

“Miracle at Troas”  
(Acts 20:5-12)

I. Introduction.

A. Orientation.

1. Last week, we were again reminded that as Christians, we will face spiritual warfare; but regardless, we must press on; we must not become discouraged, we must not become casualties of the war.
  - a. Paul was not discouraged by the opposition at Ephesus, or that it was directed against him personally, even though he was merely the messenger of the Gospel: he continued the work, relying on the grace of God in Christ.
  - b. After the commotion had settled down, he called for the disciples from Ephesus to encourage them – probably telling them the same thing he said to the disciples at Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, after he was stoned and left for dead: “Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God” (Acts 14:22).
  - c. Then he went back through Macedonia to encourage them as well.
  - d. When he had finished, he returned to Achaia – where Corinth was situated – to exhort them for three months.
  - e. Finally, when the Jews devised a plot against him, he returned through Macedonia, with several men who had been converted under his ministry and continued the work.
2. We must not give up in our pressing forward:
  - a. Yes, things will be difficult, sometimes more than we can bear, but if we keep our eyes on Christ and draw strength from Him, we will make it.
  - b. We must not forget that the Lord hasn’t left us to do this all alone – He has raised up an army, the body of Christ, to labor together to get this work done.
  - c. And we must remember how much we need the Lord’s exhortations and encouragements to move forward – which is why we must not neglect the assembly of the saints, but meet to be encouraged and to encourage one another to finish the race.

B. Preview.

1. This morning, the Lord gives to us several more encouragements: Even though there is opposition, even though there are battles to fight, there are blessings as well:
  - a. The Gospel had made inroads at Troas: there Paul was able to meet with believers and worship with them.
  - b. The day on which they met – the Lord’s Day – reminded them that though things might be hard now, there was rest ahead from all their many labors.
  - c. The Lord’s Supper they celebrated reminded them that the death of Christ – as well as His resurrection, pictured by the Lord’s Day – would ultimately provide their victory over their greatest enemy: death.

- d. The Paul's preaching brought these truths home to their hearts.
- e. And the miracle the Lord did at Troas reminded them that the Gospel they believed, the hope they had, was real: one day they would be in heaven.
- e. We see something here of the worship of the early church and the things the Lord intended these blessings to remind us of.

2. This is what I want us to consider this morning from our text.

## II. Sermon.

- A. The first encouragement we see here is that there is progress: no matter what the opposition, the Lord will gather those who are His from the world: there was a worshipping church at Troas.
  - 1. Apparently, the men who accompanied Paul – Sopater, Aristarchus and Secundus, Gaius, Timothy, and Tychicus and Trophimus – had gone ahead to Troas – a port city in Asia Minor, the same city in which Paul had the Macedonian vision.
    - a. But this didn't leave Paul by himself: "But these had gone on ahead and were waiting for *us* at Troas" (v. 5; italics added).
      - (i) This first person plural pronoun means that the author of the book – Luke – had rejoined Paul.
      - (ii) Paul first met up with Luke at Troas, on his second missionary journey. Apparently, he accompanied Paul to Philippi – where Paul now was – but not beyond.
      - (iii) It's possible that he had been there this whole time.
    - b. Luke now accompanied Paul back to Troas where he met up with the rest of his party: "We sailed from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread, and came to them at Troas within five days; and there we stayed seven days" (v. 6).
      - (i) Notice that he sailed after the days of Unleavened Bread, showing that he was still keeping the Jewish feasts – which was his right under the Gospel, as long as he kept in his heart the fact that Jesus is the reality who had fulfilled all these shadows.
      - (ii) After he reached Troas, he stayed there for seven days.
        - (a) Certainly, Paul must have used this time to preach the Gospel and minister to the saints there.
        - (b) Among other things, it's quite possible that Luke used this opportunity to gather information for his latest book: The Acts of the Apostles or better entitled, The Continuing Acts of Jesus Christ through His Apostles.
- 2. But we need to recognize that now there is something here that wasn't his first time through: a church.
  - a. At some point, the Lord used Paul to plant a church at Troas.
  - b. Even though there are those who will hate the Gospel because they hate Jesus Christ, there will be those who receive it – God's elect – and that is why we

continue to labor and reach out and pray – out of obedience to the Lord and for them (2 Tim. 2:10): the Lord will bring His elect to faith – we must believe this and continue to reach forward.

B. The second encouragement we see is that there is rest: the day the Lord established for His church is remind us that He has overcome the world and has prepared a place for us in heaven. “On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul *began* talking to them, intending to leave the next day, and he prolonged his message until midnight” (v. 7).

1. Notice when the church was gathering: the first day of the week.
  - a. Why on this day?
    - (i) This was the day Christ was raised from the dead, as we were reminded last week.
    - (ii) This is the day His humiliation ended and His exaltation began.
    - (iii) This is the day the Father vindicated His claims and publicly received His work.
    - (iv) This is also the day Christ overcame the power of death and entered into His rest.
  - b. This is the day the early church gathered to worship, and it was meant to point them ahead to the rest Christ had provided for them, so that they would strive to enter into that same rest: “So there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God. For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His. Therefore let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall, through *following* the same example of disobedience” (Heb. 4:9-11).
2. This day is not merely a duty for us: it is the foreshadowing and foretaste of His promise.
  - a. Christ has opened heaven – our eternal rest – through His work.
  - b. His work of the New Creation was completed on this day, when He rose from the dead and entered into His rest.
  - c. And so we observe this day, according to the fourth commandment, and look forward to that rest ahead of us.
  - d. The Christian Sabbath was not meant to be a burden, and it isn’t, if we love the Lord and want to be with Him – it points us to the end when we will be.
  - e. It is a picture and a sample of His promise of rest.

C. The third encouragement we see here is that there is provision: the Lord has given us a Table to remind us that He has overcome death for us, so we don’t need to fear it.

1. The early church met on this day to celebrate the Lord’s Supper: “On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread” (v. 7).
  - a. Notice that they were gathered *to break bread*.
    - (i) From verse 11, we understand this to mean the Lord’s Supper: breaking “the” bread is a synecdoche – a part for the whole. This is why they met.

- (ii) We see the same thing in 1 Corinthians 11:20, by way of reproof: Paul writes, “Therefore when you meet together, it is not to eat the Lord’s Supper,” which implies that when they meet, it should be to eat the Lord’s Supper.
    - b. This isn’t the only thing they did, of course, but it does show us that the pattern of worship the early church observed was to meet on the first day of the week – the Lord’s Day, to celebrate His resurrection – and they did so in order to break the bread – or to celebrate the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, to commemorate His death.
  - 2. Our Lord wants us to remember these two events to encourage us in His service.
    - a. Through Christ’s death and resurrection, we are freed from death.
    - b. Our greatest fear has been removed, the greatest obstacle to our serving Him overcome.
    - c. If we can learn to appropriate this truth, it will go a long way in freeing us to do Christ’s work.
    - d. Christ has become for us the Bread of Life.
- D. The fourth encouragement we see here is that there is preaching: the Lord appointed that the Word be preached to open these truths to us and comfort us. “On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul *began* talking to them, intending to leave the next day, and he prolonged his message until midnight” (v. 7).
- 1. They celebrated the Lord’s Supper, but not until the Word was preached.
    - a. It wasn’t a short message, but long.
      - (i) Since Paul was leaving the next day, he wanted to make sure that he left them with as much spiritual food as possible.
      - (ii) We could draw from this text that sermons should be long, and that ending at midnight is acceptable, but we realize this is an exception rather than a rule.
    - b. However, notice the people were hungry and stayed to listen.
      - (i) The Scripture is God’s Word.
      - (ii) And God’s people are hungry for its truth and encouragement.
  - 2. Preaching has been appointed as part of the regular worship of God.
    - a. It’s one of the ways the Lord ministers to our needs.
    - b. He wants us to be enlightened by its truth, comforted by its promises, encouraged by its commands, and to be awakened by its threatenings.
    - c. All of these things are a great blessing, and we need them.
- E. The final encouragement in our text is confirmation: the miracle the Lord performed to remind us that the Gospel is true; our hope is real. “There were many lamps in the upper room where we were gathered together. And there was a young man named Eutychus sitting on the window sill, sinking into a deep sleep; and as

Paul kept on talking, he was overcome by sleep and fell down from the third floor and was picked up dead. But Paul went down and fell upon him, and after embracing him, he said, ‘Do not be troubled, for his life is in him.’ When he had gone *back* up and had broken the bread and eaten, he talked with them a long while until daybreak, and then left. They took away the boy alive, and were greatly comforted” (vv. 8-12).

1. These believers were meeting in an upper room on the third floor (v. 9).
  - a. Paul had given a lengthy message, and it had grown late. As they didn’t have electric lights in those days, they lit many lamps.
  - b. But the combination of the late hour and the flickering lamps took its toll on a young man by the name of Eutychus, who made a very poor choice of seats – on the window sill, or more literally, in the window opening.
  - c. As he listened, he sunk into a deep sleep – something which is not too uncommon in a church service – and he fell out the window to his death.
  - d. But there are no accidents in God’s plan. God didn’t directly cause Eutychus to fall from the window, but His plan certainly included that it would happen then and there and in the way it did.
  - e. And why?
    - (i) As a testimony to His Word. In those days, the Lord was still confirming the messenger and His message through miracles.
    - (ii) And what better way than to raise a man from the dead?
    - (iii) He was dead when Paul went down to him, but the Lord raised him again to life: what an appropriate picture of what the Gospel is able to do in the spiritual realm as well.
  - f. After the boy was raised, they went back to their worship, and celebrated the Lord’s Table – remembering that through His death, He overcame death – something they had just seen with their own eyes.
  - g. Then after they spent time in fellowship, Paul departed, leaving them a constant reminder of Christ’s ability to save – the boy who had died, but was mercifully raised again to life.
2. The Lord hasn’t left us with this one miracle, but with many.
  - a. They are recorded on the pages of Scripture.
  - b. We see His hand at work in the power of changed lives.
  - c. We experience it everyday in His gracious care and provision in our lives.
  - d. All of these things confirm the truth and power of the Gospel.
  - e. And they are meant to encourage our faith.
  - f. And so even though we must face spiritual warfare and hardship, let’s not forget:
    - (i) The Lord is gathering His church.
    - (ii) After our work is completed He does have rest waiting for us.
    - (iii) Even as He raised Jesus from the dead, so He will raise us up again.
    - (iv) His many miracles confirm to us that these things are true. Amen.