

Luke 1:1-25

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[0 : 00] Stand together as we read the Word of God, found in Luke chapter 1, verses 1 through 4, get it in context for us, verses 5 through 25 are really our text. Luke, writing here, says, Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile an account of the things accomplished among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the Word, it seemed fitting for me as well, having investigated everything carefully from the beginning, to write it out for you in consecutive order, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the exact truth about the things you have been taught.

In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zacharias of the division of Abijah, and he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. They were both righteous in the sight of God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and requirements of the Lord.

But they had no child because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both advanced in years. Now it happened that while he was performing his priestly service before God in the appointed order of his division, according to the custom of the priestly office, he was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense.

And the whole multitude of the people were in prayer outside at the hour of the incense offering. And an angel of the Lord appeared to him standing to the right of the altar of incense. And Zacharias was troubled when he saw the angel in fear or gripped him.

But the angel said to him, Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your petition has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will give him the name John. You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and he will drink no wine or liquor, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit while yet in his mother's womb.

[1 : 35] And he will turn many of the sons of Israel back to the Lord their God. It is he who will go as a forerunner before him in the spirit and power of Elijah to turn the hearts of the fathers back to the children and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous so as to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

Zacharias said to the angel, How will I know this for certain? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years. And the angel answered and said to him, I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God and have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news.

And behold, you shall be silent and unable to speak until the day when these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their proper time. And the people were waiting for Zacharias and were wondering at his delay in the temple.

But when he came out, he was unable to speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the temple, and he kept making signs of them and remained mute. When the days of his priestly service were ended, he went back home.

And after these days, Elizabeth, his wife, became pregnant, and she kept herself in seclusion for five months, saying, This is the way the Lord has dealt with me in the days when he looked with favor upon me to take away my disgrace among men.

[2 : 42] Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for this great opportunity which you have given us to read your word. Lord, we thank you for the privilege it is. Lord, we also thank you for the word itself, and pray now that it would grip our hearts and minds.

Lord, I pray this account which we have read and heard so often, Lord, would come to us with a fresh. Lord, that we would see it in splendor and glory, and that we would hear exactly what it is you're telling us. Speak to our hearts and our minds, and Lord, draw us closer to you.

And we ask it all in Christ's name. Amen. You may be seated. We go to Luke chapter 1, verses 5 through 25, and we find the very first herald of the angels.

As a matter of fact, this is when God broke the silence of over 400 plus years. I think it was somewhere around 430 years since someone had heard a very clear, distinct word of God. And God begins to speak here, and he speaks, and he breaks that silence with an angel, and not just an angel, but with the angel, Gabriel. Gabriel is one of the archangels, or one of the angels of highest level, is one with great authority.

[3 : 47] We find Gabriel in the book of Daniel wrestling against the prince in power of the air and against the prince of media. We see him being there who is wrestling with authority and power, and we see him opposing Satan so that Daniel's prayers can be heard.

But what we see is God sending Gabriel with a message, a herald. And this herald we want to see this week in Luke is a call to awaken.

A call to awaken. The very first thing the angels heralded from heaven was simply a cry to wake up. It was wake up and take notice and see what is going on.

It is a call to awaken. I read verses 1 through 4 in the Gospel of Luke because I love the way Luke addresses this, and we'll start there because really it is just an introduction.

You know that Luke wrote the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts, and you know that both of them were written to an individual named Theophilus. Theophilus literally is translated lover of God.

Evidently, Theophilus held a position in Roman society because the Gospel of Luke is, oh, most excellent Theophilus, which is a proper title, one of authority or prestige in the Roman Empire.

[4 : 59] But by the time he writes the book of Acts, it is just to Theophilus. He must have lost his position. Some ascertain from this that he probably lost that position because of his belief in Jesus Christ, which is probably likely.

He had probably changed his name to be a lover of God and one who is no longer calling Caesar Lord but Jesus Lord. And we see that he is one who is really trying to figure out his faith.

And the reason I love verses 1 through 4, they give us an assurance of how we can speak of the things of Christ because the time of Christmas is a great time to speak of the things of Christ. He says all we have to do is compile an account of the things that have been accomplished among us.

And I know this really isn't the message. This is a message inside of a message, and it's been a while since I've preached, so you'll just bear with me, right? All you have to do is talk about the things that Jesus Christ has done. You don't have to give your opinion.

I want to tell you one thing, that if you proclaim the things which he has done, that is enough because he has done more than we could ever talk about, right? And we don't have to tell what we think he is or who we think he is. All you have to say is, yeah, but he walked on the water.

[5 : 57] He raised from the tomb. The tomb's not there. There are so many really facts that we can proclaim, the things that he has accomplished among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word.

So here we're just going to be servants of the word, proclaiming only that which he has done, which the word is revealed to us, and investigating everything carefully from the beginning to write it out for you in consecutive order, most excellent Theophilus.

You know, I have found that there is no harm in investigating scripture. The more you investigate it historically, accurately, and even linguistically you get into the wording of it, the more foundational faith you will have in it.

I don't really think that you ought to ever get too studious to think that you will ever undermine scripture. Actually, the more you investigate it, the more you will build up scripture. You will be those who stand on it.

But we're looking at the call to awaken found by the angel Gabriel in the temple. And there are a number of things that we notice about this, and we'll just go through them very quickly.

[6 : 57] And we see it in this text that is so familiar to us. Now, when you have your Bibles before you, I don't know what type of Bible you have. I have a Rowery Study Bible that I use on Wednesday nights, and I read out of it every day.

And it has a portion of scripture in the middle that is there for just studying purposes. But this one that I choose to preach out of on Sunday morning simply because, well, if you want to know why, it's a side reference Bible.

It keeps everything right in the middle in my eyes. I am one of those kind of distracted by everything that goes on, right? So I kind of get carried away. So I need a Bible that's very simple on Sunday mornings to keep me focused. So if you take your Bibles and you look and you have the book of

Malachi in the Old Testament, the book of Matthew in the New Testament, you'll see there is like a single page.

Don't get mad at me. I know my binding is broke, okay? People get all upset. Man, pastor, you've been hard on your Bible. Yes, I have. I tend to use it, and that's okay, right? But there is a single page, that thin little piece of page.

That thin little piece of page represents over 400 years of what we call intertestament time. And in that intertestament time, while God was silent, it does not mean he was inactive, right?

[8 : 02] Just because you don't hear God doesn't mean God's not doing anything. There's a lot that happens historically in the nation of Israel in that intertestament time from Malachi to Matthew.

Actually, it would be from Malachi to Luke chapter 1 because this is the beginning of the events that take place. And this is when God broke that silence. But what is happening there in that intertestament time is God's people continue on.

God's people are going in and out of captivity. Not necessarily captivity, but being ruled by this people group and then being ruled by this people and being ruled by Egypt, being ruled by the Seleucids, being ruled by...

Well, actually, the Seleucids came after Alexander the Great and being ruled by the Roman Empire. Having their own independence for 100 plus years because of the Maccabean Revolt. And then having Herod the Great set up and all these things are going on.

But the one consistent thing that is happening is the temple worship because the worship is there, right? Herod comes in and he's called Herod the Great not because he's a good guy. I don't know if you know a lot about Herod the Great that we find in Scripture.

[9 : 03] Herod's not necessarily a good guy. He married a lady for political purposes, got his promotion and decided to kill her because he was scared of her and he murdered all but one of his sons because he was afraid that his sons would take his throne.

He was a very, really just a conniving individual. But he was great because he was a great builder. He was progressive in that. It's amazing what Herod did for the people of Israel, really for his own purposes.

They were self-serving. They weren't really, let's just say he was doing it for the betterment of the country. But Israel had no natural seaport so he decided to build one, Caesarea Philippi, where he would build that seaport.

In order to build that seaport, he had to have a bulwark where it would break the sea so that the ships could come in. So he developed underwater concrete. Isn't that pretty cool? So they came up with underwater concrete so that they could pour these concrete piers in the Mediterranean Sea so that they could build a seaport.

He also developed an aqueduct system that took water from the Mediterranean Sea over to Jerusalem, and that was in operation until like the 1940s. People, I'm talking about he developed that like BC, right?

[10 : 06] Gravity fed. And then one of the greatest accomplishments he did is he built the temple. And the temple was there. Herod's temple was the last temple that the Jewish people had. And it was a magnificent structure.

And in this, the temple worship was going on. And this is something that was happening for years and something that was really a tradition. And we'll get to it in just a moment. And this is the place that God chose to break the silence and also the place, let's not lose the irony of it, when God chose to send his angel, Gabriel, to wake his people up.

And it was a call to awaken. We are introduced here, first of all, to the right people because we see here there was a man named Zacharias of the division of Abijah. And he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth.

Now, Zacharias was of the right lineage. He was of the right people. He was of the division of Abijah, which we can find in the book of 1 Chronicles. And we can see David coming in with the 24, breaking up the 24 divisions of the Levites and the 24 divisions of the priests so that they would have their time of temple worship.

And they were doing it when they were kind of some of that boring part, you say, of Chronicles. This is why those lineages matter, right? Because everything matters in God's economy, and he's pretty consistent there. So he was of the right people group, right?

[11 : 20] He was speaking to someone whose heritage had been passed down and someone who had a direct lineage from Aaron and Levi and from the tribe of Levi. And he was there, and he was

of this people group, one of those 24 divisions that were called all the way back in the time of David to be those who worked in the tabernacle or the temple.

This was an appointed order, and Zacharias was of that appointed order. He was the right people. His wife was of the right lineage because she was a daughter of Aaron.

So we have not only the people of right lineage, they're also the people of right character because it says they were both righteous and blameless. That doesn't mean they were perfect, but it says they were righteous and blameless as to the commandments of the Lord their God.

So they're the right people with the right character. Now pay attention to this, okay? Because in a day when God had been silent for over 400 years, and in a day when the high priest was more of a political office that was served for economic reasons than it was a religious office, and all these political schisms had happened, and all these people were over here.

You had the Pharisees who were the scribes and the Bible translators, and the Pharisees who were the legalists, right? And they were saying, do this, do this, don't do this, don't do that, don't do this. And you had the Essenes who said, you know, everybody has it wrong.

[12 : 33] We're going to go out and live in the desert by ourselves, which, by the way, many believe that John the Baptist lived with them. And they were all males, and they died out. That shouldn't astound anyone, okay? They were monastic males who went and lived in a community out here and just left everybody alone, said, everybody else has got it wrong.

We got it right. We're going to go out here and do it right. And for some reason, they dwindled out. So there's the Essenes, and then there are the Herodians. The Herodians are those who supported Herod, right?

And they are those who say, well, Herod's not that bad of a guy. We like what Herod's doing. And the reason they supported Herod is because Herod made things good, right? He brought in fun stuff. There was great things happening in the economy.

He was a great builder. He was a promoter. And then there were the Sadducees. The Sadducees said, well, there's no resurrection. There's no angels. That's amazing. You know what's so astounding about this?

Okay, the Sadducees held the office of the high priest because they bought it. They were of more economic wealth. So what happened is when Rome took over, they would put the office of high priest up for bid.

[13 : 35] And the Sadducees had prospered a little bit more in business, so they gave the highest bid. And if you held the office of high priest, that meant you were like the second highest ruler in the land.

Okay, there was Herod, and then there were you. You were the high priest. You were over all religious things, no political things, but you had your own court system. You had the Sanhedrin. You had your own trials. You had everything that was happening in your realm.

So they had placed the most money. The Sadducees did not believe in angels. They were the high priest. The very first place an angel shows up is inside the temple, which is where the high priest was over.

I don't know if you catch the irony of that, but I think it's pretty cool how God says, you don't believe me, but that's okay. I'm still going to do it anyway. But what we see here is you have, during that time, Zacharias and Elizabeth are living blameless.

They're living right. All I want you to see here, listen, they are of the right lineage, and they're the right character. Here's the people, but they were still asleep.

[14 : 40] You know what? You can have a great lineage. You can even have pretty good character, doing everything good compared to everybody else, and still be asleep in your faith. How do we know they were asleep?

Well, stay with me. There's a lot more there, right? Not only were they the right people, they were in the right place, because Zacharias was at the temple. Now, where would you expect God to show up? At the temple, right? At the temple is where you expect God to show up.

Zacharias is there, and he's serving around the temple, because he was of the tribe. They're of the right people, his order of Abijah, and they would have a time where they would go and serve for a couple of weeks around the temple.

So this was his time. So he said, all right, Elizabeth, now's our time. We gotta go serve. Now, it's not just a small group. It's everybody of that clan that was there serving, and they would just draw by

lots. Now, we know the Bible says that man casts lots, but God chooses the outcome, right? So there's no such thing as luck. There's no such thing as chance. They cast lots into the lap, but God determines the outcome of it. So they chose lots, and Zacharias was chosen. And Zacharias is given a once, literally a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, because you could never do this again.

[15:43] So many people were of the right family, and of the right lineage, and of the right tribes, and never had the opportunity to even go inside the temple, because there were so many of them. But Zacharias was given this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and that was to go inside the temple and burn incense on the altar of incense.

Now, if you walked in, you would walk into the temple. Guys that have been with me on Sunday nights kind of get this picture from the tabernacle as well. But you'd walk into the temple. The door would be there. You'd have to go through the court of women or the court of Gentiles.

Okay, that's where everybody can hang out. Then you'd go into the court of women where the Jewish women and Jewish men can hang out. Then you'd go into the court of the Jews where only the Jewish men can hang out. And then you would actually go into the temple.

And when you got into the temple, there would be the altar and there would be the basin that you would wash in. And then as you were getting closer to the Holy of Holies, which only the high priest could go once a year, right there in front of the Holy of Holies where God's presence was supposed to dwell, supposedly His manifest presence there, the Holy of Holies, where the Ark of the Covenant was, there's this little two cubits by two cubits by two cubits altar of incense that had a fire going.

And God had said every morning that a priest should go in and burn incense on this altar every morning so that the soothing aroma would ascend to Him forever. Now this incense, now stay with me because it all matters, these types matter, was to be a representation of the prayers of God's people ascending to heaven.

[17:05] Okay, it was supposed to be a physical reminder. What you say ascends to me. I hear your prayers. So he's in the right place. Zacharias is in the place where God is showing him, I hear your prayers.

He's of the right family. He's of the right lineage. He's of the right character. And he is literally standing in front of something where God says, I hear your prayers.

And yet he is amazed when God shows up. The angel of the Lord appeared and fear gripped him. And the angel says, your prayers have been answered.

He said, there's no way. You know what is shocking? What's so shocking is that today God's people are more amazed when He shows up in church than they are when He's not there.

If we ever go to a church service and man, God really shows up, we won't quit talking about it. I mean, He was there. He's all over that place. He was all over that place. He was all over that place. I mean, oh, I mean, you could tell it. You could see it.

[18:14] People were testifying. The Bible says, we're two or more gathered together. I am there as well. Shouldn't it amaze us more if He's not here? Shouldn't we say, I'm waiting until we know you're here?

Instead of saying, wouldn't it be cool if He showed up today? And tell me that what the angel was doing was not calling His people to wake up.

Because the right person at the right place was scared when God showed up. I wonder how many of us at this time of year, oh yeah, there is Emmanuel.

Emmanuel, Emmanuel is great. Emmanuel is God with us. But all of a sudden when we realize God is with us, we are filled with fear and wonder and amazement.

And I'm not saying we shouldn't fear the Lord our God, but we definitely should not doubt as Zacharias did. This is us. Which shows us that there was a pattern to be broken. Because what had happened and it happened in a very short amount of time.

[19:23] Is it in the span of those 400 years of silence God's people had grown accustomed to come, fulfill your order, go in, burn the incense, come out, go home. Come, fulfill your order, go in, burn your incense, come out, go home.

Right? It had become a routine. They had really gotten into this rut. God wasn't speaking to anyone. God wasn't manifesting Himself in any astounding way.

We never really have any kind of testimonial evidence that the Shekinah glory of God ever filled Herod's tabernacle. We just don't, our temple. We have the testimony that when Solomon built his

temple, the Shekinah glory of God fell.

We know the Shekinah glory of God fell in the tabernacle because nobody could go into it at the end of the book of Exodus. We know that when Solomon's temple was built, 2 Chronicles 6 and 7, he dedicates it, that the Shekinah glory of God fills the temple and no one can go in there.

But we never really have any other testimony of the Shekinah glory of God ever filling that. So really, it was this routine. That's where we go, that's where we do our thing and then we go home. That's where we go, that's when we do our thing and then we go home.

[20 : 29] That's where we go, that's where we do our thing and then we go home. And they were born into this. This is why I love, listen, I love all people. I really get excited. I do. I really love people and I love people who stand on the heritage of faith.

I love people who stand on the heritage of faith. But, man, I get excited when I get around a believer who had nothing to do with church growing up, and they look at me and go, I'm sorry, I don't know how this works. And I say, that's awesome. We don't need to know how it works.

Because Zacharias knew how it worked. Come, go in, burn your incense, come out. If that wasn't the routine that needed to be broken, then why in the world were everybody else outside wondering why he was taking so long?

Because if it was expected, when you go in there, you're going to meet with God, I'd be like, hey, man, hang out as long as you need to. They're like, man, all you got to do, listen, all you got to do is walk in there, put a little pinch of incense on the coals, and come out.

This was the pattern to be broken. I thank God that at times in our life, and sometimes it takes years like 2020, sometimes it takes other circumstances, where we have to break the pattern and get over doing what we've always done so that maybe we could expect more than we've ever expected.

[21 : 57] And what happens here is God breaks the pattern. It only took a couple hundred years for them to break that pattern. How long has it been since Jesus Christ ascended into the air?

Right? A couple thousand now. Now, you think we're not in any kind of pattern? It is this pattern that had to be broken. And when he broke this pattern, he came and he pronounced to them, or there was a problem he had to overcome.

There was this problem. I know I'm just making my way through it. By the way, there's six points in case anybody ever want to know. It's been a little while since my wife gave me a look. I go, oh, no, but they all tie together, right? And I got time. So there's this problem that had to be overcome.

There's six more. I'm just joking. There's not six more. Not at all. I just wanted to see if you're still listening. The longest message I ever preached had 11 points, okay? But they all tied together.

So we see this problem that had to be overcome. Men always tell us to remind us of this. This is a great passage. We have biblical authority and stuff on this. Your wife is never old. Your wife is never old.

[22 : 56] You have biblical authority. You are old. She is advancing. Zacharias says, I am old, and my wife is advanced in years. I believe that God moved men to speak the word of God, right?

So your wife is never old. She's just advancing. Whatever that is, maybe she's advancing at a higher rate than she wants to, but she's not old. Don't say, I'm old and my wife is old. There's the problem. I'm old. She's advancing, right?

She's advancing in years. But the problem was that Elizabeth was barren and they had no children. And Zacharias wasn't there by chance. He was there because God chose the lot. So God took the right people at the right place to break a pattern and he chose someone with a problem.

The reality, whoever God chooses has a problem. And a lot of times God delays until that problem gets to the point that it has to be him. Right?

God delays until it gets to that point where it must be him because he's calling his people to wake up. And a lot of times that call to wake up comes in the midst of our greatest problems.

[23 : 57] And when we realize, hey, listen, I'm too old for this or I'm advancing too far for this or I don't know if I'm able to do this. Or there's all these physical limitations and there's all these impossibilities.

And God's like, I know. That's why I chose you. Because that led us to the very next thing, that power to be displayed. Our problems are the very platforms for his power.

Our problems are the very platform for his power. He says, I know you have a problem. Listen, I am Gabriel who stands in the presence of God Almighty. Zacharias, we know how the story goes.

Zacharias says, how will I know these things will be? How can I know? It amazes us because the angel says your prayers have been heard. Now, here's the thing that we must ascertain from this, okay? This must have been a prayer that Zacharias and Elizabeth had prayed many years earlier. Because if Zacharias had just been praying when he put that on there, then he wouldn't be amazed. He must not have been saying, oh, God, give me a child. And then when the angel said, you're going to have a child, oh, thank you. But he says, your prayers have been answered.

[25 : 04] So this must have been a prayer that had been offered many, many, many years before that. Because Zacharias was certain that he was well beyond, especially his wife, well beyond those childbearing years.

Which tells us, if we're praying for something, don't set a timetable for God to answer that prayer, right? Sometimes he answers that prayer when the problem gets too big.

And so Zacharias says, well, these things can't happen. There's no way this is going to happen.

And Gabriel reminds him of the power which he represents, not the power he has. And he reminds him of the power that is going to be there. And he gives all these emphatics.

You will have a son. He will be great in the sight of the Lord. He will drink no wine or liquor. That is, he'll be a Nazarite, right? He will be filled with the Holy Spirit yet in his mother's womb. He will turn many of the sons of Israel back to the Lord their God.

And it is he who will go as a forerunner. I love how God speaks in power because God speaks as things that are already taking place when they're yet to be. It's just like when he led the nation of Israel out of Egypt into the promised land.

[26 : 04] He was speaking as if they were already in that promised land. God declares things to be because he shows us that these problems which we possess are to be the platform of the power he wants to display.

God breaks the silence and God calls the church to wake up because he knows the church is in a rut full of problems. And he wants to put his power on display.

And he really wants, there'll be a problem with Mary, by the way. Mary is a virgin, right? So there's kind of a problem. It's just a minor little problem. We'll get to that next week. But what we see is that God uses the problems to display his power.

And finally, we see that this is going to be a promise to be fulfilled. This is a promise to be fulfilled.

The very last thing God says to the nation of Israel is in Malachi.

Now, every time you open up your Old Testament, you're not necessarily reading things in chronological order. All right? Many of the prophetic books overlap one another, and some of them are not in the order that you read them.

[27 : 09] But Malachi is the last word from God before he goes silent for over 400 years. And the very last thing that God says in Malachi 4, verse 6 says, well, let's read verse 5.

Behold, I'm going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord. Look at verse 6. The very last thing God says. He will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers, so that I will not come and smite the land with a curse.

The very last thing God tells his people is, I'm sending someone to turn the children back. And the very next thing God says, it took him 400 years to say it, he's going to be the one who goes in the power and spirit of Elijah to turn the hearts of the children back to their fathers.

What God is saying is, I am fulfilling my promise. Every time the angels speak, they're speaking the very word of God, and every time the angels speak, they are only proclaiming that which God had already said.

We do not see angels coming with necessarily a new revelation, especially around the Christmas event. What we see is the angels coming with a fulfilled revelation or a manifestation.

[28 : 17] They are coming to proclaim the fulfillment of a promise which God has made. My friend, when he shows up and he calls us to awaken, he is always pointing us back to what he has already promised.

When we as God's people sit down and we consider exactly what it is the Lord our God is telling us at every season, he is always pointing us back to those things which he has already promised us. If we open up our portions of scripture, we open up the word of God, and we see that every promise God has ever given to us has been fulfilled, then we must already be in his presence.

But until that day, there are many, many, many promises that God has extended to his people that are yet to be fulfilled. So when he calls us to wake up and come back to himself and pay special attention to what he is doing, he is always calling us back to remember that which he has already promised us.

And he is about to fulfill those promises to his watching world here through his people at that place because he's going to get the world's attention. But sadly, things have went along so long now, the world has begun to pay less and less attention.

May we not be those who fall asleep, who get caught in the ruts. My dear friend Billy Howe used to say, a rut is nothing but a grave with both ends knocked out.

[29 : 35] Don't keep doing the same thing over and over and over and over again. One of the first things I wrote down as a new believer, right? Don't get caught in a rut. So many times God's people do that.

But thank God he gives us times where he calls out and says, wake up. Maybe some of us are, first time the alarm clock goes off, we're up and out of bed.

We're ready to go. Maybe some of you are like me where I hit my alarm clock four times this morning, finally got tired of getting up and cutting it off, so then I cut it off. I didn't hit the snooze button, I cut off and I told myself five more minutes, which turned into 15 more minutes, and I realized, oh no, I'm late.

But thankfully, God always pushes home. He says, wake up, wake up, wake up. May we be those people who are awakened by his declarations.

Let's pray. Lord, thank you so much for all you have done. Lord, thank you for your faithfulness to us and thank you for the word which you have provided for us. Lord, we pray that your word would speak to us.

[30 : 43] Lord, that we would awaken to what it is you're calling us to do. Lord, and ultimately in the end that you would be glorified and honored. Lord, this season which we are in the midst of, Lord, is such a wonderful time of the year. Lord, it's a great time of rejoicing, a great time of opportunity.

May we be those who offer comfort to those who need comfort, help to those who need help. Lord, always rejoicing in the chance that you have given us to praise you for all you have done. And we ask it all in Christ's name.

Amen. Amen.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[33 : 02] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[35 : 32] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[38 : 02] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[40 : 32] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.