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Acts chapter 9 verse 6. Beginning with the word arise through the end of verse 19, arise and go into the city and you will be told what you must do and the men who journeyed with him, stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one Then Saul rose from the ground and when his eyes were opened, he saw no one but they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus, and he was there three days without sight and neither eight nor drank.

Now, there was a certain disciple at Damascus named Ananias, and to him. The Lord said in a vision Ananias And he said here, I am Lord. So the Lord said to him arise and go to the street called straight and inquire at the house of Judas, for one called Saul of Tarsus for behold, he is praying.

And in a vision he has seen a man named Ananias coming in and putting his hand on him. So that he might receive his sight Then IS answered Lord. I have heard from many about this man. How much harm he has done to your saints in Jerusalem. And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on your name.

But the Lord said to him go For he is a chosen vessel of mine to bear my name before Gentiles kings and the children of Israel for I will show him how many things he must suffer for my name's sake and then an IS went his way and entered the house and laying his hands on him.

He said, brother, Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road as you came has sent me that you may receive your site and be filled with the Holy Spirit. Immediately their fell from his eyes, something like scales. And he received his sight At once and heroes and was baptized.

So when he had received food, he was strengthened, Then Saul spent some days with the disciples that Damascus. Amen. Listens this reading of God's own word. Please be seated.

The Holy Spirit is giving us in this passage has been has been giving us an account of the calling of Saul known by also, and especially to us by his Greek name Paul. As the last apostle and what we saw last week was that as the Lord was bringing Paul into his ministry.

The first two things he did was, he brought Paul, especially under his word and his word as spoken to him, not only directly, which, if we read the, the rest of Acts and especially Paul's letters. We find that the Lord Jesus did a fair amount to but modeling for us what it is like when the Lord calls us into this new life that he has given us as new people, in Jesus Christ.

And particularly into a new ordained work for those who enter into and into church office, who are called and graced and gifted and ordained to be elders or deacons in the Church of Christ. How the Lord brings them into that. And the first part is to be subjected to his word that we are under not just the authority of Christ generally, but very specifically, we are dependent upon and must believe what the Lord, Jesus teaches in his word and obey, what he commands.

And the next thing that we considered last Lord's Day, was that the apostle is one who is under authority? That in the church of the Lord Jesus, he has designed that there wouldn't be an

increasing hierarchy of individual men, but that those whom he called would be submitted to the other elders.

Whether in the other elders in their congregation, or in their Presbytery. And then when they synod or council is gathered even to one another there and we considered briefly how that's the case. Not only with this Pharisee, suddenly having to, not only receive the Word of God from but have hands laid on him for his ordination.

By a man who just a few days earlier would have been one of the ones he despised the most and how the Lord humbles us. And the necessity for that, We see in first Peter 5 where that apostle calls himself a fellow elder. And we see also in the gathering of the Apostles and elders, who are on the same footing as it were in Acts chapter 15 and so forth.

And this is something that you may have seen if you have seen and attended a worship service in which commissioning and vows of ordination and installation, we're taking place for elders or deacons. There will have been a sermon not just because it's good to have preaching. It is good to have preaching, But all of us must be brought under the Word of God so that we will look to Christ as the one who has spoken sufficiently.

He's given us what we need in his word. That's why you hear a sermon. When there's an ordination People, sometimes attend these things and they have a sense that there is a tradition here and they're concerned that we would follow traditions and traditions are just things that you've done more than once.

In fact, sometimes you'll attend something and you'll hear the phrase first annual, Okay. The question is not as it a tradition. The question is, is it from the Bible And the reason why you have that preaching, the reason why you have a smaller sermon and you may have heard it called the charge in which a an elder or a minister will read to the person who is coming into ministry, a portion of Scripture and make pointed application to that person, that's a mini sermon for him, showing that he is under the Word of God.

And, and then, you will also have the laying on of hands as the person is brought into their office. Indicating that there is this authority that extends not from the men who lay on the hands because hands were laid on them. And we made reference to this in in 1st Timothy with what what the Apostle was saying to that elder and reminding him of how he was brought into his ministry.

And he is not saying be faithful to those elders who laid an Hands on you and invested you with this authority. No, he's saying be faithful to the Lord. Jesus, who invested this authority through the laying on of hands that were laid upon you just as hands had been laid upon those elders as well.

Now, so we have those two things and the two things that remain in, how at least how we are drawing. The truth from this passage is to see that the Apostle Paul was being brought under also Jesus's plan. The Apostle Paul was being brought under Jesus's plan and then in the second place that he was being brought under Jesus's grace that he was being brought under Jesus's grace.

We see this. Also in if you go to an ordination service or if you had tend to attend to work happen to attend a worship service in which there's an ordination, there's a specific ministry that the elders of the church have recognized through biblical means that, that specific person is called to.

And so, your elders, for instance, have or ought to have and the Lord blessing his words to us. Even now, by his spirit, we are being strengthened in having a sense that this is the place where the Lord has called us to minister. And these are the people of the Lord whom he has prepared us to serve and whom he has prepared to be served by us and there's great purpose as we'll see.

And even comfort and strengthening and diligence and zeal that comes from being given that glimpse of Christ as the one who has chosen your service for you. But he doesn't just bring us under his plan. He brings us under his grace, He is the one who, who sustains us who gives us all that.

We need body and soul for all of the ministry to which we are called. And just as we did last week, Keep in mind that every one of you have a role to which he has called you. One of you is a creature and every believer is not just a neighbor to, to those around him in the world.

But a brother, or a sister to those in a congregation and your specific congregation appointed in God's providence to you. As First Corinthians 12 describes when he's talking about how individuals within a congregation, think about themselves in relation to others and others in relation to themselves. He says, God has arranged the members of the body as he chooses.

So as we consider being brought under his plan, you need not. You mustn't. Just think of your elders, and deacons and prospective elders, and deacons and ministers. Whom we hope the Lord will call our sons to be as He works in their lives and sanctifies them and gifts them.

But you must think of yourself in all of your several callings, even children, your obedience to your parents is in the Lord. He picked your parents for you. And, and that is the current place of your obedience and fathers and husbands. And wives and mothers and and so forth.

But here we have specifically the bringing, the Lord Jesus bringing Paul into his ministry and showing him. Not only that he is brought under Christ's word and Christ's authority as not only directly from the Lord Jesus, but as proclaimed to him by others and as recognized in him by others.

But also now that he has brought under his plan and under his grace, and of course, when we realize, what the Lord has called us to we ask as the as this apostle does in another place who is sufficient for such things. It was hard enough. When I thought, I just had to keep them fed alive and trained well enough that they could keep another set fed and alive by the time, they left my house as a parent.

But when you realize, these are the Lord's children whom they have appointed to me to minister to them. The means of his grace and we've already started to give it away right through, which he will bring them to faith in Christ through which he will build them up in Christ.

Then we say, as many of us say with different words perhaps but still the same question many times a day with our children Is sufficient for such things. Well then we give the same answer as the Apostle gives. Not too many verses later are sufficiency is of God are, sufficiency is of God and that's why there's prayer and that's why there's baptism as we'll see with the Apostle here.

And that's why God helping those who have presided over and led whatever worship services that you might have attended in which ordination vows were being taken or installation, vower being taken. There must have been prayer, recognizing that there's only sufficiency for this

ministry from God. So brought under his plan, We pick up in the Lord, Jesus answering Ananias and Ananias.

Of course, being instructed by the Lord and under the authority of the Lord who is very patient with him in his protest, He ends that protest in verse 14 and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on your name. But the Lord said to him, go for he is a chosen vessel of mine to bear my name before Gentiles kings and the children of Israel and just now the first part of that answer goal for he is a chosen vessel of mine.

The Lord is not just reminding or not. Just instructing an Ananias about it being okay to to go and and interact with Saul of Tarsus and don't worry. You're not going to be hold off to be executed like others. Have been That's not the only thing he's doing to Ananias here.

He's reminding Annanias that he too is a chosen vessel of Christ's vessels. Don't get to make decisions We saw before the, the aspect of the, the ministry of the deacons, as they oversaw the, the ministry in material, things of the church and that the authority over that part of the church's ministry to one another in particular, and of course, all of that offered unto God, We saw the picture of table.

Waiters they used a word for service that was, and they applied it to serving tables. Well, there's a sense in which if you're going to talk about the deacon as the waiter, the language that's used here of the minister of the Word for Paul is actually even lower. They're not just waiters they're vessels cups pitchers, I've heard before and it's it's an apt illustration that ministers should not think of themselves as chefs, but waiters Christ has prepared the food in the Bible and the sermon is not the meal.

The Bible is the meal Christ himself. And what he has written in the scripture and that the preacher needs just to be a good table waiter. Make sure that he has delivered the food in a presentable accessible way to the table, so that the people may eat, Well, that's all good and well, and it's a good illustration for what it is.

But the illustration here before us. Now, by the Holy Spirit is not the minister is the table waiter. It's the minister is the platter and the waiter's hand that he is just a vessel. In fact, the Apostle Paul will use this language about himself and second Corinthians chapter 4, when he is explaining, why he doesn't attempt to minister in such a way that is, you know, what we might call over engineered and, or well marketed to use to mix metaphors and he just plainly speaks the truth.

And we've made reference to that many times because of how glorious literally it is that he who spoke light into darkness is the one who uses the plane explaining of what the Bible says, to make the light of the knowledge of the glory of God to shine in people's hearts in Christ.

Jesus. In the face of Christ Jesus. Second Corinthians 4. And then a couple verses down, he says, therefore, we have this treasure. The treasure of knowing the glory of God, knowing that Jesus is God, that you can see in the face of Jesus. Now by faith, you don't know what He looks like.

We love him whom we have not seen, but but one day, you will see physically his face who is God, the Son in His human nature and you will lay eyes on him. And and one of the jobs as it were of ministers of the Word of elders, as we teach and preach the Word of God of husbands, as you bathe your wife, with the Word of God and fathers as you instruct your children and mothers as you instruct your children, and all of the members of the body, as we speak the truth and love, we can't go back and and build, all of that again, from from last week's open and up of the passage One of our jobs is to be unimpressive is to be an earthen vessel.

So that it will be seen that all of the glory belongs to God in Christ Jesus. That what would be oppressive will not be the presentation or the presenting of it. But the thing that is presented the word of God. Generally speaking. Yes, but here he's not just a vessel, not just an earthen vessel.

But here's what his carrying As a Minister of the Word and we can go to the Acts chapter 20, when he's talking to the Ephesian elders, and saying earlier in the passage he has withheld, nothing that is profitable and so he's innocent of their blood. Then he tells them that they need to proclaim the whole Council of God later in that passage and in Acts chapter 20.

And there's a question among ARP ministers this week, which are we supposed to do? And often. When you have that question, you're presented with two options and it's both and not either, or are we supposed to preach the gospel or so we supposed to preach the whole Council of God and someone just quoted from the form, for the ordination service that uses both in a sentence.

And says, if you're not preaching the whole count, it implies by combining the two. If you're not proclaiming the whole Council of God, you're not proclaiming the gospel and if you're not proclaiming the gospel, you're definitely not. Proclaiming the whole Council of God and the, the two go together as the Lord Jesus said it is then it is they the scriptures that speak of me and then you look at the scriptures and they're full of all manner, all different kinds of instruction, in which Christ has proclaimed to us.

And so the spirit here or to us in the recording of and the Lord Jesus, to Ananias says, he is a chosen vessel of mine to bear my name to bear my name. That is what the vessel is supposed to be carried carrying, That's what's in the picture. That's what's on, the platter is the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ, that he is, the Lord, the living God, who is one and yet he has now revealed Himself as having that name into which Jesus commanded that we be baptized.

So God has revealed himself to us in Christ and if we have seen the Son, we have seen the Father and the Spirit is, not just the Spirit of the Father, but also the Spirit of the Son. And he affirms that to us when he commands, that we back, be baptized in the name of and it's not names there in Matthew 28, it's singular, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

That's the one name into which we are baptized, But then we have the this other language that we use calling upon the name of the Lord or the Lord Jesus, or the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the name that Paul was supposed to bear, which was the name that he hated You.

Remember? What what Ananias has just finished saying in verse 15 here, he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on your name, all, who say the Lord is Jesus. The one God of Deuteronomy, 6 has become a man who died for our sins and rose again.

And we know his name is Jesus, the Lord, who is the Creator of all things. Who His name is special, covenant name that he gave to his people is, I am that I am that, he has all existence in himself and none of us have existence without him because he created us, and he is the one who sustains us and He put that in his name, that he has all existence in himself, and all power in himself and all goodness in himself.

We are dependent. He is independent, We are creature, He is Creator. The Lord is Jesus, and the name Jesus is because He saves his people, The Lord. And they would have been reading Greek copies of the Old Testament where they wouldn't have it. Like we we do sometimes where it says Yahweh in the Hebrew and so if you have an English translation, it's all caps and

your English, they would have just had curiosyn, the same letters, This is the Greek word for Lord and and they would have known what an amazing thing it is.

And it was the amazingness of it that had made Paul the blasphemer and chief of sinners, right? Because he hated the name of Jesus. And the idea that Yahweh had become a man But that's what he is to bear. Now that that Yahweh saves, which is what Jesus is.

It's a contraction of those words and that it was God himself, who would be the prophet that Moses had said, would come that. God would raise up a prophet from among them? Who is greater than Moses that the end of Moses's life in ministry. He basically said, you know the the sum of my ministry that the point of my ministry to you was to get you ready for the prophet that's coming which made it.

So So so Ironic, if I'm you probably using the word incorrectly, but you know what I mean, we all use it incorrectly. So Ironic, that that when the Prophet came, they were like, he's speaking against Moses and wasn't that Steven's entire sermon? No actually Moses told you to listen to him, so that God would come and be a man, and be that prophet, And God would come.

And be a man, not from the line of Levi, but from the line of Judah with a priesthood, that would actually bring an end to priests coming out of the line of Levi only, or of or high high priests from the line of Aaron. But now all who are in Christ, have a priesthood that is participatory in the single great forever high.

Priesthood of Jesus. God became a man to be that prophet. God became a man to be that priest. God became a man to be the son of David. And all of these anointings these ordained offices, Prophet, priest and king, The word for anointing, You is the Hebrew basis of what we Anglicize as Messiah, which translates into Greek and something that we anglicizes Christ and you know, those words don't you.

And so, when you say Lord, Jesus Christ, You are summarizing the truth of the entire Bible. The truth of the Old Testament is the Lord alone is God, and He is saving sinners. And the truth of the New Testament is Jesus alone is the Savior of sinners, and he is, God in the flesh.

And so it's it's really the when he says he's a vessel to bear my name, There's a there's a zeroing in a focus on what the sum teaching of the whole Bible is that is Jesus's plan for Paul that he would be an earthen vessel and that he would really get dinged up along the way towards the end of second Corinthians.

When when Paul is arguing against the false, apostleship of those who the the Corinthians have allowed themselves to get sucked in by, and he talks about himself being a true apostle. One of the, one of the main things that he, he talks about is that he has suffered many things and he starts to give him a list of what he has suffered, But you think he's giving that list in grumbling or complaining or polishing his star, Look how wonderfully I have done and suffering.

All these things. He's basically saying in retrospect at that point what the Lord Jesus is saying in Prospect at this point that what God has planned for Paul is a specific ministry. Bearing his name through specific difficulties, how many things he must suffer. So he has chosen vessel of mine to bear my name before Gentiles Paul preaches in the synagogues at Damascus, He's his quickly identified as an enemy.

We'll hear more about that later. He goes down to Jerusalem where he's quickly identified in his home church and perhaps other synagogues as, as an enemy. His exiled as at were to Tarsus the there's church, the church starts to spread it goes to Antioch. There are a bunch of people that get converted at antioch.

Barnabas there, how are we going to teach all of these new Christians? All about Jesus and what to believe about him and how to love and obey and serve? And how are we going to teach all of them from the Bible? It's just oh I remember God had called this man.

That knows the Bible better than almost anyone on earth. Perhaps better than anyone on earth at the time And the Lord Jesus had shone him and made him a vessel for the bearing of his name. And here we are in a Gentile place Antioch and Barnabas goes. And he gets Saul also called Paul and he brings him to Antioch.

He starts to minister there. And what do you think Paul is thinking at the time he's thinking Jesus told me that I would bear his name to Gentiles to the nations. Here we are in in a church where there are a bunch of Gentiles. His assignment to me is these people.

And then when he's brought before King Herod it, his trial or perhaps later out after the close of the book of Acts giving testimony before Caesar himself, he remembers. Jesus assigned kings to him when he goes into synagogues and preaches and gets tossed out or even stoned. And the reason the stoning stops is because they think it was successful.

They leave him for dead and then he gets up and gets ready for the next ministry. And that was what was time to him As Jesus's plan? It's Jesus's plan. Jesus has specifically assigned him. Those who would hear him. And so he has to you, This should be very thrilling and encouraging to you.

Whether we're talking about talking to each other at home, Jesus has assigned your brothers and sisters to you children. He wants your his word and his name to be in your mouth to them In Jesus's assigned. Your children to you parents. Jesus is assigned the other church members to you My dear eyeballs and noses and ears to use some of none of which are particularly attractive, right?

But which are some of the, the pictures in the body metaphor that the apostle by the Spirit uses and 1st Corinthians 12. He's assigned the different joints of each congregation to be connected to and interdependent upon the the strength of one another. It would have been greatly strengthening and encouraging to Paul as he went from Gentiles or in front of kings, or spoke.

To even the children of Israel in the various synagogues, that Jesus said he would bear his name in this place. And Jesus is the one who would do the same. Nobody knew this more than Saul of Tarsus. He certainly didn't think he had saved himself. He certainly didn't think.

Stephen had saved him Has been a while now since he held the coats while Stevens murderers killed him and it didn't do him any good until Jesus addressed him from heaven. And so he knew that it was Jesus's job to do the saving but that every moment in his life was an assignment from Jesus to bear his name at least on your life.

And as you discern opportunity Also on your lips, remember we talked about that not too long ago and we were thinking about the third commandment and what that means for us and how we live and and how we speak. So that Everywhere you go and you run into people, you have first of all an obligation to live as someone upon whom the name of Christ has been placed because you don't know, if God will give you opportunity and you should be looking for opportunity to testify to your Creator and your Redeemer.

You will, if you ask the Lord to give you opportunity and to help you see it, I suggest that you be prepared in his providence. He always seems to open our eyes and it may just be that he's

always doing it and we can't see it. But the Lord brings us into contact with those either who are converted and know his name and need the encouraging and strengthening that we are to do with one another in the Word or he may be giving you the privilege of speaking his name and behalf of his name to someone who has never hurt and whom he is bringing to himself.

Or he may give you the privilege of testifying to his name in front of someone who is resisting and rebelling against him and before whom you will be an example of how merciful God is, and how powerful God is to say. And for which, they will have to give an answer in the last day.

That's especially the context of the verse that we often hear quoted always being ready to give an answer for the hope that is within us that's in the face of persecutors and accusers and magistrates who are condemning and punishing that they would bring glory to Jesus for having heard His name from you.

It's wonderfully freeing that we are only called to be faithful. Not fruitful. No one hears in the last day. Well done. My good and successful servant You hear. Well done, my good and faithful servant. Why? Because the fruit is given by God Even when he gives much fruit, and it's a blessing to have fruit, right?

We're not hearing, and reading into the Bible, this idea that we, that lack of gospel, success is something to be reveled. In to say, I was faithful and nobody got converted. Hooray. No, But when God gives the fruit, it's His fruit that He had planned and he just appointed to you that particular moment of harvesting and he might have appointed to you the planting and the watering to use the illustrations from the early part of 1st Corinthians at the Apostle uses there.

But he has appointed to you what comes to you. And so instead of having a quota of productivity, which we often feel like we have and as, as wrongly self-imposed, you know, the number of people or, or how far along my children are by now or whether or not they seem to have been brought to faith yet.

And and we we impose on ourselves the productivity. No, you're called to a principle of faithfulness and readiness and it is God's way to use those who are following independence upon Him. But it's also a great mercy that are suffering are suffering has been selected for us Every bit as much as every moment of your life and the context in which you find yourself and the people whom you encounter and you're watching for opportunities to bear the name of Jesus.

And as you do so you will suffer many things. But so that Paul or Saul is, he's still being called in this passage would not be discouraged when he suffers many things because he is about to suffer many things immediately, He doesn't he doesn't get the, the a warm-up time.

He's immediately opposed to his life for I will show him how many things He must suffer for my namesake. You know, there was an exact number of things, an exact number of things that Paul was going to suffer and everything that the Lord Jesus brought him through. Got him closer to the completion.

Every one of those sufferings had been appointed to him. I trust that that idea would be encouraging to you. Dear believer that the one who has redeemed, you by his blood from the hell that you deserved taking it upon himself that the one who has called you to the specific time and place and interactions and role in which you find yourself now and which you will find yourself in every moment until he takes you from this world, He has also appointed the exact number of things that you will suffer as you walk with him and depend upon him as you serve Him.

The fact that he has selected them for us as one, one, encouraging and comforting thing. But in the last place not only has he selected them for us but he carries us through them. Remember in Romans 8, he talks about the being glorified together with Christ, if we suffer with him inheriting together with him, if we suffer together with Him for a little while, in order to be glorified together with him and how the present that temporary light sufferings.

He says this both and in Romans 8 and also to the Corinthians, the present and light the temporary and light afflictions are not to be compared to the eternal weight of glory. The eternal weightiness heaviness of the glory that and one passage would be revealed to us and the other one revealed in us.

And so that brings us in the second place. Not just brought under his plan. That Jesus is the one whose picture ministry for you. And Jesus is the one whose picture sufferings for you and numbered them. And when you're done, you're done, It's over forever, But that Jesus is the one who sustains you in both the ministering and the suffering.

One of the things that Jesus did for Paul as he was bringing him not just to faith but into ministry was he impressed upon him how needy he was At first. He spends the first three days of his Christian life, blind. He opens his eyes, he doesn't see anything when he does receive his sight, something like scales falls from his eyes.

In verse 18, He makes him to know his extreme neediness. Yeah, Paul was as they're described a seeing person His entire life up until these three days. He was not equipped to be blind. It wasn't like he was blind from birth and had gotten accustomed to it. He was immediately desperately needy so that the Lord would buy those days.

Even communicate to him. How entirely dependent we are? Upon God, it's God, who sustains light and God, who designed your eyes, and God, who keeps your eyes working. Some of at least one of us has recently gone through eye injury. The rest of us are still blissfully taking for granted how easily we see all the time.

Some of us are getting old and can barely see the congregation, because we need to be able to see the Bible. And our notes, we're desperately needy for the grace to fulfill our calling, to serve the Lord. Jesus, well, in those moments and those roles in which, you find yourself in your life, you are as needy as a blind man, and any illusion of ability or independence of your own is just that, It's an illusion, it's a lie.

And so, one of the things that he makes known to policy calls him as the extremity of his neediness. And then of course how continually needy he is verse 19, when he had received food. Well, why does verse 19 say when he had received food? He was strengthened because he had been fasting for three days and in it just took those three days and he was weakened by by his fasting.

So the Lord Jesus, of course, has taught us to feel this even in that form of prayer. That is a template or a model for all of our praying that we would ask him for our bread daily. And so he teaches us that we have to pray daily Because you're going to eat.

You ask him again another day, another prayer and hopefully more often, of course, even than that. So, our continual neediness and our need for feeling neediness, which is part of the point of fasting. Paul, is not eating or drinking the Lord. Jesus refers to his pasting as praying in verse 11.

He wasn't eating or drinking verse 9, that's fasting but we know they in God's good providence to us having studied it recently in the Sabbath school, the fasting is joined to praying in the Bible and that's how Jesus summarizes what Saul of Tarsus is doing at the end of verse 11.

That's why. If you have never fasted, not only, are you not doing something that Jesus says, those who follow him will do. He says my disciples will fast when I'm gone. Well, Jesus is in heaven. Are you fasting? Do you fast Not necessarily fasting? Right. This moment. But that fasting is joined to prayer.

It's an expression of neediness in in what we do and make ourselves to feel with our bodies. Just as prayer is an expression of neediness with our lips, isn't it strange that we are? Well, I guess it's not strange because we have that sinful nature that opposes all the truth of God.

But one of the ways that that fleshly nest displays itself is when we are praying and we want to feel like we're praying, sufficiently prayer itself is an expression of neediness. So one of the reasons why we form our prayers, largely from the Bible, from the words of Jesus being taught how to pray like little children, who need so many examples and instructions as as we grow and mature.

And when you grow in mature in prayer, you don't feel like you're being successful in prayer. You feel like you are feeling needy And those times in which we are thrown. So greatly by the Holy Spirit upon upon the mercy of God, upon the power of God upon the wisdom of God, The old saints used to say and some of them still do and they say as much helped in prayer today that even their expression of neediness was something that they couldn't produce themselves.

But that God, using the means of his word over over the all the time that they had been walking with him in this life, had had come in that private worship or that family worship work. The prayer meeting or the worship service, had come by his spirit and had enabled them to, to lay theirselves their hearts, their minds, their desires entirely upon God, expressing, how we have nothing in ourselves, and God has everything in him and calling upon him through Christ, That was one of the first experiences that was an experience through, which Paul was coming into his call as an apostle.

The Lord, Jesus started him in three days of fasting and prayer, because it was his grace that would be sufficient for him. And it was a lesson that they apostle kept learning evidently because again, in that latter, part of the second Corinthians to which we're referring earlier, we have the passage about the thorn in the flesh and Paul begging that it would be taken away and the Lord Jesus assuring him that it was there on purpose because he needed to feel his neediness so that he would rejoice only in the strength of Christ.

Hear my grace is sufficient for you. For my strength is made perfect in weakness. So when the Lord calls us into our life as Christians, and when we remember our calling, as Christians and and think about our day-to-day and all the roles that he's given us, we are not just to be brought under his word for our instruction and his authority for our accountability.

And and leadership and functioning appropriately in the role that he's appointed and under his plan, knowing that everything that we come into has been selected for us and assigned to us as both a privilege and a responsibility. But also under his grace that he is the one who supplies the life, and the power, and the goodness, and the wisdom and even the zeal.

And so he makes Paul to feel the extremity of it is neediness that how continually he is needy and gives him mechanisms by which to feel not super spiritual, but super needy fasting and prayer. And of course, Christ has displayed to him as the sufficiency for all this need.

You see the the parallel versus 17 through 18, we know that more takes place here. The this encounter is recounted twice. Again in acts, once in chapter 22, once in chapter 26, and he says, be baptized and wash away your sins. That's part of what he says. I think that's from chapter 22, but now you see how much I need to grow in my comprehensive Bible knowledge, but here he doesn't tell us about the wash away, your sins line.

Why? Because there's a parallel that baptism teaches and displays many things at once. And there's a parallel in verse 17 and verse 18, that that we are to see with respect to his baptism. So Ananias says, the the portion that the spirit reports for us here is Jesus who appeared you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.

He is giving you sufficiency that is he is your sufficiency for the ministry to which you've been called in the suffering to which you have been called and then the parallel to receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit. At the end of verse 18 is and he received his sight at once and he arose and was baptized.

Wait, there's an asymmetry. It's not perfectly parallel. Well it's sort of is because the application of the water on earth is an image of what Jesus actually genuinely really does with his spirit from heaven. Remember this has been said about Jesus, from before his own baptism that on earth, we baptize with water but he who is coming.

After John Would baptize with the Holy Spirit. And we've seen we can't take the time to see all those places now but we've seen how that connection is made over and over again. And so Ananias says that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit and then he arose.

And he was baptized and we know, Are we assume that? It's with water, but also with the Holy Spirit, isn't it? Because what Ananias did with the water on earth Jesus did with his Spirit from heaven and it wasn't the application of the water That was Paul's, sufficiency for bearing the name of Jesus before Gentiles kings and the children of Israel and suffering so many things.

It was that genuine reality of Christ giving his spirit by which Jesus made himself. Paul's sufficiency for all of that ministry and all of that suffering, Your water baptism. Does not make Christ your sufficiency but he's given it to you as a means. So that as you remember, as you know, as you witness another one being baptized with water and you see the reality of the water being applied on earth, the Holy Spirit, blesses to you again works in you again the the efficacy the the effectiveness of your baptism as he stirs up your your faith in Jesus Christ and makes you to know of a certainty that God the Son has become a man who sits at the right hand of majesty and pours out His Holy Spirit.

And that his Holy Spirit is the one who gives you faith in Christ. His Holy Spirit is the one who enables you to serve Christ to enables. You to receive all of the moments of your life as assignments, enables you to endure the suffering and count it. Something that that you are not even worthy of and rejoice.

That you've been given the privilege of suffering in Christ. Jesus, for a little while. Christ was Paul, sufficiency Christ, the filling of the Holy Spirit, was signified in the baptism? That's how he would be able to fulfill that which we, he was being called to. You remember baptism being used in a similar way when the at the end of Peter, sermon on the day of Pentecost, they were told to repent and be baptized.

Not because the baptism saves them but because as they believed in Jesus Christ, the baptism affirmed to them. The reality from heaven that they were seeing signified upon

themselves or receiving a signified upon themselves on earth and all believers receive this spirit, Romans 8, verse 9 and verse 14.

If one does not have the spirit of Christ, he has none of His. And as many as are led by the Spirit, these are the sons of God be very careful. There are believers out there who will tell you that there's such a thing as a believer, someone who is saved.

But doesn't yet have the Holy Spirit? No, Romans 8, verse 9, and 14, those things all believers have their sufficiency from Christ by the same Spirit, who ministers Christ to them and therefore, all believers are to receive this sign of baptism. Matthew 28 verses 18 through 20. The spirit is unto us, a spirit of grace that is in part, a spirit who ministers to us and applies to us the power and life of Jesus.

His grace is sufficient for us. His strength has made perfect and weakness. And that's why baptism is a sign of grace. It is not a display of yourself and your testimony. It is a testimony of Jesus that He is your sufficiency that he is the one who sustains you in ministry and in suffering.

So, whatever role you are in in addition. And many of us are called to to many offices, but if you're a believer, you are, at least in this office, disciple of Christ member of his body bearer of his name, upon your life. And in moments that have been assigned to you in his providence upon your lips.

Every one of you, who believe in Jesus that description applies to you, You have a great calling fulfill your calling that's one who is under his word, who was under his authority, who was under his plan, Your moments, your interactions. We've all been assigned to you. You're sufferings also specifically assigned to you and especially who are under his grace Christ himself as your sufficiency for all to which he has called you.

And then, let's pray.

Lord. We pray, first of all, for those who hear about these things and the idea of having a life that is joined to you independence upon, you sounds foreign to them because they have not turned from their sin and trusted in Jesus and become new people with a heavenly calling.

And so we pray that what they have heard about God, who became a man to save sinners, your spirit would use to give them faith in. Jesus Christ, who became a man to save sinners. And Lord, for all of those whom you have brought to faith. We pray that by the nourishing, and strengthening of your word, your spirit would grow them.

Now and continue to grow them by this portion of your word that they have heard grow us by the grace of Christ, grow us by the knowing of Christ. For we ask it in his name, Amen.