had also believed the message of John and that they were now looking forward to the coming of the one who should come.

Now Paul, of course, identifies that person because he knows, now, his particular name. He says that they should believe on him which should come after him. That is, on Christ Jesus. So what Paul does is to say simply, “John Baptized because he was bringing people to believe on the one who should come and I can tell you now his name is Christ Jesus.”

You know, occasionally you have people say the Old Testament saints could not have believed any personal redeemer who was to come. Well Paul denies that right here. John the Baptist ministered in old covenant days, before the time of the cross. John the Baptist and the men of his day lived under the Law of Moses, but nevertheless John told them that they were to believe on one who was to come. So it’s perfectly proper to have a faith in the old covenant times of one who is to come. “Now when they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.”

Tongues were a sign to the Jews. So the apostle states in 1st Corinthians chapter 14, “Tongues were assigned to the Jews that God was with this new Messianic movement. It was a miraculous thing for a person to speak in a known language which he had never studied.” And if anyone thinks that is not a miraculous thing try to learn a foreign language and try to speak in that foreign language just take a few lessons in French, or German, or Dutch, or whatever it is, and you will discover that it would be a miracle for an individual to be able to speak a language which he had never studied.

In the Book of Acts the terms that are used for the dialects are terms that refer to known languages. In every reference they are references to known languages. When we say speaking in tongues we are not talking of ecstatic speech. Ecstatic speech is not speaking in tongues. Speaking in tongues, biblically, is to speak in a language which has never been learned. Now that is why it is a miracle. That’s why for it to occur one would, by the very fact that it occurred, realize that the hand of God was in what was happening.

So when Paul laid his hands upon them and the Holy Ghost came on them and they, “Spake with tongues,” it was in evidence to all that the hand of God was upon what was transpiring. And we read, “And they also prophesied.” Now we have talked about prophesying for several times previously, there’s no need to repeat it. But to prophesy is to give revelation, and so they gave revelation. To prophecy is not to teach. To prophesy is to give revelation. The revelation may be of the future, it may be predictive revelation. But it also may be of the present, it may be moral exhortation. The characteristic of prophecy is that it is revelation. And that is what took place, “They spake with tongues, and they prophesied.”

Well it’s a magnificent experience that the apostle had and one can see in the incident how important it was for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to take place, what tremendous changes took place, and what was the significance of the fact that the blood was shed on Calvary’s cross.

Some years ago in the Christian grade school in Dallas in the early days of the school which now is I think essentially what is the academy to the north of us here. There were many teachers who were teaching who were not overly qualified, they were sufficiently qualified. But there were many things that were lacking in the school in the early days. They didn’t have proper art teachers and things like that but it was a beginning, at least. And I can remember many years back when in the course of the growth of that school which met over in the east of Dallas that occasionally the word

would go out to the seminary. They need a teacher in art, or they need a teacher in this, and some seminary wife who had had some experience would be called upon. Or even some faculty wife might be called upon to do something for awhile. And I remember one year [name redacted] who is the wife of the librarian at Dallas Seminary mentioning the fact that the Christian grade school needed an art teacher. And she said, “You know, it’s a pitiful thing. Three years ago the call went out for an art teacher and they obtained a teacher who knew a little bit about art but she was not really qualified. She came in and she taught the children how to draw lighthouses.” And she said, “It’s been three years since that time and every class at the Christian grade school now is drawing only lighthouses.” [Laughter]

Well, you know, that illustrates, it seems to me, on a kind of different level what had happened with these disciples who had John’s ministry. But that’s all they had. They had not heard of what had transpired in Jerusalem. So in a sense they were still preaching about lighthouses and hadn’t known the fullness of the revelation in the Lord Jesus Christ. And that’s what transpired when Paul came after Apollos had been there, too, and preached the things that concern the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let me just conclude by saying this, for our time is up. One of the important things that appears we should not miss and that is that nothing less than the actual reception of the Holy Spirit is genuine Christianity. This particular thing is so real and so vital, and so important that even Simon Magus, who is not a believer so far as I can tell, wanted to have the Holy Spirit. You see, it’s not enough to have an intellectual conviction of the preeminence of the Lord Jesus Christ. There are people who have a conviction of the greatness of Christ who have not yet come to a personal trust in him. It’s not enough to have made an outward decision to adopt the plans and purposes and ethics and life of Christ; that is, his teaching. It’s not enough to have decided to imitate his example. One must have him who is the life of God. And one has him through the

ministry of the Holy Spirit. And the presence of the Holy Spirit is the evidence of the reality.

The Old Testament saints had a measure of the power of the Holy Spirit, he was with them. But in New Testament times the Lord Jesus says he is within all of us. To point any seeking souls to the way of life, notice the clue in chapter 18, verse 27, “Believed through grace.” One notices a progression through Acts. We’ve had, for example, “As many as were ordained to eternal life believed,” Acts chapter 13, and verse 48. Then in chapter 16, verse 14 we read that the Lord opened the heart of Lydia. And now here they believed through grace. You put all this together, of course, and you see that it is God who opens hearts and he opens hearts in accordance with his eternal election in ages past, “As many as were ordained to life,” and he only does it on the principle of divine grace. There isn’t one thing in any one of us to which we can point and say, “This is the reason why we possess eternal life.” There is no reason except the love of God in Christ.

Well I wish it were possible to speak further about this but our time is up. In fact, it’s a few minutes past and so we stop here and we pick this up again next week in Paul’s third missionary journey. Let’s bow together in a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we thank Thee for the privilege of the study of the word of God and we, again, express to Thee our gratitude for all that has been done for us through Christ. We thank Thee for Apollos, and for Paul, and for these disciples of John the Baptist who ultimately came to the understanding of the full significance of the saving work of Jesus Christ. Lord, we pray that Thou wilt enable us to be bold witnesses for him who has loved us from ages past. Unworthy, undone...

[RECORDING ENDS ABRUPTLY]