

A Persecutor Turned Proclaimer

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 08 July 2018

Preacher: Paul Brennan

[0 : 01] We're going to turn now to our Bibles and to our reading this evening which you'll find in the New Testament in the Acts of the Apostles and at chapter 9. I think it's on page 917 if you have the church visitor's Bible.

Otherwise it's after Matthew, Mark, Luke and John and we come to the Acts of the Apostles. We're reading in verse 1 of chapter 9 which is the extraordinary story of the meeting that the Apostle Paul had on the road to Damascus with the risen, ascended Lord Jesus Christ that we've been singing of.

Sometimes people think rather tritely, wouldn't it be wonderful to meet face to face with Jesus? And I think that would be a wonderful, fun experience. Well, it would be wonderful, full of wonder.

And that's certainly what the Apostle Paul or Saul of Tarsus as he was then discovered on that road. So let's read from verse 1. But Saul, still breathing out threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus so that if he found any belonging to the way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.

Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. And falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?

[1 : 42] And he said, who are you, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But rise and enter the city and you'll be told what you must do.

The men who were traveling with him stood speechless, hearing the voice, but seeing no one. Saul rose from the ground. And although his eyes were opened, he saw nothing.

So they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. And for three days he was without sight and neither ate nor drank. Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias.

The Lord said to him in a vision, Ananias. And he said, here I am, Lord. And the Lord said to him, rise and go to the street called Straight. And at the house of Judas, look for a man of Tarsus named Saul.

For behold, he is praying. And he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight. But Ananias answered, Lord, I've heard from many about this man, how much evil he's done to your saints at Jerusalem.

[2 : 58] And here he has authority from the chief priest to bind all who call upon your name. But the Lord said to him, go. For he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel.

For I must show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name. So Ananias departed and entered the house. And laying his hands on him, he said, Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road by which you came, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.

And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes. And he regained his sight. And then he rose and was baptized. And taking food, he was strengthened.

For some days he was with the disciples at Damascus. And immediately he proclaimed Jesus in the synagogue, saying, He is the Son of God. And all who heard him were amazed and said, Is not this the man who made havoc in Jerusalem of those who called upon this name?

And has he not come here for this purpose, to bring them bound before the chief priests? But Saul increased all the more in strength and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Christ.

[4 : 28] For many days had passed, the Jews plotted to kill him. But their plot became known to Saul. They were watching the gates day and night in order to kill him.

But the disciples took him by night and let him down through an opening in the wall, lowering him in a basket. And when he came to Jerusalem, he attempted to join the disciples.

They all were afraid of him. They didn't believe that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles and declared to them how on the road he had seen the Lord who spoke to him.

And how at Damascus he had preached boldly in the name of Jesus. So he went in and out among them at Jerusalem, preaching boldly in the name of the Lord. And he spoke and disputed against the Hellenists.

But they were seeking to kill him. When the brothers learned this, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus. So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built.

[5 : 39] And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied. Amen. And may God bless to us his word.

Please do turn to Acts chapter 9. And we'll spend a few minutes looking at this together. So Acts chapter 9, which Willie read earlier for us. The Lord Jesus Christ is really able to turn circumstances on their head for the strengthening of his church.

He can and does take what seem from a human perspective to be no hope situations. He can turn them around and bring great growth, great encouragement, and great transformation.

And that is exactly what we see here in Acts chapter 9. Look at how it begins and how it ends. It begins with Saul. The last time we saw Saul was at the start of chapter 8.

And he was approving there of the execution of Stephen. He was ravaging the church. And he's still at it here at the start of chapter 9. Just look at what it says there. But Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord.

[7 : 07] He was still doing what he'd been doing in chapter 8. He was still terrorizing the church. But look down to the end of the reading. And it's an unexpected conclusion there in verse 31.

So the church throughout all Judea and Gilead and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied.

Now that, from a bystander's perspective, would have seemed a very unlikely outcome. When you think about the start of the chapter and where it ends.

You think about the seemingly unstoppable Saul who had the full backing of the religious establishment in Jerusalem. He's going on his mission trip to capture Christians.

You do not expect verse 31, do you? And the big lesson that Luke, the writer, is seeking to teach here is not primarily about Saul.

[8 : 11] Although he, of course, is a very, very important, significant figure in the life of the church. He was crucial in the spread of the gospel. But the big lesson is about the risen Lord Jesus.

And how he, even in the face of great obstacles, obstacles like Saul. It's about how Jesus is building his church.

That's the focus at the end of the passage. The church was being built up. It was multiplying. So the human figure at the center of the story, it's Saul. But it's really about the risen Lord Jesus and his church.

So yes, we read about Saul's flooring on the Damascus Road. We read about his commissioning in Damascus. And the opposition he then faced as he went about proclaiming Christ, no longer persecuting him.

So yes, we see that, but there are bigger lessons here for us. We see the Lord's authority to build his church. We see the Lord setting his agenda for the building of his church.

[9 : 13] And we see that the Lord knows the adversity that the building of the church will involve. Those are the big lessons that we see here in this chapter.

So we look at this momentous chapter in three sections. So first, verses 1 to 9. From a human perspective, Saul is flawed. But the bigger lesson Luke teaches is that the Lord Jesus has the authority to build his church.

Saul was clearly an impressive man. A man who unsurprisingly struck fear into the hearts of believers in the young Christian church.

That's several points as we read through the passage. We read about Christians being very fearful of Saul. Look at Ananias in verse 13 and 14. Down on to verse 26, the disciples in Jerusalem were all afraid of him.

Saul was a man with presence. And he had a clear goal. It was his intention to go to Damascus and to find any there who belonged to the way.

[10 : 21] That is, to find any Christians. And he would arrest them and bring them back to Jerusalem. And we have this reference to Saul's intended purpose three times in this passage.

Verse 2, again in verse 14, and again verse 21. Three times we're told he's going there to arrest Christians, to bind them and bring them back to Jerusalem. That was his plan.

But even though Saul was a powerful, fearful man, he had the backing of the religious elites, he had a steely determination and purpose, he hadn't counted on meeting the risen Lord Jesus.

And it is a terrifying, astonishing encounter, isn't it? Saul is literally floored on the road to Damascus. This great, powerful man who went around arresting all these Christians.

He's floored. Literally thrown to the dirt. Thrown to the ground by the risen Lord Jesus, who he was so determined to persecute. And the turnaround in Saul's life is instant.

[11 : 31] His purpose in going to Damascus, a purpose that Luke reiterates three times, is totally turned on its head. Saul goes from persecuting Jesus to proclaiming him.

He goes from seeking to destroy followers of Jesus and dismantling the church to spreading the gospel and building the church. How has that happened? How has the great Saul gone from persecuting to proclaiming?

Well, Saul met. He was confronted by the risen Lord Jesus. The one that Saul had deemed a fraud. The followers of whom he was so keen to arrest and even murder.

How terrifying for Saul to suddenly be brought face to face with Jesus. The one he had persecuted.

Suddenly he's there. He's brought face to face. Saul was a man who committed his life to serving God.

[12 : 36] He was a zealous Jew, wasn't he? He talks about himself in the book of Philippians. He describes himself in his pre-Christian days as a Hebrew of Hebrews.

As to the law, a Pharisee. As to zeal, a persecutor of the church. He thought he was serving God. He didn't dispute the scriptures.

He knew that a Messiah was promised. He was looking for the Christ. But he refused to acknowledge that Jesus was the Christ. He couldn't acknowledge that.

He treated him as an imposter. But here, on the road to Damascus, he's confronted with reality. And it would have been for Saul absolutely terrifying.

Look at what happens there. Verse 3. Suddenly, a light from heaven flashed around him. And falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?

[13 : 44] And Saul responds, who are you, Lord? Saul knew that this was a divine encounter. Who are you, Lord? And then the response that would have shattered Saul to his very core.

I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. Saul encounters the risen Lord Jesus. The second person of the Trinity.

The one who had been appointed judge. The one who reigns at the right hand of the Father. Who's returning one day to usher in the new creation and bring the final judgment. That is the one who saws meat.

And it's terrifying. He had got Jesus all wrong, hadn't he? Totally wrong. He must have thought, in that moment, he must have thought, this is it.

It's all over. But although it was a terrifying confrontation, there's also, well, it was a gracious one, wasn't it?

[14 : 45] God knocked him flat, but he did so to bring him to repentance, that he might be used for his mighty purposes. Jesus didn't stop with the words, I'm Jesus, whom you're persecuting.

He says more. Look at what he says. But rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do. It's clear, isn't it, that Jesus is in total control.

His authority is ultimate. He was able to take this man, Saul, the powerful, persecuting man who struck fear into so many. God was able to take him and totally turn him around.

God was able to take this man, Saul, the powerful, persecuting man who struck fear into so many.

He has the sort of power that can turn anyone around. He can, if he chooses to, he can take the souls of this world and use them for his own purposes.

[16 : 09] He can turn a life upside down and change this direction entirely. And so Saul, instead of being the one to persecute the church, he's instead going to be persecuted himself.

Persecuted for the church and for the savior he once hated so much. And he was the kind of man that no one expected to be converted.

His opposition was too deep, too articulate. So much of his life would be threatened that if Christianity was proved true. He'd taken such a public stand, hadn't he, against what he saw these Christians to be proclaiming.

Utterly humiliating for him to change his mind, don't you think? But when a man, when any man meets, really meets the Lord Jesus Christ, when he understands who he really is and hears his call, it's impossible to resist.

It was for Saul, it is for so many. Now it isn't always the case that Jesus will turn around his persecutors, is it? But the encounter that Saul experienced, that will come to every person who's ever lived one day.

[17 : 31] Every persecutor of the Lord Jesus and his people will one day have to come face to face with the risen Lord Jesus. And it will for them on that moment be terrifying, as it was for Saul then.

Because at that moment, at that moment when everyone meets the risen Lord Jesus, and those who persecuted him in particular, they will realize how wrong, how terribly wrong they've been.

And if that moment comes on the day of judgment, then it is for them too late. That is a warning for persecutors, isn't it?

But it's also a comfort for the persecuted. Because Jesus sees, he knows, and he will bring them to account.

So the Lord, the risen Lord Jesus, he has the authority to build his church. Nothing, and no one, can stop him from achieving his plans and purposes.

[18 : 39] Not even, not even a man like Saul, who is so determined to persecute. Such was the authority of the risen Lord Jesus. He turned him around, and used him, and used him, not to persecute, but to build up, to proclaim.

That's the first section. Let's look on to the next, and to our second point, verses 10 to 19. Verses 10 to 19. And from a human perspective, we see in this section, that Saul is commissioned.

But the bigger lesson that Luke teaches, is that it is the Lord, who sets the agenda for the building of his church. The Lord sets the agenda. So Saul, he's been floored on the road to Damascus, and he's brought to Damascus, where he meets one of the Christians there, a man called Ananias, who himself, has met with the risen Lord Jesus.

He's been given a task, and a message to deliver to Saul. And naturally, Ananias, who's heard about this Saul, and what he's come to Damascus to do, he is a bit hesitant, isn't he?

Look at verses 13 and 14. He's not quite sure he wants to do this. This is the man who, until very recently, has been breathing threats, and murder against the disciples of the Lord.

[20 : 02] But the Lord speaks, words of reassurance to Ananias. He tells him, the extraordinary plans, that he has for Saul. You see, it's the Lord Jesus, who sets the agenda, for the growth of his worldwide church.

And that's what we see, in these words of the Lord, to Ananias, in verses 15 and 16. Saul was to prove to be, the key man, in the growth of the gospel, into the Gentile world.

So look at there, at 15 and 16, where we see, the global reach of the gospel, but also, the gritty reality, as that gospel goes out. Look at what he says there.

Go, for he is, a chosen instrument of mine, to carry my name, before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel. For I will show him, how much he must suffer, for the sake, of my name.

Saul was being commissioned, by the Lord, to become, one of the key figures, in the expansion, of the worldwide gospel. Jesus sets the agenda. He makes the calls.

[21 : 14] He commissions, the people he needs. And the agenda, Jesus sets out here, in verses 15 and 16, for his church, and for Saul in particular, is twofold.

One, the gospel is, to have a global reach. But two, suffering for the gospel, is a gritty reality. So the first thing, the work Saul, is called to, it was to have, a global reach.

The very fact, that you and I, are here today, is evidence, of the fruit of his work, isn't it? The Lord, commissions Saul, to be his instrument, in taking the gospel, about the Lord Jesus, to the Gentiles.

And this was, always his plan. This was always, Jesus' agenda. We've seen that again, and again, in these studies and acts. Back in chapter 1, verse 8, Jesus sets the agenda, for the growth of his church.

He tells his disciples there, that they are to be his witnesses, in Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

[22 : 24] That is, the agenda, the Lord Jesus sets, for his church. And Saul, is going to be, one of the key men, in realizing, that agenda, of taking the gospel, not just to the Jews, but beyond, and to the Gentiles.

And just a few chapters later, in Acts chapter 13, we read about, the Jewish rejection, of the gospel, that Paul proclaimed, and the Gentile acceptance, of the gospel.

Chapter 13, verse 46, Paul and Barnabas, are together, and they spoke out boldly, saying, it was necessary, that the word of God, be spoken first to you, that is, to the Jews.

Since you thrust it aside, and judge yourselves, unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning, to the Gentiles. For so the Lord, has commanded us, saying, I have made you, a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring, salvation, to the ends, of the earth.

And he's quoting Isaiah there. And when the Gentiles, heard this, they began rejoicing, and glorifying, the word, of the Lord.

[23 : 38] Saul's, key task, now that he serves, at the Lord's pleasure, was to take, the gospel, to the children of Israel. Yes, but, also beyond that, in fulfillment of God's plans, to be a light, to the Gentiles.

As we just read there, in chapter 13, bringing salvation, to the ends of the earth, in that great fulfillment, of Isaiah's prophecy, in Isaiah 49. That was always God's plan, salvation, to the ends of the earth.

That is the Lord's agenda. It's always been, the Lord's agenda. On Wednesday night, at our prayer meeting, we were hearing a little bit, about the conversion, of Charles Spurgeon.

And, it was a very average sermon, on, this verse, from Isaiah 45, that brought Spurgeon, to Christ. And here's the verse. It says, turn to me, and be saved, all the ends, of the earth.

For I am God, and there is no other. Turn to me, and be saved, all the ends, of the earth. Right there, in the Old Testament, the gospel, had a global reach.

[24 : 55] It was always going, to the ends, of the earth. And our task, today, is the same as Paul's. Our task, is a global one. It was for Saul, and it remains so, for the church today.

So our horizons, as the Tron church, they stretch, beyond the city limits, of Glasgow, don't they? Of course, that includes Glasgow.

It's where most of us, live and work. The people we rub shoulders with, and get to know each day, they need to hear the gospel. But our eyes, our eyes as a church, they do need to be, on God's global plan.

His global plan, to bring his gospel, to the ends of the earth. And that's why, on our Wednesday prayer meetings, we pray first, for our gospel partners, around the globe.

We begin with our, worldwide focus. That is why, we've poured resources, into our Farsi ministry. Yes, our global focus, as a church, will mean, sometimes, sending folk overseas, to serve there, but it also means, sending folk downstairs, to serve the folk, who have come, from overseas.

[26 : 06] We live, in a global city. Folk, from every continent, on the world, are coming to this city, for study, for work, for a new start.

So let's be alert, here, in this city, for global reach, right on our own doorstep. That is the Lord's agenda, for his people then, and today, it's a global reach.

But that global reach, also involved, a gritty reality. Look at verse 16. We've seen, the global reach, in verse 15.

But verse 16, Saul has to come to terms, with a reality, that he was going, to have to endure, for the sake of his savior. The Lord says to Ananias, I will show Saul, how much, he must suffer, for my name.

Suffering, was going to be, for Saul, and for so many, of the Lord's people since, part and parcel, of witnessing, to the gospel. The gospel, would grow, as the witnesses, suffered.

[27 : 17] It is indeed true, that the blood, of the martyrs, is the seed, of the church. We've already seen that, just a few weeks ago, in chapter 7, when Stephen was executed.

What happened after that? Great expansion, of the gospel. Great opportunities, opened up, as people were scattered. And, the global reach, that God instructs, it comes with, a gritty reality.

It's the agenda, that Jesus promises, and it's the reality, that Saul experiences, as we see, our final point. Let's look on, to verses 20 to 31. And we see, in this section, from a human perspective, that Saul, is opposed.

But the bigger lesson, Luke teaches, is that the Lord, knows the adversity, the building, of the church involves. The Lord knows, the adversity, that the building, of his church, involves.

It's, an unpacking, of that gritty reality, of verse 16. Now the transformation, the turnaround, in Saul's life, is absolutely astonishing, isn't it?

[28 : 30] At least, from a human perspective. He went, to Damascus, with the clear intention, of arresting, those who proclaim Christ, and bringing them, back to Jerusalem, to face the chief priests.

But instead, he finds himself, doing the very thing, he was so steadfastly, opposed to. Look at verse 20. For some days, he was with the disciples, at Damascus, and immediately, he proclaimed Jesus, in the synagogue, saying, he is the son of God.

Look on, to end of verse 22. He confounded the Jews, who lived in Damascus, by proving that, Jesus was the Christ. But as we've seen, in the book of Acts already, and as we'll see again, here, the proclamation, of Jesus as the Christ, it quickly brings, fierce opposition.

Look on, to the very next verse. When many days, had passed, the Jews, plotted to kill him. Saul, the man, who once, was the instigator, of persecution, against those, who proclaimed Christ, well, he became the persecuted.

He became the hunted. Men were plotting, his own death. And it's just, as the Lord said it would be, back in verse 16. Saul was going to know, firsthand, just how much, he'd have to suffer, for the sake of Jesus' name.

[29 : 56] And so, in fear of his own life, Saul flees, and he heads, back to Jerusalem. And when he gets there, after initial, and understandable resistance, from the disciples, in Jerusalem, Saul is accepted.

And he quickly, sets about, preaching boldly there as well, just as he had done, in Damascus. And again, as in Damascus, he faces real, adversity, and hostility.

The Hellenists, sought to kill him. And again, Saul has to flee. Proclamation, of the Lord Jesus Christ, it will provoke, and it will bring adversity, it will bring, suffering.

That was the way, of our Savior. He was the suffering servant. It was the way, for Saul. It is the way, of the church, and for Christians.

The Lord is clear, about that, isn't he? He doesn't say, lay back, on your recline, and relax. That's not the Christian life. No, he says, all who follow me, take up your cross, and follow me.

[31 : 07] That is the pattern, of the Christian life. The Christian life, is a cross-shaped life. It was for Paul, and it is, for every Christian.

Not in exactly, the same way, but it is, a cross-shaped life. And so, we must be clear, in our expectations, in the Christian life, corporately, as well as individually.

Playing our part, in his agenda, for the world, taking his gospel, to the ends of the earth, calling men and women, to repent, and believe in Jesus, to turn to him, and be saved. Playing our part, in that building, of his church, it will necessitate, adversity.

It will bring, suffering. Three quick observations, about adversity, involved in gospel work, as we close. First, adversity, leads to gospel expansion.

Every time, Saul encounters opposition, and threats to his life, it forces him, to seek new places, to proclaim the gospel. He had to move, from Damascus, to Jerusalem, and from Jerusalem, to Tarsus.

[32 : 19] And Tarsus, was on the south coast, of what we now know, as Turkey. And the next time, we meet Saul, he's joined, by Barnabas, who then brings him, to Antioch, and Syria. And the gospel, continues to move out.

And Saul, goes about carrying, the name of Jesus, to the Gentiles. So adversity, in God's plans, and purposes, often leads, to gospel expansion.

So every time, we encounter, opposition, hardship, remind yourself, of that pattern. Adversity, leads to expansion.

And that ought, to shape our prayers, shouldn't it? It will give us, a lens, through which, to interpret, what may seem, at the time, and in fact, be very hard.

Knowing, that adversity, in God's plans, often leads, to expansion. Second observation, adversity, often leads, to subsequent peace.

[33 : 23] So the personal adversity, Saul endures, results, in peace, for a time, for some. Look at how, the section ends. Saul, has been preaching, the gospel.

He's had to flee. And so, verse 31, the church, throughout all Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria, had peace, and was being built up.

It multiplied. The Lord, as we've seen, through this chapter, the Lord, has seen to it, to remove, the chief opponent, of the Jerusalem church.

He's been removed. And not only removed, but been totally turned around, and brought into the plans of God. The Saul, of chapter 9, verse 1, is no longer. He has, as we've been seeing, utterly transformed.

And the Lord, is capable, of doing that. He does bring, times of adversity, but also, times of peace. And notice, what it is, that happens, during that time of peace.

[34 : 28] In that time, the church, is being built up. It's multiplying. That's what's happening, in this time of peace. Times of peace, are not times, to sit back, and enjoy the good life.

No, times of peace, they're times, to build up, to grow, to strengthen. And we, as a church, we are, in a time, of relative peace, aren't we?

The dust, has long settled, on the adversity, we have to endure, with the Church of Scotland. And since then, we've built, multiplied, strengthened.

But let's keep at it. Keep straining forward, that many, might hear the gospel, and be saved. The time of peace, is not the time, to relax.

It's the time, to build, to strengthen, to multiply. And finally, as we finish, adversity, is not, endured alone. Notice, Barnabas, there in verse 27.

[35 : 32] Notice, the disciples, and brothers, who secure, Saul's safe, passage out of danger, verses 25, and again, in verse 30. Saul faced, significant opposition, and threats, on his life.

But, he wasn't alone, in that. Unnamed, disciples, and brothers, came to his aid. Without them, Saul, would never have got, beyond the city limits, of Damascus.

It's a wonderful picture, isn't it? Of the body, the church body, at work. It wasn't all, about Saul. Yes, he was a key man, but he wasn't alone.

He couldn't be alone. He needed, countless others, to share, in that work, of the gospel. Ordinary, unnamed, Christians. They were, absolutely key, for the growth, of the gospel.

It was then, and it still is today. We're, ordinary folk, aren't we? None of our names, are in the Bible. We're, we're ordinary.

[36 : 36] And if you think, you're something extra special, then when you get home tonight, check with your husband, or wife, or give a good friend a phone, and they'll put you right. We are ordinary. We're normal Christians.

But that's okay, because we serve, an extraordinary God. A God, who uses, ordinary folk, for his purposes. Look at all the ordinary people in here, some of them unnamed.

They are key, in allowing Saul, to go about his work. Helping give him, safe passage. So he uses, ordinary folk.

But he's also, a God, who can totally flatten, and turn around, any man, even a man like Saul. He can do that. So let's together, be greatly encouraged, by Acts chapter 9.

Let's be clear, on the Lord's, unstoppable, church building purposes. Be clear, on his authority. He can make things happen.

[37 : 39] He can turn lives around. We can be clear, on his agenda. But also, we can be clear, on the adversity, we'll have to face. The Lord Jesus, he will build, his church.

he will build, his church, and the gates of hell, will not, prevail against it. That is what, this chapter teaches us.

Let's pray. our Father God in heaven, how we thank you, that you are so much, more powerful, than we are.

You are so much, more authoritative, than we are. you know, so much more, than we know. You are far, stronger than us.

And Lord, it's easy to be discouraged, when you look out, in the world, and you think about, your church. But Lord, we know, that you are, building your church. You are, the almighty, sovereign Lord.

[38 : 56] and the Lord Jesus, right now, is reigning, at your right hand side. And we thank you, for this encouragement, this reminder, that he is, building his church, nothing.

And no one, can stop that. So encourage our hearts, this evening, before we ask it. In Jesus name. Amen. Amen.