

Acts Bible Study - Part 5

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[0 : 00] Well, let me just say a little word of prayer and then we'll go to Acts. Wonderful. Oh, Lord, we come to you in this crazy season that just doesn't seem to stop.

We pray for you to continuously help us to navigate and continue to be inspired by your word and be connected to one another.

And Lord, we just pray hedges of protection around so many people, everyone we wish. And we just offer you our thanks and our love in Jesus name.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Okay. So what I thought we'd do, I have some commentary and stuff about the passage and about Peter because we're going to be getting, this is Peter's turn to turn to talk.

But I thought that it would be in some ways we would look back at those things through the lens of having at least read some of it.

[1 : 15] So my thought is if you would read the first 11 verses and then I'll read from 12 to 22. Great.

And which chapter are we in? Four. Four. Yeah. Okay. No, that's okay. And I, um, I grabbed my Christian standard Bible study Bible.

So it'll be different than my NIV. Oh, okay. Yeah. And what do you, what version do you have? I have, um, NRSV revised standard. Oh, yeah. I picked this one because I liked the cover.

It's beautiful. I would pick it for the cover too. It really is a nice study Bible, but I kind of, it's like shoes, shoes and Bibles. I like. Okay.

And this one is headed the opposition to Christianity in Jerusalem, the arrest of Peter and John. While they were speaking to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple police and the Sadducees confronted them because they were annoyed that they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead.

[2 : 23] So they seized them and took them into custody until the next day, since it was already evening. But many of those who heard the message believed and the number of the men came to about 5,000.

The next day, their rulers, elders, and scribes assembled in Jerusalem with Annas, the high priest, Caiaphas, John, Alexander, and all the members of the high priestly family.

After they had Peter and John stand before them, they began to question them. By what power or in what name have you done this? Then Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit and said to them, rulers of the people and elders, if we are being examined today about a good deed done to a disabled man, by what means he was healed?

Let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified and whom God raised from the dead, by him this man is standing here before you healthy.

This Jesus is the stone rejected by you builders, which has become the cornerstone. There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved.

[3 : 45] Now, when they saw the boldness of Peter and John and realized that they were uneducated and ordinary men, they were amazed and recognized them as companions of Jesus.

When they saw the man who had been cured standing beside them, they had nothing to say in opposition. So they ordered them to leave the council while they discussed the matter with one another.

And they said, what will we do with them? For it's obvious to all who live in Jerusalem that a notable sign has been done through them. We cannot deny it. But to keep it from spreading further among the people, let us warn them to speak no more to anyone in this name.

So they called them and ordered them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered them, whether it is right in God's sight to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge.

For we cannot keep from speaking about what we have seen and heard. After threatening them again, they let them go, finding no way to punish them because of the people.

[4 : 51] For all of them praised God for what had happened. For the man on whom this sign of healing had been performed was more than 40 years old. I love like 40 is ancient.

And back then, quite old. Yeah, probably was. Yeah. But then they easily talk about people being 900 and stuff like that.

Yeah. And I thought that. Let's see. We're just going to go. We'll just we'll just keep going.

Why don't you read from 23 to through 31 and then I'll read the rest. OK, great. This is titled The Prayer for Boldness.

After they were released, they went to their own people and reported everything the chief priests and the elders had said to them. When they heard this, they raised their voices together in God to God and said, Master, you are the one who made the heaven, the earth and the sea and everything in them.

[6 : 01] You said that through the Holy Spirit, by the mouth of our father, David, your servant. Why do the Gentiles rage and the peoples plot futile things?

The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers assemble together against the Lord and against his Messiah. For, in fact, in this city, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, assembled together against your holy servant, Jesus, whom you anointed to do whatever your hand and your will had predestined to take place.

And now, Lord, consider their threats and grant that your servants may speak your word with all boldness while you stretch out your hand for healing and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant, Jesus.

When they had prayed, the place where they were assembled was shaken and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God boldly. The next section of mine is called The Believers Share Their Possessions.

Now, the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common.

[7 : 22] With great power, the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold.

They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had a need. There was a Levite, a native of Cyprus, Joseph, to whom the apostles gave the name Barnabas, which means son of encouragement.

He sold a field that belonged to him and then brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet. Wow. Yeah.

A pretty good response, huh? Uh-huh. I think about the, you know, in the 32, now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and one soul, and no one claimed private ownership of anything.

Yeah. Everything held in common. How does yours sound? Yeah, very similar. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but instead they held everything in common.

[8 : 30] Not a needy person among them. I know. That's pretty amazing. Yeah. They, so part of when I was looking things up about this, I thought it was interesting to learn some things about Peter.

Peter, because Peter, we, we think of Peter as the person who denied Jesus. Right. And that tends to be at least a part of where he gets his reputation, part of his reputation.

He ended up being, many people called him the head of the apostles. He was a bishop. There was, they talked about him being, you know, such a speaker, and which is pretty significant considering how we hear about him early in the story.

And he, he was one of the first disciples to be called. He was, he and his brother. And they, in, in reading, and I, you know, I've, I've looked some at what, how you would describe some of the fishermen that were called to be disciples.

And they, the, the description that I read this week was about that fishermen were burly, uncouth, scraggly, not clean.

[10 : 05] You know, people, they were the guys hanging out down by the water and not always appropriate. Yeah. And so, and I, I found that that was, that what, I wondered why that mattered.

Because people in general were different, but part of it stems from a description of Peter before he meets Jesus as, as, and even when he meets Jesus is considering himself to be a great sinner.

That, that he was, he was unworthy of being called as a disciple. He would say that about himself. And yet, as one of the first ones called, he just went.

Yeah. He also was the first one to know. He might not have been the first one to know that Jesus was the Savior, but he was the first one to identify it.

Right. Right. And so it's, it's quite interesting. And they, some of the stuff talked about that when he said that to this slave girl or whatever she was, when he denied Jesus, that he, that it was very likely sort of a mumbly conversation.

[11 : 23] And, you know, she identifies him and he was just kind of like, you know, just kind of caught. And, and, which I thought was interesting as we think about our own culture and people, how people respond when someone either confronts them or asks them about their faith.

I think that a lot of people might feel pretty mumble mouthed. Yeah. Yeah. And that's when you were, when you were growing up or in the, the, the Sunday school Bible study classes, do you think that you were around or have worked with the kids that you've worked with about telling their faith story?

You know, we have a little bit, and the thing that I always have thought about ever since I heard it happen.

And I think it was 1999 in Columbine in Colorado, where the young woman, you know, had a gun pointed at her and asked if she was a follower of Jesus.

I'm not sure if that's exact words that they used, but that she said yes, and they killed her. And ever since I have heard that recounting of that horrible day, I've wondered, you know, what would I have said at that age?

[13 : 00] And even now, if somebody had a gun at me, I pray that my faith would be strong enough, but I, I don't know. How can, how can we know? And I think that, that there's a description of the place where Peter was when he was confronted that was very much the same because he had seen what happened to Jesus, that he'd been carried off and beaten and arrested and all of that.

And for all he knew he was next. And, and, and so I'm sure that fear and confusion.

I think about the, the speaking to Peter speaking in this passage. And I think that one of the things I've observed over the years, and I went to an event once where the, the presenter talked about a culture of, or generations of people that have not learned how to tell about their faith.

And that we, we, as leaders in the Christian community don't often help people get to the place where they can share their faith.

Um, whether that's times when they get a few minutes of testimony in church, a lot of people are like, no, no.

[14 : 39] And it's not because they don't have something to share. It's because they think they don't have anything to share. Right. Um, and so part of what this, this presenter was talking about is that from the time our, our kids are very small, how helpful it is to help them to articulate.

Not, not, not like, um, a rote kind of statement of what they believe, like say this, but more to help them to gain some confidence in what they already believe.

Right. Um, and to find ways to let them express that. Yeah. And, um, and I think that, you know, it's true that a lot of churches, there's, there's not necessarily a lot of opportunities in some churches for people to speak.

Um, and I mean, there are lots of opportunities and, um, I, I love to preach as much as the next person, but, or the next pastor, because not everybody loves to preach.

But, um, but I also love creating environments where people get to tell their own story. Right. And creating environments where the youth get to tell their own story.

[16 : 06] And, um, and the same with children, obviously different at different age levels. Yeah. Because they, they, you know, when I've asked people to do something and they're sort of confused about being quite clear because they're a little nervous.

What, what are you asking me to do? And, um, and, um, and sometimes it's the most inspirational thing we hear all year. Yeah. Um, and, you know, I, I have a confession that I'm not great at it of telling.

And I, I think about it a lot and how to, to tell the story to quote a hymn for, you know, for different people. Um, but I don't always have a great answer.

I, I think I have an easier answer when they're younger. You know, I've always found it easier to tell kids, I think, because I'm just insecure myself with peers, you know?

Um, but several, you know, the place that I work, part of the reason I feel that I am called to work there in advertising, which really is kind of neither here nor there.

[17 : 21] It's a great job, but I feel like, well, you know, it might not be my calling, but I do feel like there are people there that I'm supposed to witness to. You know, um, there's even, even the owner of the company I pray for all the time because he, and he doesn't have really any faith, um, community in his life.

And, um, has always, he's always done very well financially and he's very well liked and he's really a good guy, but he, you know, I don't know if it'll take him having some tragedy or I don't want to wish that on him at all, but there are, he knows how strong my faith is.

And every once in a while I'll get a chance to get a word in, but I don't feel like I ever adequately describe it. You know, I'll start to, and sometimes I'll even just say to him, you know, oh, it's how I used to tell my kids when they were little that, you know, Jesus took all the timeouts for us, you know, they don't, he just took their timeouts and they couldn't do anything bad enough that Jesus couldn't fix, you know?

And I try to say those things, but I don't, I feel like I don't have a great answer for him and he doesn't give me many opportunities. I'm sure. But, you know, every once in a while he'll say, yeah, I know you need to tell me more about that.

And I feel like, oh, I'm so inadequate because I don't have, I feel like he's a tough audience and he and I both are professional communicators and we should, you know, I should know my audience.

[18 : 59] And I'm like, how do I best hook him? Because on the surface he has, you know, worldly success. He's an attractive guy. He's got, you know, a beautiful home.

He's succeeded in business. He's well-liked by people all over. He's well-known in Buffalo. I'm like, what is, what's going to make him feel like he needs this?

You know? And it's so hard to say that for what that might be for anyone. But I think that Bill Edmister and I were talking this afternoon about the, well, we met to talk about the Blue Christmas Service.

But we were talking about seed planting. Yeah. And that that's what you're doing. You're seed planting, you know, because you're only getting these little places.

But you're not just a transitory person in his life. Right. So, you know, that statement, you know, I'll have to know more about that or, you know, sometime you'll have to tell me more.

[20 : 07] The door just kind of gets a little bit. And I think that so often people feel like they have to have a sort of prescribed thing to say when I think what most people want is what difference does it make in your life?

You know, why? Why? What? And some days we have better answers than others. And, you know, there's a whole lot of people who grew up believing their whole life.

And for them, that is sometimes difficult. They can say that, well, I've had faith my whole life. But they're they get kind of embarrassed about the fact that maybe they don't have a moment.

Right. Maybe they don't have a specific time. And I feel like everybody's life, there's lots of times it's a matter of identifying them.

You don't have to be a bad person, nonbeliever, and then become a Christian. That's not everybody's story. And you can believe for as long as you ever could remember.

[21 : 20] And then find times when it's. More intense or more needed in a particular time. And I think most people most people don't want us to tell them what they should what they should believe.

They want us to tell them what we believe. It's a great point. Yeah, it really. So it's it's. But I think about this.

This healing and this testimony. And it just reminds me that part of what got me there was this. Here he was, this kind of.

Mumble mouth trying to figure out what he believes in front of a person who's challenging him. And then now he's in front of some very serious people. I mean, we're not talking about the corner group of clergy who think they know everything.

We're talking about the big guns that are confronting them about what they've done. And the fact that not only when in four.

[22 : 28] He through. Oh, let's. Oh, it helps if I was in four and not three.

I'm looking at three like this isn't it. This isn't it. But that. But that. Um. When. When. When. When we look at. The fact that they arrested them.

But even before that, while Peter and John were speaking to the people and the people are annoyed. They. Um. Proclaiming that in Jesus, there was resurrection and the dead, which was probably the healing was one thing.

But teaching the resurrection story was another thing because the the Jewish culture dead is dead. That's the end. The end of the story is death.

So don't be telling people that there's something after death when there isn't. Death is death. That's the end. And that's what they'll believe. Jews. Right.

[23 : 31] That's so hard to believe that we're so closely aligned with the Jewish faith. But yeah, that they that it's just.

And and so even all this, the good works that they do throughout their lives or and they probably wouldn't even use those words. But in the rituals that they follow, etc. They.

Why do they do that? If they think there's nothing. Um. Well, they do have a belief system that talks about.

Their faith tells them. It's a version of do all the good you can while you can. Because that's what God teaches, because the God of the Old Testament teaches that we should.

And, you know, some of the same things that when we look at Micah and, you know, talk about how we should live our lives. The Old Testament is full of those kinds of instructions.

[24 : 29] And I think that that a big part of the faith culture is. Is. Be a godly person and.

Be a godly person in the space in which you live and that and be grateful. I think it's I'm simplifying it, but.

I think it's interesting because in one way there's a part of it that you're doing these things with no thought of reward. Right.

So there's something to be said for that. Um. And yet it also doesn't have the comfort. Right. That that we find in in eternal life.

Yeah. And so. It's. I. I think that I would have to. Really sit in some.

[25 : 27] Jewish space. To understand not. You know, I can read the Old Testament and I can read things about the Jewish faith, but I think that trying to understand how that all works.

Requires sitting down with with Christians who are comfortable with Jewish people not being Christians. We might wish or hope, but that's who they are.

And. And Jewish people being comfortable explaining a way of life because it's not just about what they believe. It's a way of life.

Yeah. And it's like so many of the Jewish people that I know that it's a lot more just a cultural tradition, you know, and it's like the family is Jewish and like we talk about being American.

Right. And it's like you celebrate Fourth of July and all those things. And I think some of that comes from the from the very beginning. The identity of the people of Israel is very connected to where they came from and the sense of identifying as people of Israel, the Jewish people.

[26 : 44] And the culture, the rules of living have been obeyed across the spectrum, just like Christians. And we can find temples where people are not strict and ones that are in the middle.

And obviously the Hasidic Jews are the probably the most conservative. But there are a lot of people who are who they are Jewish, but they are maybe historically religious, but no longer.

Yeah. And and yet they likely would never deny. Right. Their heritage. It's like Katie's roommate that I've told you multiple times is Jewish.

But Katie, you know, she's a young woman. Katie said she doesn't really practice much, but her father is from Israel and I believe has the dual citizenship, you know, played on their national volleyball team, served in their military like they all are to do and goes back.

I think he just got back from like a month in Israel with his family. I think the whole rest of his family is there. But I also don't get the sense that even he is not really very Jewish.

[28 : 05] I sent them a hand like a card and Katie said, oh, you don't need to do that. I don't think they do too much, you know, and I said, well, I wanted to recognize that they. Right. And, you know, there's a great deal of secular population in Israel.

Yeah. Just like here, you'd expect it to be different, but you'd also expect a lot more Christianity in Israel than there is.

I know there's there's the Jewish people. There's the Christian people. There's Muslim people. Right. Right. And there. And even, you know, and among Christian people, there's all the denominations and different kinds of Christians.

And it's it's fascinating. Yeah. And but so much of it, like when people talk about going to Israel to stay in.

What do you call it? Like people go for a month to stay in a household family unit where everybody does the work. I'm just not remembering the name of the commune, not a commune, but it's similar.

[29 : 15] Yeah. Just the name of it's just escaping me right now that it's their history. Their history, their history is so important and where they came from.

Not necessarily their practice of their religion. Right. Well, I often I know we're on a side tangent, but I have often like had a very complicated view of the Jewish faith because I feel like they were the ones they're closest to when Jesus came, but they're also the ones that rejected him the most.

So it feels like it's more of a rejection than people who maybe never even heard about anything leading up to Jesus coming. But I know that then this is where I get more confused that, you know, especially some of the evangelical denominations, more evangelical denominations in the U.S.

You know, I believe that we need to be so close to Israel because of prophecy and what's going to happen in the end times. And part of me is like, but they're the ones who are kind of rejecting him the most.

You know, they're they know he came, but they don't believe he's the Messiah. So but we still you know what? I don't know the complicated part. I think is what happens when Jesus comes back and right.

[30 : 40] And yeah, it's and we don't know possibly it when Jesus comes back. That may be the time when they recognize him as the savior because they still don't believe there has been one.

And I think that I think one of the other important things and I think it depends on the community is that the people, the Jewish people have a very high respect for Jesus.

They hold him in very high esteem and his teachings in very high esteem. They just simply don't believe he's the savior, which is it.

I was telling the kids last week and I hope I was right that in especially in real time when Jesus was born. They and when he lived, they really thought he was going to be a political king.

Right. And literally save them. Right. Military politics. You know, it was going to be a conquering kind of power, even if that was from a position of a judge or something like that.

[31 : 43] Yeah, that's what they thought. They this was not what they had in mind. Yeah. Yeah. Because we were we were talking about King Herod and how he obviously felt threatened. You know, so.

But I think it's interesting to think about the. The power that even that Herod that some of them saw in Jesus that made them.

Like there's something here. The power that we see witnessed in this conversation because we get to the place where they they talk about when they talk about Jesus and they talk about what he did.

You know, you can see that the the priests and the they were there like, wait a minute, what do we do? Because we can't deny what happened.

Can't deny that this man is healed. And we can't deny that these thousands of people have come to faith. Yeah, maybe they felt that way in terms of who is going to stir up that much of an angry crowd.

[32 : 55] So there might be some fear of causing conflict in that, but they're definitely it's let's see.

They go from in in verse 13. Now, when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, they realized, first of all, uneducated and ordinary men. And then next amazed and recognized them as companions of Jesus.

Yeah. And so then when they get into the discussion, what will we do for it's obvious to all who live in Jerusalem that a sign has been done through them and we can't deny it.

Yeah. But so that this does not spread any further. Right. Threaten them. Right. And, you know, when we read about the 5000, you know, it's important.

You know, it's important to note that I think that 5000 years says men. Mine says 5000 years says 5000 men.

[34 : 02] Yeah. So if it is 5000 men, then you have to actually add all their families. Right. Because they would have been there also like the feeding of the 5000.

Right. Right. And we often they they we we often don't realize that even with the there's all kinds of questions about when the disciples were called.

What happened to their families in some of the conversations? I was the readings that I was looking at about Peter. He was married. And when they talked about what he left behind, they talked about boat nets job home.

But they didn't they didn't talk about how they might know that. I don't know. I like to think that they took their family with them. Yeah, I know. Me too.

Yeah. Yeah. And it would be that kind of lifestyle would have been a little bit more common than people didn't own as much.

[35 : 11] They didn't own a lot of property. Yeah. Might not have even owned their homes and their belongings were simple. Yeah.

Yeah. And probably. But I just I think that we were never told really in the scriptures how it was. We don't we don't hear about their left behind family.

We see when it comes whenever they're in Jerusalem, even if they even if they had left their family, they would have been coming and going from from there.

And when they were called, I can't remember, had Jesus did Jesus do any signs or miracles or did he just say, come and follow me?

Um, let me see if I have the reference. That was I mean, that was bold, regardless.

[36 : 11] But they, you know, they could have a chance. So before now, I just turned back quickly to Luke five.

Okay. Switching the Jesus calls the first disciples. So if you look in the in the part before that, the biggest thing that happens is the man with the unclean spirit.

And then the Simon's mother in law was suffering with a high fever and he healed her. Yeah. Um, and and then all well, yeah.

And then the sun was setting and all those this isn't for all this. Those who had any who were sick with various kinds of diseases brought them to him. And he laid his hands on each of them and cured them.

Yeah. So then he preaches in the synagogues. Uh huh. Um, what we don't know is when he calls the first disciples, he was standing beside the lake of Jenna Surratt and the crowd was, um, was pressing.

[37 : 26] Um, oh yeah. Oh, then he did have them put their nets down. Right. And they hadn't been able to find anything. So I guess that was a miracle and they were amazed. Um, they were amazed at the catch of fish they had taken.

Okay. And then in, um, around in verse eight, when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down to Jesus knees and he fell down to the ground.

And he fell down to Jesus knees saying, go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man. Yeah. Wow. So that's, and he said, you'll be fishers of men or we always say that.

Yeah. And they brought the, left, they brought the boats to land, left everything and followed him. Yeah. So they had, there certainly was a lot of miracle stuff going on.

Yeah. And whether the disciples were actually witnesses, they could have been, they might not have been, but it's not a big place. They certainly would have known what had happened.

[38 : 32] Yeah. Um, and yeah, they, um, the, you know, and back to what we talked about with John before Peter, um, when they are asked by, um, Annas and Caiaphas and John and Alexander and all the priest high priestly family.

Um, when they made them stand in their midst, they inquired by what power or what name did you do this? And Peter filled with the Holy spirit said that they were doing it in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

And then clearly who you treated badly. Yeah. Um, and that, that is really very, very significant to, um, proclaim in that particular, it does say that he was filled with the Holy spirit.

So, you know, that we can, we can sort of extrapolate that to be that that's where his power and his strength and his courage and his, he, Peter gives a new understanding to what they call holy boldness.

Yeah. Um, and he, um, and John too, but John didn't have the story, the backstory that Peter had.

[40 : 02] Right. Um, and to be able to, one of the things that Peter was known for is that in, even though he was filled with the Holy spirit and he was preaching, he was respectful.

That what he was known for in his ministry career was that he was not afraid to speak. Um, the truth to people who didn't agree with him, but he didn't do it as a bully.

Oh, he didn't. Even though he's talking about, he talks about the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, man, salvation, things like that.

And from you crucified, but what's written about this, this speech or sermon really, um, is that it was done with energy and a passion, but it was not condemning.

Hmm. It was not, um, you know, when you look at. Protesters, the different kinds of protesters, there's the ones who simply say, this is what we believe.

[41 : 12] Right. This is what we believe. And this is what we're asking for. And then there are those that are on the attack. Um, and where a lot of trouble often happens.

Yeah. Whether the Holy Spirit wisdom was a part of not go softly, but go respectfully and you'll do a lot better.

I don't know. Yeah. Um, it's just interesting to think about. It's interesting to hear. And, and some of these insights came from the, the history that Peter has F ongoing, not just, not just here in terms of how he got along, um, with people who didn't necessarily agree with him.

It's good to know that, um, it's funny, pastor Tom, I think would always call him Rocky, you know, playing off the, but we've used the Sylvester Stallone voice.

So I think I always pictured Peter as kind of this, you know, bull in a China shop. But it's interesting to hear that the scholars think, you know, that he was tactful. It sounds like, but bold, but right.

[42 : 29] And so, you know, maybe, maybe Sylvester Stallone without the hitting. Yeah. Cause I, cause I imagine him being a presence, you know, a significant presence, no doubt.

Um, and a little on it and uneducated and probably a little, uh, uh, you know, forgive me, sorry. I know. Um, and so the, um, so I'll, I'll share what part of the says the temple authorities put Jesus in the lowest place they could an outcast death outside the city walls, the ultimate in exclusion from the community.

The ultimate in silence. But God has raised Jesus to the place of highest honor and authority at the very center of God's new community. Armed with the words of Psalm 118, Peter puts the temple authorities on notice that in raising Jesus from the dead, God has made him the cornerstone of a new temple with the only power under heaven to heal.

On what authority on the authority of the resurrection and God's gift of speech to the church. Peter and John say, we cannot keep from speaking about what we have seen and heard.

Mm hmm. Peter and John say, we cannot keep from speaking about the truth. And that then at the end of the story, it's the authorities turn to be speechless. The accusers of Jesus and his people are now silent.

[44 : 04] Um, the reversal is really sounds very sudden. It's not like they went into retreat and like, you know, they were discussing and going to come up with a vote.

Um, and one of these commenters says, you might think that this story seems a little too fantastic, a little too miraculous. Yeah. Um, but then if God raises Jesus from the dead.

Yeah. Then why not this? And sometimes this passage is in the, in the, if people preach the lectionary, a lot of times this passage shows up in the Easter season, which makes sense.

Yeah. Um, and not too many pastors preach on acts on Easter. Um, people want to hear the resurrection story. But part of what we're reading through acts is that it's resurrection and resurrection and resurrection.

Yeah. Um, and so he, um, Paul, when he's, when he's doing this, um, and talking about Jesus, um, it's throughout acts.

[45 : 24] He speaks to not just little groups of people from Israel. He speaks, you know, in big, it gets kind of bigger and bigger, um, to continue to, uh, speak to as much of all the people as is of Israel as possible.

Um, we see in this, it's the leaders, you know, the, the known leaders. And then, um, he goes on, um, to talk about, and since we, we understand that Luke is the author more than any other evangelist.

Luke emphasizes the resurrection as Jesus vindication. Like, yeah, this is it, you know? And like I said, if you believe in the Jewish faith that dead is dead and there is nothing beyond dead.

Wow. Then this is the most amazing thing that they've ever heard. Right. Um, and his reject Jesus rejection by those in authority, as we know, fulfill scripture, um, that comes from Psalm 118.

Um, do they have the first five books of the old Testament? Do they read the Psalms as well? Um, hold that thought.

[46 : 52] Let me see. Now, my, um, this particular study Bible, um, this, this particular Bible has the, the old Testament and then has all the apocryphal, um, books.

But I think that the, I'm trying to remember what we, we studied the old Testament as a whole.

And our old Testament professor called it the Hebrew scriptures. Uh huh. All of it. Um, and I have a copy of the Torah. It's probably in my office, probably not here.

Um, but I, if we hear, if we hear, we, well, no, I'm, I'm acting like I don't know what I'm talking about, but think about in both Hebrews and in acts, how many times they reference the Psalms.

Right. Over and over and over again. So, um, my, my, my sense is that the Psalms are very much a part of the Jewish literature.

[48 : 25] Um, yeah. Yeah. So, yeah. Yeah. Again, it just, you know, as I look at Psalm 118, you know, the stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.

Yeah. It just seems, it seems incredulous to me that they didn't recognize Jesus. Right. And well, and even, you know, as we go through advent and we keep referring back to Isaiah.

Right. Um, and there's this, there's sometimes these parts that are like, what part of this don't you get? Right. But we have, you know, having sung the Messiah forever.

Yeah, no. You know, how could you not get it? Yeah. That's just, it's, um, and I think that was, um, the more I've learned about scripture, even when I went to seminary with this old Testament professor who was not Jewish, he was very much a Christian, but he could, he only memorized one gospel, the gospel of Mark.

Oh, but what he did then after he, after he memorized Mark was, which is a pretty big undertaking, was then every thing he did in the old Testament teaching had the gospel behind it.

[49 : 50] So he could, it's kind of, I can't do this backwards, but it's kind of like the, if the hand behind is Mark and the hand in front is the old Testament.

So what he's teaching the old Testament, the gospel can come through because he can pull in all the quotes and match them in time and place.

Um, in terms of telling about the, the prophesying about what was going to happen. Right. And just, it's a, it's a fascinating ability.

Yeah. Yeah. Because we're always, I mean, here's me doing sermon preparation and I'm like, I'm in Luke and I'm in Isaiah. I'm Luke and I'm in Isaiah and I'm flipping, flipping, flipping, flipping, flipping.

And to be able to just have it in your head. It would be, they must have, do they have Bibles that have them ordered like that or have, you know, wouldn't that be fascinating to like have them to.

[50 : 54] Yeah. Cause I think that the only thing I've ever seen, which of course, isn't the old Testament at all, it's the gospel parallels. Yeah. And you know, you can, you can, I'm sure that there are study Bibles.

I can't imagine how it would be done because the old Testament is so big to be able to also provide all, you know, it's, we see in the new Testament, we see the references back to the old Testament.

Um, and they, um, Oh, look, I turned right back to the passage that I'm one of the passages I'm preaching on.

Um, and so in looking at the, the, the, the, the, the, the, the, the, the, the, the, the, the, I wanna even enhance to God with all that. Yeah. Um, yeah, I I can see. Let me see them this that little, um, in the letters that your family.

Um, that's, that all the things you have to do with him dishonor to you. Yeah, Move your, the, the, the Señor. Okay. Yeah, come with me. Um, I was so take a look at for you and the caricature that he had to be up off on right now to talk about six days, but we were just about to have to search ■ HTTP TIPS.

[51 : 59] But it's but that's so I think sometimes that's as close as we get. Right. Is the drawing the line back and forth and some of the times like I will frequently use Bible Gateway when I'm looking at the passage because I want to see what it looks like in this version and this version.

And I also sometimes want to copy and paste a part of it out and drop it into a sermon, things like that. Yeah. And so it's it's.

But when you're hands on book. Right. It's a lot of flipping. It is. I know I find I love doing that copying and pasting from Bible Gateway.

But I know I never get it as like if I'm putting something together to talk about on Facebook or something. I feel like I get it so much more if I get the actual book out.

You know, I can read it on the screen and highlight it and copy and paste. But until I really like read it from the book. Warren, I think there are a lot of people who will say that that that's always where you have to start.

[53 : 11] Because if you start on the screen, you're it's kind of like the Reader's Digest version of what's going on.

A little snapshot. I mean, you're getting the actual scripture. It's not like you're getting an abbreviated version. Right. But oh, what's always been so important for me is how do you put it in context?

What's going on ahead of it? What's going on after it? Yeah. And sometimes when we're faithful to that task, we find out you don't don't even go there.

Yeah. Because you're offering this as even sometimes with Jeremiah 29 11. Yeah. Read the whole thing. It's not as pretty as it seems.

No. And and so, you know what we do? We don't. We use other scripture to support it. But we keep Jeremiah 29 11 right there just the way it is.

[54 : 09] That's right. That comes with that because we're we're shining up a piece, but not telling the whole story. But I think that the point is we want people to believe that God has a plan and the plan is good.

Right. After all the plan was Jesus. So, yeah. And it's so interesting. I mean, I just I've become to I've come to appreciate the Old Testament so much because I think growing up where I, you know, and I went to small churches.

So we didn't always have the most, you know, educated or they were all educated pastors, but we didn't have necessarily the ones who were trying to teach us in detail.

I started to realize that, you know, that there were Methodist churches that were doing a lot more Bible study maybe than in my tiny little, you know, crossroads church. But it was so much focused on the New Testament.

And it makes me think about why people pass out New Testaments a lot to, you know, you see the tiny little. Right. Right. At the when I was in Colorado, I mean, you open the case where the Bibles are.

[55 : 21] They're trying to find a whole Bible for somebody was like it's like was like a hunt. Really? Because first of all, they're more expensive. They're also hard to put in those little books in the world Bibles.

But the main reason that people do it often is the Psalms and New Testament. Yeah. Yeah. And why? Because they're easier to read and filled with more good news and comfort.

Yeah. For a hospital. Yeah. That's true. But it just, yeah, it gives, I feel like it gives the wrong impression, you know, that the Old Testament is not important. I think and I do think that does happen.

And I think that I know from my own perspective, when I first was interested in reading the Bible, one of the challenges is if you start at the beginning. Yeah.

And you it's. What what you want is a phase one and a phase two, you want to give people the New Testament and then give them a little bit of time and then give them the Old Testament.

[56 : 27] Or I think even more importantly, get them engaged in some place where they can learn about the Old Testament, because it's daunting and it's full of terrible, terrible things.

Yeah. And that I think that was part of mine. Like, really? I don't think so. Because what you're saying here in church and what I'm reading, it doesn't match up.

Right. So there's some and I have a lot of respect for some of the documents that have been produced about like what you should read the order, like what New Believer kind of what how to guide them.

I never seem to have one available to me because I've given them all away. But there's a sense of part of it depends on who that person is. Yeah. What their interest is.

Are they interested in are they a person who can embrace the whole biblical story? Or are they someone who's first maybe looking for some healing and connection with God and then grows into an ability to understand the whole.

[57 : 39] Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. So it's I think that it's it's really I think that this sometimes I think, well, we can when we even when we look at just this one chapter and acts and I'm going the wrong way in my Bible.

And we think about how many things are in here, not only from the courage that it took for Peter and John to do what they were doing.

But what is it what is it telling us about? Sometimes speaking our truth.

Sometimes speaking our truth. In terms of faith. I don't know whether some of its well if they could do it, I can do it. It's different.

You know, I think that both you and I we can do it. And we both do it in different ways. But we're not forced into a place where it's going to put us in jail.

- [59 : 03] Right. Right. And we're we're we're not not only is it not going to put us in jail, but we're we're quite privileged people.
- And so we can buy a Bible that we like. Right. And I have I thought at one point I was like, OK, I think I'm done with Bibles.
- No, no, no. I had to buy another one. I think that but I do think that there's going back to where we started, which is how and I'm not I'm not putting you on the spot.
- But how do you with the youth or I in a variety of contexts? How do I create an environment where people feel the both the permission and the safety to tell their story, to tell their faith story?
- You know, I think about when I read some of what the confirmands wrote for confirmation, they were very honest. I think that was one of the things that I really loved, which, you know, I didn't want to go and.
- [60 : 28] Right. Oh, but, but, but, but. And then the other the other kids who I'd never even met, but we're talking about being, you know, that this came at a time in their life.
- But they, you know, and I don't know what they have done historically about how does that get shared in the context of confirmation?
- Or does it only get read at the confirmation service? Or does it get read at all? I think this year was the first time that I saw those kind of testimonies.
- And I've even been a sponsor for multiple confirmands. And one time I remember working with a young woman who had some like learning disabilities.
- And I remember helping her express herself so she could write that kind of testimony. But I think it was much less public. And this year, did they put it in the newsletter?
- [61 : 32] Or how did I feel like I read it? I think they might have put it in the newsletter. They definitely put it somewhere. But I, you know, when I read them, you know, ideally, I would have liked the kids because we read, we read parts of them at the confirmation service.
- Oh, yeah. And part of the, you know, the sense, well, what I would have really liked was if they could have read this, they could have said this themselves.
- Themselves, yeah. But at the same time, at that particular age, in that particular environment, that's a big ask. And I think that, I think that the kids and the families were like, I think it made it feel deeper in the moment because those things were written no matter whether they were confirmed this year or other years.
- Right. But I think that the fact that we, we all got to be inspired by some of their stories. Yeah. I think that was great. Yeah.
- And, you know, we were, during November, we were, we had talked about the possibility of trying to get people to do, you know, just a less than 10 minutes.
- [62 : 58] You know, just a less than five minute video about, there was a specific question about gratitude. Uh huh.
- And it was connected to the church. It was their faith, but it was also what we were, what we were trying to, to, I mean, you were there, we were talking about the cloud of witnesses and how important that is.
- And that, that sort of not only, um, what is that, what are you grateful for, but what are you grateful for in terms of this family of faith being a part of your cloud of witnesses.
- And I wasn't a part of contacting people or anything like that. Um, but I know that nobody wanted to do it. Really? So my, um, and it's, that's not the first time I've encountered that people largely are, feel a little embarrassed about, about doing things like that.

Sometimes it's easier to get them when they don't have to do a video. Sometimes it's easier to do a video, but finding, thinking about the future and figuring out how do we find opportunities for people to do that?

[64 : 13] Because sometimes when I've asked another person and usually it's like a part of a series and there's a specific thing I'm asking them to do. Um, when they've seen, when they see somebody else do it, then they have a sense of what they might say.

Right. Like, well, maybe I do have something to say. Yeah. And, you know, we can't hear all the things that everybody wants to say, but how can we continue to move in our faith community in a way that helps people to realize how much inspiration is right there?

Yeah. Yeah. Nobody asked me, I would have done it, but they're probably tired of hearing me talk. I don't know. I wasn't a part of it, so I don't know how, I think Adrian got put on it and I think it also came about around the same time that, um, DJ's brother died.

So then Sherry was gone. So it could be a whole bunch of things that it just didn't happen. Right. But you know what? We're, we got time.

Now we have time. We're not done yet. That's right. It wasn't meant to be that. Yeah. Yep. And it's, I, and it's also a lot easier when you have more people on the ground, you know, more people who can actually be present and more people that, um, at least Scott and I can get to know.

[65 : 47] Yeah. And because there's a whole layer of people that, uh, a mom of some young kids came on Sunday for the first time. I wasn't actually introduced to her, but she had some questions about, um, Christmas Eve.

And she had brought her children to junior church. And this was the first time they'd come since the church had opened. Yeah. And, um, there's a whole layer of people like that out there that.

Right. I know that's, I, Dan and I talk about it every week that, you know, I guess I'm just hoping that people are not falling off. But, you know, there's a lot of people that I would have thought might've even come back sooner, you know, and I, then I ask for forgiveness.

Cause I'm almost judging them of, well, why aren't they there? Do they have somebody that's, you know, compromised in their family or, um, who are they protecting or, you know, or, or, you know, the people that, that may feel, um, that it was hard enough to lose two pastors.

And then you add the church being closed and then you bring in new pastors and the church still isn't open. Right. There are people for whom those layers, um, have really challenged their commitment.

[67 : 14] I know. Um, and yeah, and there's just a whole bunch of people, a whole bunch of people that just don't feel safe yet. Yeah. Um, and I, I love going into a, someone's home and them saying that I've never met and having them say, well, we feel like we know you and how's that Charlie?

Exactly. It's like, you're like a celebrity. They always say that, you know, you watch people on TV every week and you feel like you know them. And the, the, but the, the joy for me is now I get to meet and hear about you and to be in, in your home.

And you know, we're, we, we're having to kind of really now be careful about that because, um, people are awfully glad to have it happen.

But we, we who are coming in are people that are out and around. Right. And you know, being very careful and we, we take all the precautions when we go, but we have to pick and choose where we can go.

Have you, um, have you met Olive Burbage and her sister Dorothy Stewart? No, you know, that's, they've, they've come up before and. They're like the, they're, they're two matriarchs of the church, especially Ollie, um, Olive.

[68 : 44] Um, she, Dorothy, I think, um, came and was in Buffalo a lot of her life and then came to live with her sister later in life. But I think they are, they're either in their nineties or approaching their nineties and they live together.

Um, Olive's husband died long before I came to the church, like 30 or 40 years ago. He died relatively young. Um, and her sister Dorothy is, um, is never married and never had kids.

But Ollie, you know, is just somebody that never missed a Sunday ever. And, you know, I know that she just can't come right now, but it's, it's just so.

It feels like such a loss, you know, that she's, that she's not there. And I, I can only imagine how she feels. They live right on, um, Bear Ridge, not too far from the, not too far from you and the church.

What's Olive's last name? Burbage, B-U-R-B-I-D-G-E. And she's the mother Burbage, Olive Burbage. She's the mother of Jeannie Prendergast.

[69 : 56] Oh, okay. And Jeannie and Tim live right across the street from Ollie. Oh, okay. I know them. Yeah. They live, um, there on your side of the street and right across the street is Ollie.

They, a lot of people call her Ollie, Olive, and then her sister Dorothy. And what's Dorothy's last name? Steward, S-T-E-W-A-R-D. And they, they've always been workhorses up the church.

They would be at the fish fries from start to finish, you know, in there and people, you know, would tease about it. Just how active they are at such a, an old age.

Um, that I just, I just wonder how they are. I talked to Tim and Jeannie occasionally. Tim is a big choir member. And, and Jeannie's been there since I don't know, since birth maybe at the church and she's probably in her sixties.

Um, she looks like she's in her twenties. She's a real, I know, has a real young face. Um, but yeah, that, that, that family is a big, you know, not neither, none of them have been, I don't think at service ever.

[71 : 06] And it just feels like, oh my goodness, how can we even have service without them? You know, and it's, and it's, I think that that's a great loss that Scott and I can't even identify because we don't know them.

I mean, we know, I mean, I've served a lot more churches than Scott has, but there's so, there are those people in every church. They're often there first and they, um, um, sometimes they're the most down to earth in terms of things come, things go not going to get.

Yeah. Didn't you say one of them has a little bit more of a tendency to speak her mind? Yes. Dorothy. Dorothy. Yeah. She was a nurse and she's very, you know, she's very to the point.

Very, um, you know, if you want to know if you look good that day, you ask Dorothy and she'll tell you so, and, and, and quite honestly, Ollie is probably her polar opposite.

She is just like sugary sweet. Just, I just, I love both of them. I do. They're just really so funny. You know, pastor Tom used to say Dorothy.

[72 : 25] Um, and I think he, he got her, so she would say goodbye to him, but she, you typically doesn't say goodbye on the phone when she calls you for something. As soon as she, the answer.

She hangs up. She said it to me. And you think, Oh my goodness. Like until you really know her, like, what did I do? I offended this matriarch of the church. Oh, just. It's wonderful to hear about them.

And I look forward to hearing about them from them. I know. I just, it's getting scary lately. You know, my. It's the, it's, it's just becoming so, so close. I know. I know. I know. I know.

I know. I know. I know. I know. I know. I know. I know. I know. I know. I don't know if my parents, they haven't talked about not coming to church.

I keep saying to them, it's the safest place around, you know, it's the safest place around. I'm, I'm, you know, really this going out to eat for my dad. I just, he loves to eat.

[73 : 27] It's probably his biggest hobby. But I said, that's the most dangerous thing. You know, you got the mask off and you just, you gotta not do that. Um, and I see some of the, the groups of senior citizens and some other places where they're having meals together and they're not, they're not.

And I don't. Um, I think there's a, there's a part of it that feels like as long as you are making that decision with a real understanding of what the risks are.

Um, then you have, you have that freedom, not near me though. I mean, there's a sense of, you know, we will be, I'm sure when we get together with our kids after Christmas, that they'll be the part of the group of us that will be here in Buffalo living in this house.

Um, we will probably not wear masks when we're together. Right. But then when we go to Cleveland, if Sarah and Jordan or Charlie are there, then everybody will wear masks.

And, um, and so, but that's the way it's been since Charlie was born. Yeah. You know, they don't wear, his parents don't wear masks around him, but anybody that comes into the house does.

[75 : 00] Yeah. Um, and now I, I know Marty visited them, uh, this past weekend. And, um, I noticed that Jordan had a mask on as well.

And one of the pictures and I, you know, Ohio is not a safe place to be. I know. Um, and so it's possible that Jordan was wearing a mask to protect Marty.

Yeah. I don't know. That's, I don't know. Um, and a part of our conversation was, well, if you guys are willing to come to Ohio, because Ohio's Ohio's.

Not ever been great. Yeah. We haven't, they haven't ever had a very good track record with COVID. Um, but our plan is that we will buy our food here and we'll go to our Airbnb that they would have especially cleaned.

And the only two places will be is at the house and at Jordan and Sarah's house. And that's it. Yeah. I think that's smart. It's funny that Jack is, you know, was in Ohio because Xavier did such a beautiful job.

[76 : 11] I just, I don't know how they did it. I, I see some of what they did. They just really required a lot, um, of the kids and they did it, you know, and I'm just, I've got my fingers crossed that he goes back.

Yep. Well, and I think about, we learned last at one of the last advisory team meetings that, um, the kids in the preschool, they sanitize their hands every six minutes.

Oh my gosh. Wow. They must look like some really chapped little hands. It's interesting that a lot of us are finding that we're not. Um, yeah.

And you know, little kid's skin is so much more resilient than our older skin, but they, um, that some of the parents are saying that, that they don't.

They're some of their willingness to keep bringing their kids is because they feel like our practices are so safe. Mm hmm. Um, you know, I think we've all realized that there is no complete.

[77 : 15] Right. Safe. Yeah. Um, but our church back to the service, I, I do think what we're doing is, and I know you've said that, that some officials have even come and said what we're doing is kind of top notch.

And yeah, first class. Yeah. So that's, uh, we just keep doing the best we can and, and just keep the prayer list just keeps growing with people with COVID.

And so we just, I know it. Well, we, I think the, between you and me, and I guess everybody who's listening on the live stream, but, um, with my dad, I think how I finally convinced him.

Part of, I had kind of ulterior motives. Dan is his healthcare proxy. They knew that I was too sappy and sentimental and that I would never be able to, you know, pull the plug, so to speak ever.

And this was 20 years ago when we first got married. So they have made Dan the healthcare proxy. And so the other day, Dan and I were talking and he said, you know, I really need to know your dad's thoughts because we've, he's always said no ventilator.

[78 : 28] But does he want a ventilator if he gets COVID, you know? And so that prompted us to, to talk about it and to say, you know, because we wanted him to know if you're going to keep going to these things, there could be a really good chance that you get it.

And Dan wants to know what his marching orders are, you know? And so what did he say? He, it was funny at first he said, well, you know, if I knew it was going to be, if they could say it was just a few days and I could get off it, I guess, maybe, maybe even just a week.

But then at the end of the conversation, he said, no, no, he said, I'm, he's 80. You know, he's lived, he's lived longer than I thought he would, to be honest with you. And I'm incredibly grateful for that.

And that my kids know him and love him and, and my mom. And so, you know, I think he's, he's always had bad breathing, he has some asthma and stuff like that.

And he said, I don't, I just don't want to suffer and I don't want them to suffer, you know, obviously. So he said, no. And my mom said, yes. She said, I want whatever they want to do.

[79 : 38] So I said, okay. So that's, you know, both of those are, those are both hard answers because it's, you know, with COVID, they, some of the ventilator patients, people were, you know, people were willing to say, well, I just want a trial.

Like in normal healthcare things, people will say, I'm willing to do a ventilator trial like a week. But if it's not going to improve my condition, then I want you to take it off.

Yeah. Way harder to take it off than it is to not put it on in the first place, because then somebody has to make a decision. Right. With COVID, the, sometimes the ventilator for maybe up to two weeks, it requires that long.

You know, once you get past that, that's a whole different story, because you're not supposed to be ventilated, then you have to be draped and, you know, that kind of stuff once you get past a certain day.

But the, the, it's, I don't think there's ever an easy answer, but I think it's important. I can't even begin to say how many times when I was at the hospital, you know, when I saw a woman in her, I think she was 90 something.

[81 : 03] And she, they coded her three times. Now, a code is very violent. You know, it's chest compressions and breathing and, you know, all the, you know, the, the shocking, all that kind of stuff.

And we, as the team who surrounded this woman who was being coded, we found ourselves feeling angry at the family for continuing to say that, you know, she's in her nineties.

Just let her go. Yeah. When I sat after she, she, she didn't make it through the third or the fourth one. And when I sat with her daughter and her son-in-law, they said, you could see that it had been, it had been hard.

And they said, she always told us, you do everything you can. So it wasn't them. It was her and them following her wishes.

And, you know, we can certainly hope that after the first code that she just didn't feel anything more that happened. Right. That, that, um, but it was, it was just so wonderful to, to be with her family and to hear.

[82 : 17] Cause you could see when I saw him doing the page, the code, she had colored hair and she was, you know, there was just, this was clearly a spunky person. Probably nail polish.

Right. Right. Right. So when it, you know, I was, I was quite surprised actually that my mom said that as much as she did.

Um, cause she, you know, she suffers a lot of things and besides the MS and she's, she's, you know, really been challenged at times with depression and other things that I really thought she might also say, let me go.

You know, or, but I think, I think she doesn't want to suffer. Mm hmm. You know, I think if she thought it would be painless or something, you know, but I think if she, she thinks she might suffer, I think I understand that.

If she can't breathe and they don't put her on a ventilator. Yes. That's a, a very, very real fear. And the good news is that when you're on a ventilator, you're sedated. So you don't feel that either. Right.

[83 : 21] I think that's what she's thinking. And I think that's, you know, having, having watched some of my, my grandmother and my sister both died of lung cancer between my grandmother died in July and my sister in October, both had lung cancer.

My grandmother, that was the primary place. That was her. The primary cancer was in her lungs and she'd smoked for a long, long time and had quit for a long time. But anyway, and my sister, the lung cancer was secondary.

Oh, that the lung cancer is what ended her life. But that wasn't a primary source of cancer. Two different counties in Maryland across the river from each other.

And my grandmother both had home hospice. My grandmother had a very difficult death and gasped. Wow. And I felt like there was, it was just me and her.

And I felt like, and, and liquid morphine that I had to try to get down her throat. Well, she's caught, she's, she's, she's having trouble breathing. So she's gasping.

[84 : 30] So then she, she breathes. It was, it was a terrible experience and just kind of was like, this isn't the way hospice is supposed to be. My sister was the most peaceful thing there ever was.

You know, she had morphine patches instead of oral morphine. She never was, and really never really struggled to breathe.

So I don't know whether it was the two different cancers or what it was, but it's, it's, I can step outside of the personal part of it and look at the medical.

Like, is it the different hospice and the different counties? Is it different cancer? But of course in that time, you don't ask those kinds of questions. Right. And they were, it wasn't even that like the patches had been developed after your grandmother passed.

Cause it was like within six months. Right. Right. Yeah. Well, and that's, I, you know, my mom's, um, father died of emphysema basically.

[85 : 34] And he was on, I don't feel like they called it a ventilator. What did it, it was back in 1984. Um, what would they have called it a ventilator? I can't think if they, he was still somewhat, you know, he had oxygen and it just, it felt like he was more aware, but I think he did struggle and struggle for breath.

And I think she probably remembers that, but I may have told you before, she still smokes. She has smoked since college and still. Wow.

She smoked, she started smoking after college. In college. Oh, in college. Yeah. And, and she's 79 years old and she still smokes. And so I, that's why I just feel like if she gets exposed, both my parents are not going to do well with it.

I feel like, I don't know. Um, so let's, let's try their best for them not to get it. I know that's the answer. Exactly. Just don't get it. Right.

Yeah, it's, uh, that's, we talked, uh, uh, Scott and Sherry and I met today and so we were talking a little bit about the feeling of the increase in cases and how we all know somebody now, um, who's directly, who's had it.

[87 : 00] Um, and fortunately, all of them have come through it and without hospitalizations, but that the question then was asked, well, what if we do?

What if one of us gets COVID? Because if one of the three of us gets COVID, we're all out. We're at least all out in terms of quarantine.

That doesn't mean that we couldn't possibly preach or do something. But we would, um, and it wasn't as though there was no sense as to the, that, um, the church couldn't pick up and take, take things where they needed to go.

I said, well, we give all things technical to Adrian. And then we have Kelly and Nancy and everybody. They can all do the music and that's what they can do.

They can just do music and there's surely somebody who's got a testimony to share. That's right. That's right. That's right. But, oh yeah, that's, I mean, and you guys probably, if you are seeing more people, you're probably more likely to.

[88 : 09] Yeah. I think that, um, our seeing people has, has been, has become quite limited. Um, and, but we've had meetings.

Yeah. Um, so like last night we had finance. Um, the only holiday party I'll probably have in terms of work because we did a elephant gift exchange.

One of those stealing games. Oh yeah, that's fun. And, um, and did it all, you know, there was all kinds of hand sanitizing and. Right.

With spraying stuff, but they, you know, we are with those kind of, I am more than probably anybody. Yeah. More than, more than Scott and Sherry. Right.

And those kinds of people and they, um, but, and you know, I did a wedding on Friday and I did a baptism on Sunday, Saturday. And, but everybody is been following the rules.

[89 : 11] Everybody's. Yeah. It makes such a difference. My, my parents, um, I think my dad's also been affected because a friend of his died.

Um, and he did have underlying health conditions, but he's still passed of COVID and another, a wife of his friend is in the hospital right now. And then he heard that their little town, they're up in Porter, which is Ransomville and Youngstown.

Um, is they have 50 cases for, you know, a tiny little town. Um, it's about the size of Pendleton, I think. So I don't know how many Pendleton has, I guess there's, you know, I used to be able to find it this summer when I was looking, but yeah, I just, I sort of keep saying to them.

We just have to assume it's everywhere. Yeah. Just assume it's everywhere and you've got to protect yourself. Right. And, and on the other side of that, um, I asked, I asked Sherry and Scott to share not their favorite Christmas hymn or song, but the song that, or him that this year has felt the most powerful, like has moved them.

Um, and all three of us picked hymns that were the kind of longing, like, Oh, come, Oh, come Emmanuel.

[90 : 38] Come now long expected Jesus. And in the bleak midwinter, all of those are sort of like laments, you know, but even in the, even still.

Yeah. We wait. Um, and so all three of us were talking about just how, how, um, how newly were moved by hymns that we really hadn't necessarily been before.

I don't think I ever liked in the bleak midwinter before. Right. No, I listened to it all the time. Yeah. Um, what about you? Yeah.

You know, that's a great question, man, because I've been struggling. I need, I said, I would sing a song as part of the online celebration that Lori Jago is putting together. And I haven't been able to find one, one thing everybody hasn't picked already.

Oh, my favorites. I really wanted to sing the first Noel. I used to my, when my grandfather was passing, I, we knew he was passing and I lived in Washington, DC.

[91 : 46] And for about a week before I got home for Christmas, I would call him and sing that to him every night. Just talk a pillow on the telephone.

And he waited till I got home and I, I had all kinds of delays. I had to pitch fits in airports in Cleveland and Rochester to get me home.

And I purposefully never called him. Um, while I was doing that, I was like in my mid twenties. And I just knew if I called him that day that he might pass.

Right. So I got there in time and it was like six hours later that he did pass away. So did you get to sing it to him in person that night? Yeah.

So that's always been special to me. Um, but yeah, I need to give some thought. The ones that you just mentioned, maybe I should sing one of those, you know, they're, I'm going to look back at the hymnal too.

[92 : 42] Cause like, yeah. Is Nancy going to do the breath of heaven song again? Yeah. Yeah. Oh my gosh. I know just from the first chord of that song.

Oh, I just love it. I had to go home right home and get it on my phone. Cause I didn't have it. And it was like, I need to listen to that again. But it's interesting. It's, you know, like you say, there's the, there's the all time, long time favorites and maybe they still are.

But is there a new something speaking to us in the midst of something in this season? Is there a new, um, call for the light of Christ through different or words or music?

Right. I'm sure. I'm sure you'll find something wonderful. I always like to sing. I'm, I'm best. I think it like upbeat fast. I, that's just, it's my personality. I like singing fast and jazzy.

But now it feels like, cause Nancy recommended to me, come thou long expected Jesus. That, you know, that does seem very appropriate too. I'll have to give it some thought.

[93 : 49] Yeah. Because people also enjoy, you know, we're not singing. So if you on Facebook can sing something that we all want to sing, we can sing with you. That's right.

We can sing with you on Facebook. That's right. And so one of the, the upbeat Christmas songs would also be, would also be nice. Cause we're missing them that we understand why we're not doing them because it's hard to not get everybody singing.

You know, they're the ones that you really kind of get everybody going. Yeah. Yeah. Did you hear me on Sunday start spelling out the doxology from my place? I, yes.

And I, I was actually glad to hear it, but. I just, you know, that's why it was so funny. I forgot the words the other week because I think you said, you know, and in fact, I threw you under the bus.

Cause I said to Dan, well, pastor, pastor Kathy said, come join us in the doxology. I stood right up and I just belted it out and he gave me the dirtiest look.

[94 : 54] I think there are times when we each find ourselves not singing out necessarily like that, but singing in our masks. Yeah.

Yeah. Employing the music. So we're, we're sad this year because I haven't figured out a way yet to do it, but our family, um, since the kids were born, we have hosted Christmas caroling in our neighborhood and raised money for children's hospital because I shared with you how Jack was in the neighborhood.

So we, in our old neighborhood and then in this neighborhood have, we send around flyers to the neighbors and we tell them that we're going to come Carol. And if they would like to make a contribution to children's, we have a little bucket and, and then we have like a little cookie and, and a hot chocolate at our house.

And it's been a great like community builders. Neighbors get to know neighbors and we raise money and it's, you know, it's a big tradition for us and we love it. Our old neighborhood, we always had one man that would pay us not to sing.

That would be my father. Probably. He would be the one that would be like, go away. Yeah. This one guy would be like, here's a 20 if you won't sing. But, um, so we really can't, I saw, I read something in the paper yesterday about how caroling really is one of the worst things, even though you're outside, even though, you know, especially for the carolers.

[96 : 21] Um, and the rest of my family is not huge singers. I wish they were, they're good, but they don't like to sing like I do. Um, because the four of us living together, we could go and stand at the end of a driveway.

Um, but they don't want to do that. DJ and Sherry would usually come and help us. Cause they're, I, they're, I call them my ringers. So we'd bring them in, you know, because they're such good singers.

And, uh, and Judy and Elmer crop that you may know from church. Um, but we can't do it. So I don't know what we're going to do. Yeah.

The, the Fairport United Methodist church, which is not, they have not ever yet come back to having worship in their church. Oh, wow. Um, and they're in Rochester and they, um, they, they did Christmas caroling.

By the best that I can figure out based on what I, the pictures that I saw was that they had like cars in the driveway, in the church parking area or something.

[97 : 30] They were like three across and down. And I don't know whether they, and they had someone with a, uh, like a speaker who was by themselves outside leading the singing and everybody was singing inside their cars.

And so that was, that wasn't Christmas caroling to other people, but it was giving them the ability to sing Christmas carols. Right. And, you know, our church, um, would do that to shut-ins.

Um, you know, something just occurred to me, maybe ask the staff, like if people would want, I was just thinking about me singing to my grandpa when he was sick.

Like if shut-ins would want somebody to call them and sing to them. Right. Like, like, you know, you could literally have like people at the band or, you know, some, you know, you could, people that are actually already together or individuals.

Yeah. Um, you know, when I was in Colorado, I was very, um, I won't say envious because I didn't want to be these two peers that I had, but one of them, big, big African-American guy, um, who would, when he was visiting, would sometimes sing.

[98 : 54] Yeah. You know, a hymn or something. And then there was a woman who just is also an incredible vocalist and leads the music at her church in addition to being a chaplain.

And, um, they, I always, I would bring in my phone and play amazing grace, you know, for people something, but it wasn't me singing.

And so I really do wonder whether, whether that might be something people would enjoy. You know, we, um, maybe it'd give me a reason to connect with the choir again, too, to ask.

Yeah. There's probably not a lot of them, but a few of them would be interested or would be willing to do it with enough encouragement. You know, if you're calling a little old lady that's at home, like what's wrong with singing a couple of verses of away in a manger to her.

Right. And, and if you don't want to do it yourself, if you can, if you can be better at your phone than I am, and you can bring two or you can bring maybe a couple of other people in the call with you.

[100 : 04] Yeah. And you can sing it. Then you can, then the three of you together can sing it to that person over the phone. We would normally as a church and I didn't always do it, especially cause I was always exhausted from the cantata, but it was, it was either the same weekend as the cantata, or maybe the next weekend on a Sunday afternoon, we would get together and go to shut-ins.

So maybe we could even have that be the time. Like if it wouldn't be a huge commitment, if we said like this, what's the Sunday before Christmas, is it a, the 20th or something?

Yeah. It's the 20th. Yeah. Like, you know, between one and five, if you would like a phone call, you know, it gets two things to find people that'd be willing to do it and find people who would want the phone call.

And we could just, and, and maybe just not even worry about the video or any of that, just pure phone calls. Right. Just phone calls. You know, that makes people more.

And again, I think if we can get, like, if there's a husband and wife that both sing, um, or people that are living together, um, in some way or who, or they can get somebody else on the phone and do a little group sing without actually being, you wouldn't actually have anybody being with anybody other than, yeah.

[101 : 27] And actually older people like the phone. Yeah, exactly. Exactly. Yeah. I, I'm willing to, um, maybe ask Gidget if they know like the list of people that they last year went to.

Okay. And should I reach out to the choir and see? Yeah. Let's, um, I'll, I'm going to make a note to myself to ask Gidget.

I think she would know. And Louie Bobsy was, I think often the, the volunteer person that did a lot of it.

Okay. He would arrange like where we would go. So he would, between them, they would know who it is that really liked it. Yeah. And probably now it could be a ton of people like Ollie Burbage and Dorothy Stewart, you know, who are, who haven't been out.

There's so many more quote unquote shut-ins. Right. Than ever before. Well, see, we're doing our own holy boldness here.

[102 : 43] Thinking up new things. That's right. I know I'm keeping you way, way late. Speaking of which, I did email you back. You probably haven't had a chance to see it about the cantata video.

Let me just hear. Why don't I just take us off live stream? Okay. I've actually had a wanted to answer. Why? I want it.

I don't know why it's not giving me an opportunity to actually stop.

Stop. Live streaming. All right.

Well, we can talk on, we can talk on live stream. If anybody's still listening, they can hear this conversation. Yeah. So you were talking about how you responded to me about that.

[104:15] Oh, yeah. I don't know if you saw it. It was only like maybe a little bit before we got on. Okay. No, I haven't seen it. I don't know. I was thinking that I would do mine from here.

I was going to do it. I don't think it's at the church. I don't think it's at the church. As long as it's not at the church, I have my conductor's baton. And I was going to say, this year I'm trading it in for my remote control to watch it on YouTube, on our TV.

And the big thing, the funny thing about the cantata too is Pastor Tom used to always make as big a deal about the cookies afterwards as he did about the cantata.

So, you know, and I put that in the newsletter article, just, you know, get your own cookies this time. Watch it. So I was going to maybe have a little plate of cookies or whatever.

And then I wanted to, I was thinking I could introduce you and kind of toss it to you. And I thought maybe if you'd be willing to do it in the sanctuary. Yeah, I can do that. And just, you know, and I think I, in the email said a couple of things that maybe you could say or, but you can obviously say anything you want to say.

[105:26] But, but just, you know, things like, you know, I really, I had pictured us being here. I knew I'd heard a lot about it. The reputation and yeah. Yeah. And unfortunately, but, you know, here with you in spirit and hopefully next year, we're all going to be back or those, all that type of thing.

And just in super short, I think. And then, and so then I'll end and then the cantata will begin. Yep. And I think it would be great if possible to do it when it's dark.

Hopefully that's, I mean, the good news is that's not late in the work day. Right now it's probably 4 30. It's very doable. That's fine. If Adrian's willing, because that's what it, the cantata always felt like that with all the lights on and.

The Christmas Eve like. Yes, exactly. Yeah. All right. Thank you for doing that. I appreciate it. You're welcome. And I hope that the rest of your evening and your night goes well.

I hope you sleep well. You too. Thanks for letting me talk so much. Oh, you're welcome. It's been great. And I guess the only way to turn off the live stream is to shut this down. Okay. Let's shut it down.

[106:41] All right. Good night. Abondation 2.

I'm agreeing then. All right. Okay. Out. We are sitting here now. Oh, we're at tub. Up. We're actually sitting here now. A little full tub. We're at how we■■■ to shower. All right.

You're at the TV space. What was your life or... Abondation 2. What's your life or what you think the other face of ■■■■■■■■, and how to do the type of illusion. What is your life or what we need? By the way to your life or what you're missing, are you roads. How to do this inside, wenn you wake up, you have good nights and our spaces meet.