

The Lord's Care for Us

Acts 20:1-6

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Introduction:

As we continue our sermon series in Acts,

- we come to chapter 20.

In this chapter, we find the Apostle Paul wrapping up his personal labours in Asia, Achaia, and Macedonia.

- There is something very touching and tender about this part of the history.
 - Paul had poured his heart into his ministry among these Gentile regions...
 - He had suffered both insult and injury, and had often been rescued by those to whom he had ministered.
 - He had truly poured himself out for them and for the gospel,
 - He had loved them like a father and had shed many tears for them and had pled *with them* by preaching and *for them* by earnest prayer.
- And now they knew that they would see his face no more...
 - He had told them so, as it says in at the very end of the chapter...
 - **Acts 20:37-38: Then they all wept freely, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the words which he spoke, that they would see his face no more. And they accompanied him to the ship.**
- It may surprise you to know that the events of chapter 20 probably took place over a period of about two years—from the summer of 55 to the spring of 56 or perhaps a year later—from the summer of 56 to the spring of 57.
 - During this time, Paul makes his way around to the places he had formerly ministered and pleads with them to continue in the grace of God.
 - It is not until we get to the meeting with the Presbytery of Ephesus at Miletus (in v. 17) that we get a record of the kinds of things Paul was saying to his beloved flock—
 - but we can be sure that his ministry in all the other places would have been similar.
 - He speaks with deep concern for them, longing for them to be faithful and to continue in the grace of the Lord Jesus.
 - He speaks of the danger that they are in from enemies that will arise from inside the church as well as outside.
 - He reminds them of his example among them as a shepherd and he urges those who serve as elders to be faithful shepherds...
 - How he had pled with them in his preaching!
 - How he had sacrificed for them that they might know the riches of the gospel and run the race that was set before them.
 - He does not hesitate to remind them of his own example.
 - They knew that he had loved them.
 - They knew that more than anything, he wanted them to cherish the sweet gospel that he had imparted to them.

My brothers and sisters, the ministry and the passion of this great apostle are very instructive to us.

- He is truly a minister of Jesus Christ—one who represents the Lord Jesus.
 - And so as we look at Paul’s ministry here, we must look beyond Paul to the One who sent him.
 - He was doing the will of the Lord Jesus—and in fact, Paul’s ministry is the ongoing ministry of Jesus Christ.
 - The passion and the tears and sacrificial service are that of Christ beautifully reproduced in His servant!
 - When we see Paul yearning for the disciples to continue in the grace of the Lord, we need to see the yearning of our dear Lord Jesus all the more—
 - the Son of God who actually bore the pains of hell for us in full measure—who loved us and gave Himself for us!
 - What idiots we are if we do not devote ourselves fully to Him...
 - If only we could see the riches of His grace and the breadth and length and depth and height of His love for us!
 - We would cease to trust in our own way and to go our own way and we would wholly devote ourselves to Him!
 - No cross would be too great to bear for Him!
- This whole section is very convicting for me as a minister...
 - When I see Paul, I am pained to see how little I have lived up to the calling that I have been given—
 - I have not poured out my life for you as I ought to have done.
 - I have asked the Lord to forgive me and to help me to be more earnest.
 - But my brothers and sisters, you need not stumble over my inadequacies—the Lord Jesus is the same as ever.
 - Even though I may not have represented Him anywhere nearly as the Apostle Paul did,
 - You still have recorded for you right here in the Scriptures the testimony of this faithful servant...
 - And these things are recorded in the scriptures to be a standing testimony of the way ministry ought to be.
 - So please, look with me at the captivating things that are revealed to us here in Acts 20 and let the importance of clinging to Christ be impressed upon your heart!

Let us begin today with a consideration of the first six verses of Acts 20.

- Much of the two year wrapping-up ministry of the Apostle in Macedonia and Achaia is packed in to these six verses.
 - And here we see four ways that the Lord works in His people that they might continue in His grace.
 - **First, that the Lord unites us in loving relationships as we minister to each other (20:1)**
 - **Second, that the Lord uses us to minister words of encouragement to each other (20:2)**
 - **Third, that the Lord protects us from the plots of our enemies (20:3)**
 - **Fourth, that the Lord raises up many labourers to care for us (20:4-6)**

Let’s begin with the first...

I. The Lord unites us in loving relationships as we minister to each other (20:1)

A. The bond that Paul had with the Ephesians is very obvious here.

- **Acts 20:1: After the uproar had ceased, Paul called the disciples to himself, embraced them, and departed to go to Macedonia.**

A.1. You can see the bond that had developed.

- Paul does not leave without saying farewell to these people he has ministered to for the past couple of years...
 - He calls them to himself and you can see how they embrace as he heads out to Macedonia.
 - This was not his final departure from them—for he will see them again after his wrapping up ministry is complete...
 - That is when many tears are shed.
- But even now, there is an obvious tenderness...shown by their embrace.
 - Friends often realize the bond that they have when it comes time to depart from each other...

A.2. And it is no wonder that this should be so.

A.2.a. Paul had truly poured out his life for these people—teaching them daily as we have seen—

- Only recently he had faced the uproar that arose against him—and before that opposition from the Jews.
- They were sure of his love for them, and they loved him who had first loved them!

A.2.b. Learn from this...

- As you minister to those around you—as you lay down your life for them for Jesus sake—bonds of love will develop by God’s grace...
 - I say “by God’s grace,” because it will not always be so...
 - Sometimes it may be that the more you love the less you are loved... Paul spoke these words to the Corinthians...
 - **2Co 12:15: And I will very gladly spend and be spent for your souls; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I am loved.**
 - But when such is the case, do as he did and keep on spending and being spent...
 - Even if those you love never return your love, you will honour the Lord by your faithfulness...
 - Love them, not because they reciprocate, but because you love the Lord.
 - Any lesser motivation will not last—love must be deep.
 - We must love as Christ loved.
 - Loving enemies is not just a technique to win them over—though it is that in part—it is our calling regardless of whether others return your love.
 - But I say that many times you will win others by loving them.
 - And always you will be doing your part to cultivate a bond of love with them like the bond that Paul had with the Ephesians.
 - It is hard to resist someone laying their life down for you.

B. I want you to think about how God uses love among us...

B.1. The Lord uses it in our lives to help us to be faithful...

- When we love one another, we do not want to disappoint each other.
 - Think of it—if you have parents that dearly love you, you don't want to do something that would grieve them.
 - Augustine was constantly haunted by his mother's love during the time of his rebellion—and the Lord used this to draw him.
 - It can be the same with our brothers and sisters in the church.
 - Even when Paul was gone, the Ephesians would be inclined to often think, “What would Paul say about this?”
 - The influence of a godly mother who loved you often remains long after she is gone.
- Of course if you are only going through the motions of serving God for the sake of your parents or other believers in the church,
 - that is a tragic thing... if you have no personal relationship with the Lord.
 - But if God uses your relationship with them as a means of preserving you from temptation—and of preserving your walk with Him...
 - the love of others is simply one of the many ways He uses to preserve you in His grace—and is good...

B.2. Jesus actually uses us to minister His love to those around us.

- The loving care that Paul had for the church was an actual outworking of Jesus' love...
 - I don't mean to say that Paul was passive and that it was the Spirit that was moving his body...
 - There is a false doctrine like that...
- But I mean that when we understand the sovereignty of God, we understand that all things are from God!
 - We understand that when someone comes along to help us, that yes, that individual has helped us and is to be thanked,
 - but we also understand that God is over it all and that He is the one who brought that help to us in His providence.
 - If someone gives me food, I thank them, but then I also thank the Lord.
 - The story is told of a widow who prayed by her open window for food.
 - A group of mischievous boys heard her prayer and ran to get some food and put it on her window sill to trick her.
 - She saw the food and began thanking the Lord.
 - The boys began to laugh and mock and called out that it was not God, but they who had put the food there...
 - To which the woman replied—“Oh no, the LORD gave me the food! You were only His instruments who brought it to me.”
- When we love one another, it causes thanks to be returned to God.
 - It is God's ministry of love that we have the privilege of delivering—
 - When we care for others, God Almighty is caring for them and we are the instruments He is using.
 - The LORD Jesus had faithfully ministered to the Ephesians, and He did it through the Apostle Paul.

TRANS> So you see that we have much reason for cultivating love in the church—it will truly help us all to continue in the grace of the Lord.

- But there are additional reasons as well.

C. Let me give you three additional reasons for cultivating bonds of love...

C.1. First, Jesus said that this is one of the principal ways that the onlooking world will know that we are His disciples!

- **Joh 13:35 “By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”**

- This is one of the ways that we are meant to stand out from the world as believers.

- Jesus’s love is so amazing that we can never be thought of as His followers unless we also love one another.

- John says:

- **1Jo 4:20: If someone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar.**

C.2. Another reason to cultivate bonds of love for one another is because it is very pleasant to live in such love...

- Psalm 133 says:

- **Ps 133:1: Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!**

- We are human beings, and we were made in God’s image!

- Like the triune God Himself, we are social beings, and we delight in loving companionship.

- So it is in your interest as well as that of the whole assembly to do what you can to cultivate bonds of love...

- You can’t control what other people do, but you can do your part.

C.3. And yet another reason is simply because our Lord calls us to love each other.

- He calls us to love one another as He has loved us...

- This is simply the right thing for us to do—it is God’s commandment from our creation to love one another...

- And now that Jesus came, the commandment is enhanced in that now we are to love as He has loved us and given Himself for us.

- It is what we are meant to do—what we were created to do and what we have been redeemed to do.

TRANS> I am sure you are all grieved by how short you have come—I know I am...

- But how thankful we should be that if we confess our sins, the Lord is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

- Let us henceforth endeavour to represent Him well in our love for one another, and let us pray that love will be cultivated in our families and in our church.

- Truly, He is the One who gives us these loving relationships!

- It is His love reproduced in us for His glory.

- How let’s look at the second way our Lord’s care for us is demonstrated in this passage...

II. Second, that the Lord uses us to minister words of encouragement to each other (20:2)

A. You see how Paul goes all over Macedonia and Achaia to encourage the disciples of Christ with words.

- Verse 2 explains...
 - **Acts 20:2: Now when he had gone over that region and encouraged them with many words, he came to Greece [the popular name for Achaia] and stayed three months.**
- A.1. From all that we can tell by looking at the things Paul says in his epistles (for example, in 1 Cor 1-7),
 - A.1.a. Paul spent well over a year ministering in Macedonia.
 - No doubt, he went back to the churches he had established there—to Philippi, to Thessalonica, to Berea...
 - These churches were continually on his heart and he wanted to go to them to see how they were doing and to encourage them...
 - But understand... as much as these churches were on the heart of Paul, they were even more on the heart of the Lord Jesus!
 - Paul went to them, but it was the Lord Jesus who sent Him there because He would have Paul minister to them.
 - He wanted Paul to leave a final and lasting impression on them to help them to be faithful.
 - It was Jesus' mercy to the congregations in this region to bring these words of encouragement through Paul.
 - According to what Paul says in his letter to the Romans, this is probably the time he went as far as Illyricum.
 - A.1.b. And then we are told that he went to Greece (or Achaia) for three months!
 - He likely spent most of his time at Corinth where he had laboured in the past.
 - He had already been to Corinth at least twice...
 - There was his initial visit when he remained there to plant to church...
 - And again at some time while he was at Ephesus—when he had to go and rebuke them...
 - And this was followed by a hard letter that we no longer have...
 - There were many problems in this church that had to be worked out.
 - Paul speaks about this in his letters to them and about how anxious he had been to hear from Titus who had visited them at this time after the hard letter.
 - Paul speaks about how he was so concerned about them that he could hardly minister at Troas—even though the door was wide open to him.
 - He was very relieved when he finally met up with Titus in Macedonia,
 - And it was then that he wrote 2 Corinthians in which he explains all this...
 - And now, in our passage, we see that he went to visit them again.
 - You can imagine that he would have many words to say to them!
- A.2. And indeed, we are told that in all the places Paul went, his primary ministry was “to encourage them with many words.”
 - A.2.a. Paul went about ministering words of encouragement in all of these places.
 - The word “encourage (παρακαλεω par-ak-al-eh'-o)” is that word we have seen so much in Acts and in the ministry of Paul when he returns to churches he had planted.
 - It is such a rich word—there no one English word that can pick up the full meaning of this word...

- It means to come to someone's side and to speak into their lives according to what is most needed...
- It is to exhort, to comfort, to encourage, to help...
- The Holy Spirit Himself is called the "paraklete"—the helper—the comforter...

A.2.b. And you see that Paul exercised this ministry with many words!

- He did not hold back what was needed.
 - He wanted to do all he could to confirm them in the grace of God and this is best done by the ministry of the word.
 - He wanted to instruct them about all that the Lord has done for us and about how to live—and this he did by preaching and teaching...
 - And he wanted to correct their errors and their wrong ways of thinking and living and this he did by preaching publicly and from house to house...
 - And he wanted to urge them to cleave to the Lord and not depart from Him—and to warn them to guard what they had been given...
 - and this also he did by many words.

TRANS> And as an apostle, the words he spoke were the Lord's words.

- That letters we have from him are the very word of God in the fullest sense.

B. My brothers and sisters, you need to understand that power for encouragement is found in the Word of the Lord!

B.1. You all need the word in your own life...

- This is where needed comfort, exhortation, and instruction is to be found.
- When you belong to Jesus, He faithfully brings His word to you.
 - It is one of the chief ways He cares for you.
 - And if you are wise, you will make use of the scriptures—
 - you will read the Bible and you will listen at family worship and you will listen to preaching at church...
 - And you will listen to your brothers and sisters when they speak the word into your life.
 - Surely you want to grow and flourish as Christ's disciples!
 - Paul knew that the word was what was needed most of all for that to happen, and it is still the case today.
 - Oh how he yearned for these churches to be established—and that is why he preached so much in every place.

B.2. And not only ought you to receive the word—you are also to minister it to one another day by day...

- If you see someone doing the will of God, encourage them...
- If you see someone who is weak and wavering, strengthen them with the word and encourage them to go on...
- If you see someone who is sorrowing and struggling, go to them with God's promises to comfort them...
- And if they are rebellious then go to them to rebuke them and use the word to restore them.

- Jesus uses us to deliver His word to each other...
- You don't have to always be quoting verses, but you are to be always speaking what has its basis in God's word.

TRANS> It was Paul's custom to encourage others with many words and this ought to be our custom as well.

- When you do, you will be extending God's care to others...
- So now we have seen two ways that the Lord cares for us—
 - giving us loving relationships with each other...
 - and giving us words of encouragement from each other...
- And now, third, I want you see the Lord's care in that ...

III. The Lord protects us from the plots of our enemies (20:3)

A. From what we can tell, Paul was wanting to get to Jerusalem for the Passover.

A.1. As he went around to the different churches, he had been busy collecting offerings for the poor in Jerusalem.

- We know this from 2 Corinthians.
- So he was planning to board a ship to Syria—which was where you went when you were heading up to Jerusalem...
 - But verse 3 tells us that he learned of a plot against him and decided not to embark...
 - **Acts 20:3: And when the Jews plotted against him as he was about to sail to Syria, he decided to return through Macedonia.**
- Paul had enjoyed a lot of protection from the authorities in Corinth,
 - Some of them were his friends...
 - so the Jews were restrained from their persecutions of him there,
 - but boy did they want to get him!
 - Not only he had established a Christian church right next to their synagogue,
 - but he had led two of their synagogue leaders to the Lord!
- And so when they got wind of his plans to sail to Jerusalem...they saw their golden opportunity!
 - Of course many of them would have been going up to Jerusalem for the Passover as well...
 - We do not know exactly what they planned...
 - Perhaps simply to tie something heavy to him and toss him in the sea!
 - But whatever it was, Paul found out about it and decided not to go on this ship to Syria!

A.2. This reminds me of Psalm 92:11 in our Psalter which is rendered (without all the supplied words of the NKJV),

- **“You made see the spies and hear what plotters said.”**
- It is the Lord who enabled Paul to learn what had been plotted against him because it was not yet his time to die.
 - The Lord still had more work for him to do, so He revealed the plot.
- We see this very often in the scripture...
 - It already happened to Paul at Thessalonica and Berea...

- It will happen to Paul again after his arrest in Jerusalem when his nephew discovers another plot and reveals it to Paul and then to the Romans.
- And it happened repeatedly with the Lord Jesus Christ Himself when He learned of plots and escaped from His enemies.
 - Of course, once the appointed time had come for His crucifixion,
 - He willingly submitted to His enemies...
 - But the point is that He was protected by the Lord until the appointed time that He might complete the work that the Lord had given Him to do.

B. My brothers and sisters, you also are under God's protection until you have completed the work that He has given you to do.

B.1. Learn from this that you need not be afraid—for yourself or for others!

B.1.a. Increasingly, we live in uncertain times as believers or even as citizens.

- We have long enjoyed a luxury that most Christians have not had...
 - the luxury of serving Christ in almost complete safety.
- But increasingly, it is evident that more and more people are against us.
 - We also see God's hand of judgement closing in on our society and the wealth that we enjoy.

B.1.b. It is all too easy to be inappropriately anxious because of these developments.

- But the Bible teaches us that we are to be anxious for nothing.
 - But don't misunderstand what that means.
 - It does not mean that we are to bury our heads in the sand and pretend that nothing is happening...
 - Nor does it mean that we not to take action to protect ourselves as Paul does and as Jesus so often did.
 - Jesus tells us to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.
- Trusting God rather means that we must not allow ourselves to ever forget that our lives are totally in God's hands and that He will protect us.
 - We are to trust in the Lord at all times—and to be thankful when we can see the evil coming and protect ourselves.
 - **Pr 22:3 A prudent man foresees evil and hides himself, but the simple pass on and are punished.**
 - But in every case, you must put the matter in the hands of your loving heavenly Father—while doing what you can to protect yourself.

B.2. And if it should come about that you must either suffer or deny Christ,

- there is nothing better than to suffer for Him!
- You can be sure that it is the will of your loving heavenly Father for you to suffer at such times and you must remember that it is a great privilege to suffer for Christ and His kingdom.
 - You have been telling people who do not love Him of your love for Him—
 - Now you have an opportunity to demonstrate that love.
 - You can tell the world that you would rather suffer and die than deny Christ!
 - You can seal your testimony with your own blood.

- We take note that Paul, very properly, did not board the ship, but we should also take note of what else he did not do...
 - He did not soften his message—he did not cease to preach the full gospel of Christ.
 - If he had been one to do that, he would have changed his message long before and prevented many plots and injuries.
 - But think what else would have been lost by taking such a course!
 - Think of all the converts all over the world that humanly speaking, would not have been reached.
 - Of course we may say that God would have reached them in another way...
 - But there is also a sense in which we cannot say that, because the way God had determined for them to be reached was through the bold ministry of Paul!
 - His decree of election could not be changed,
 - but neither could His decree of using Paul to reach the elect and to provide us with Scripture.
- The point is, it is fine for us to take appropriate measures to protect ourselves...
 - but it is never appropriate to depart from the Lord to do so.

TRANS> And let me say further that you don't have to wait until your life is in danger to suffer for Christ.

B.3. All of you have opportunities to do this that arise in everyday affairs.

B.3.a. For example, look at what I have to do...

- I have to preach things from this pulpit that could get me in trouble.
 - I can't look at my family and say, "But I have to protect my family."
 - The Lord had appointed me to care for them at this time, but if doing His will removes me from that role,
 - it is no longer His will for me to protect them.
 - I can't protect them without His enablement anyway—and if I depart from His will, I put them in greater danger.

B.3.b. Some of you have opportunity to show your love for Christ by refusing to sacrifice the Lord's Day.

- You may not be able to sing in a choir that requires you to perform on the Lord's Day...but that simply means it is not God's will...
- Or you may not be able to play professional sports—but that simply means that the Lord has something else for you to do.
 - Do not look at this as a bad thing—look at it as an opportunity that the Lord has given you to testify of your love for Him.

TRANS> Now let's move on to look at the fourth way we are taught that the Lord provides care for us...

IV. Fourth, that the Lord raises up many labourers to care for us (20:4-6)

A. It is quite amazing to see the list of men that are mentioned in verse 4!

- **Acts 20:4: "And Sopater of Berea accompanied him to Asia—also Aristarchus and Secundus of the Thessalonians, and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy, and Tychicus and Trophimus of Asia."**

A.1. These were faithful companions of the Apostle Paul—

- As you know, he demanded total commitment from those that served with him—
 - He had no use for half-hearted ministers of Christ!
 - You remember how offended he was with John-Mark when he did not complete the first mission!
 - In other places, he is critical of those who were slack in ministry—
 - In Philippians 2:20, he says of Timothy:
 - **Phil 2:20-21: For I have no one like-minded, who will sincerely care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus.”**
 - That is quite a thing to say!
- So these men listed in Acts 20:4—
 - If they were Paul’s companions in ministry, you can be sure that they were no half-hearted tag along disciples!
 - These were men who were prepared to pour out their lives for Christ and for His people.

A.2. This list of men shows how the Lord had worked in every place...

- Sopater, Aristarchus, and Secundus represent Macedonia...where Paul ministered on his second journey...
 - Gaius and Timothy represent Galatia...from the first missionary journey...
 - Tychicus and Trophimus represent Asia...where Ephesus was...and where Paul ministered on his third journey...
- These men may have all been travelling up to Jerusalem with Paul to deliver the offering that had been collected...
 - If this was so, they would have been able to bring greetings for their various provinces which would have helped to build unity with the saints at Jerusalem—especially with their gifts for the poor.
 - Luke also seems to be with them at this time, because he uses ‘we’ to speak of the company.
- This list of men reminds us how extensively the Lord had worked in all of these places...
 - And it demonstrates His care for His people in raising up these men to serve as shepherds for His people.
 - Paul was not going to be coming back—
 - But the Lord had raised up these men to continue ministry to His people.
 - The future of the church was in their hands...
 - Of course, it was in God’s hands, but these men were leaders that the Lord had raised up to look after His people and help to gather those that were yet to be saved.
 - How He loves His church!
 - How He looks after her!

B. And so it is today—He still raises up labourers to minister to His people...

B.1. The Bible is very clear that the LORD gives elders and pastors and deacons to minister to His people.

- It is very important that these men are faithful to their calling.
- They represent Jesus Christ and provide the care that He has appointed,

- setting the example for His chosen flock,
- protecting them from heretics and deception...
- feeding them and correcting them and encouraging them...
 - as it says in Hebrews 13, keeping watch over their souls as those who must give an account!

B.2. Jesus told us to pray for such labourers—and pray we must.

- They are His gifts to the church.
 - If we do not ask for them, He may withhold them from us for a time!
- What's more, you need to pray for their ministry...
 - Paul himself testified that it was not him, but God's grace that was in him that made him a faithful labourer.
 - They cannot possibly minister as they should apart from the powerful working of the Holy Spirit.
 - Prayer for them is essential!

B.3. Moreover, it is essential for every disciple to come under the care of the elders that Christ has appointed in His church.

- This is His government.
 - He does not have another form of government as some seem to think.
 - Some kind of ethereal government by angels...
 - Or church government within your own heart or your own family...
 - That is not the government He has appointed.
- We have seen in Acts how Paul established elders wherever people were saved...
 - And in his letter to Titus, he speaks of how this was something lacking in the churches at Crete that must be done to establish the churches...
 - And in his letter to Timothy he speaks of how elders are to be selected and how they are to conduct themselves in the house of God which is the church.
- That means that those who refuse to come under the care and discipline of a congregation governed by elders are refusing to come under the care and discipline of Christ.
 - If this is the government He has appointed and they reject it, they are refusing His government.
 - That is why people's excuses for not coming under the care of the church are not sufficient.
 - It is true that the officers of Christ make many mistakes.
 - It is true that they are mere men.
 - But it is still His government and for that reason it is to be submitted to.
 - Perhaps this will help you all to understand why we do not allow people to come to the communion table unless they are members in good standing of a faithful church.
 - A person who has rejected Christ's care and discipline needs to repent and correct that before coming to the table.
 - This is a big problem in our day and we are not being faithful to Christ unless we address it.

TRANS> But we must not lose the main point!

- The main point is that Christ loves us and provides workers to care for our souls and to gather His people into the fold...
 - How thankful we should be for His care and protection...

Conclusion:

Indeed, how thankful we should be for all of His care that we have seen in this little passage.

- Truly, Jesus cares for us in very tangible ways!
 - He unites us in loving relationships
 - He brings words of encouragement and help to us
 - He protects us from those that would destroy us
 - And He raises up leaders to look after our souls.
- It is no surprise that He should care for His people in these ways when we consider how He loved us and gave Himself for us!
 - You know what He did!
 - We were all desperate sinners—all of us have sinned and come short of the glory of God.
 - But the Son of God left the glories of heaven to come and save us.
 - He was born of a virgin and He lived a life of perfect obedience, completely without sin.
 - And then, He was baptized and began to declare that He had come to redeem and to give us eternal life and He did signs and miracles that showed His power over the curse.
 - Then, for our redemption, He went to the cross and bore our iniquities.
 - He took the full penalty of our sins—the very pains of eternal Hell.
 - And then He rose on the third day declaring the good news of forgiveness through the cross to every one who believes.
 - It is no wonder that the one who has done all of this for us would also care for us as we have seen today.
 - It is easy to see why Paul was so zealous to do His work.