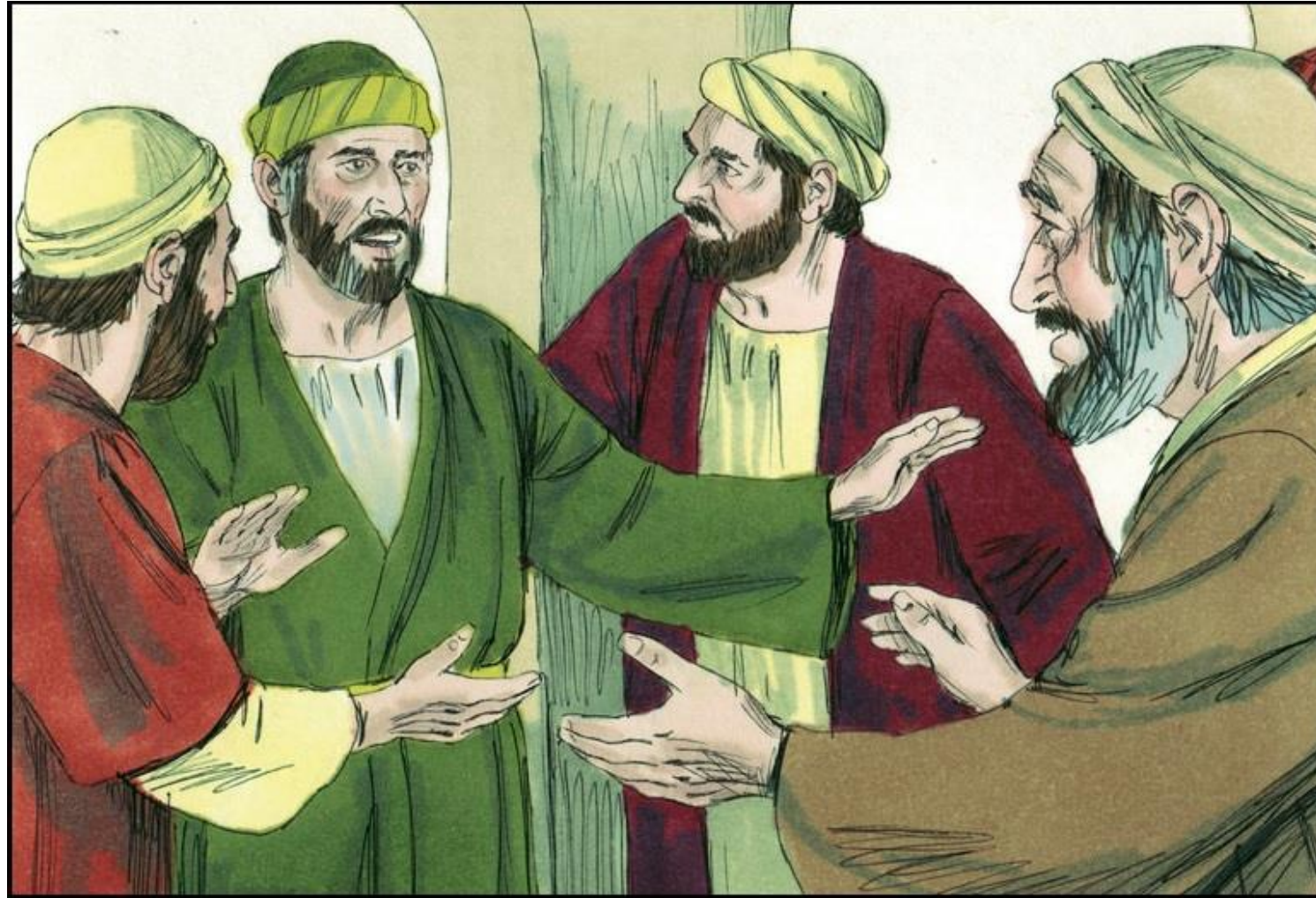




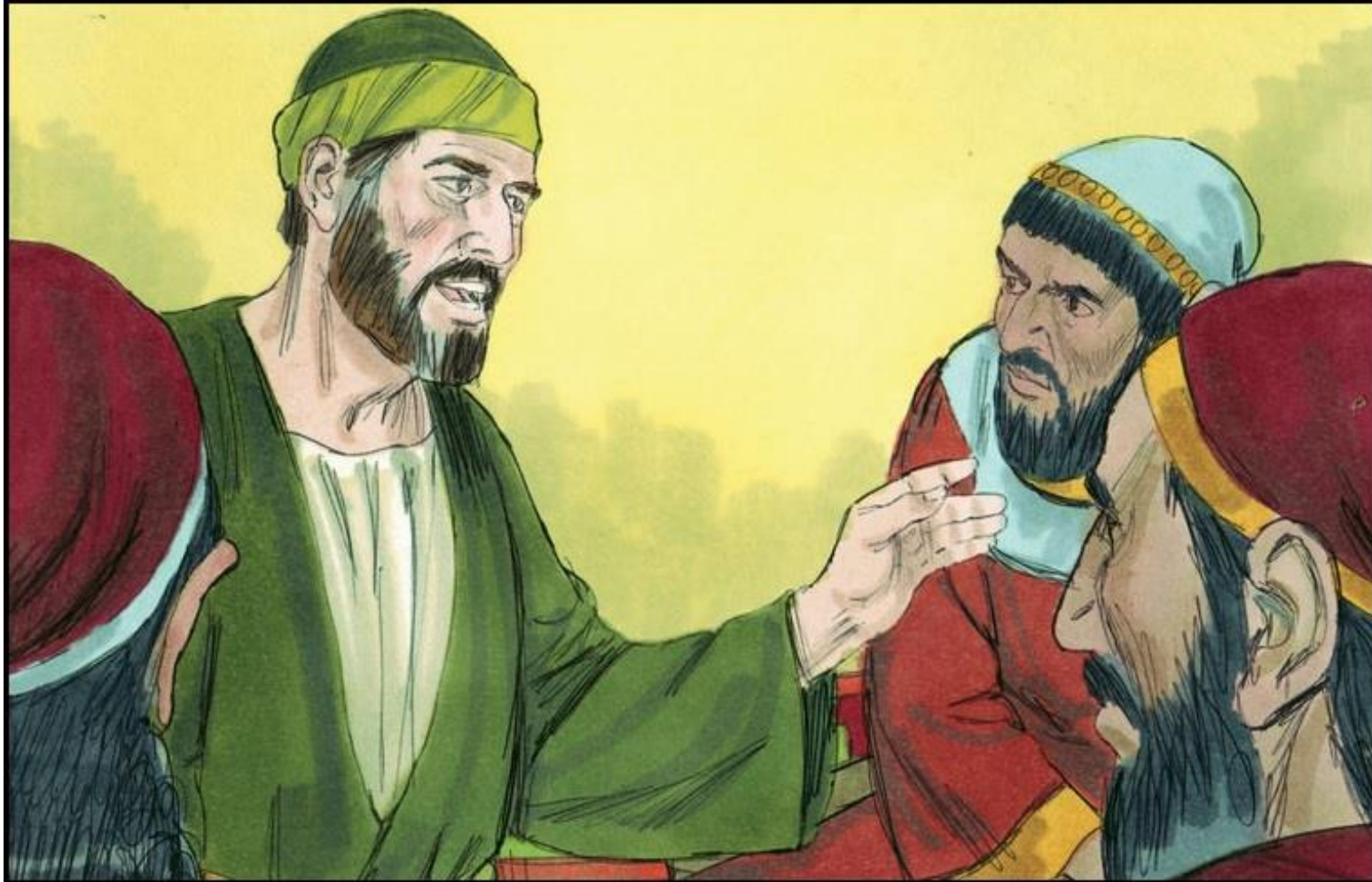
Final Lessons
from Paul
Acts 20

Now from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called the elders of the church to come to him. And when they came to him, he said to them: (17-18)



“You yourselves know how I lived among you the whole time from the first day that I set foot in Asia, serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials that happened to me through the plots of the Jews; ²⁰ how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you in public and from house to house, testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.” (18-21)

And now, behold, I am going to Jerusalem, constrained by the Spirit, not knowing what will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me.(22-23)

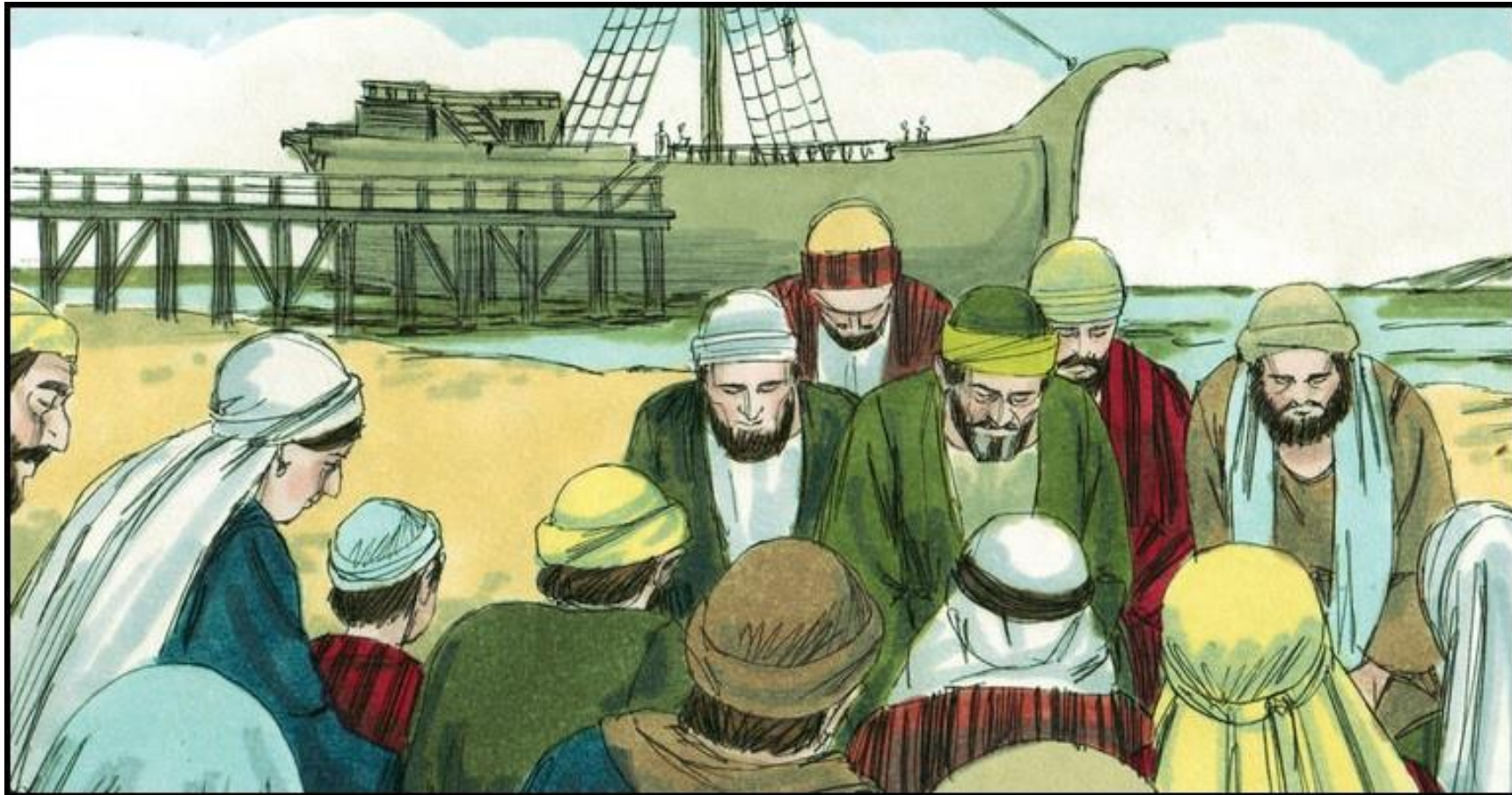


But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God. And now, behold, I know that none of you among whom I have gone about proclaiming the kingdom will see my face again. Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all, for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God. (24-27)

Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears. (28-31)

And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. And there was much weeping on the part of all; they embraced Paul and kissed him, being sorrowful most of all because of the word he had spoken, that they would not see his face again.

And they accompanied him to the ship. (36-38)



This account is very important for many reasons. But today we want to cover
7 Final Lessons from Paul:



**“You yourselves know how I lived among you
the whole time from the first day that I set
foot in Asia...” (20:18)**



Your life will be the best (or worst)
testimony of the truth. You may be the only
gospel some will read, the only Christ some
will see. (20:18)



PRACTICAL ACTION



**Be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil.
Eph 5:15-16**



Be especially cautious about your actions around unbelievers. Humbly model the behavior you are hoping to reproduce.

“I lived...serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials that happened to me through the plots of the Jews.” (20:19)

2

Humbly submitting to & honoring God in the midst of pain, disappointment & suffering is the main way that God is proclaimed as supremely valuable. (20:19)



PRACTICAL ACTION



God looks more glorious and valuable to the lost when he is still praised and esteemed in the midst of challenges vs when he is praised in times of comfort.



Be especially cautious about your actions and their implications in the midst of loss.

“I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you in public and from house to house...”(20:20)

3

We must be relevant
& preach to the needs of
the day. We must not be
abstract, outdated &
ineffectual. (20:20)



PRACTICAL ACTION



We can not present the most powerful, most important, most relevant truths in an old-fashion, mundane, lackluster way.



**We must be up to date with the issues & concerns of the day.
We must connect the truth to the things that matter to the lost.**

“...teaching you in public and from house to house, **testifying both to Jews and to Greeks** of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.” (20:21)



We must be impartial in our friendships & our efforts in evangelism. A subtle racism & egocentrism exists in many churches. (20:21)



PRACTICAL ACTION



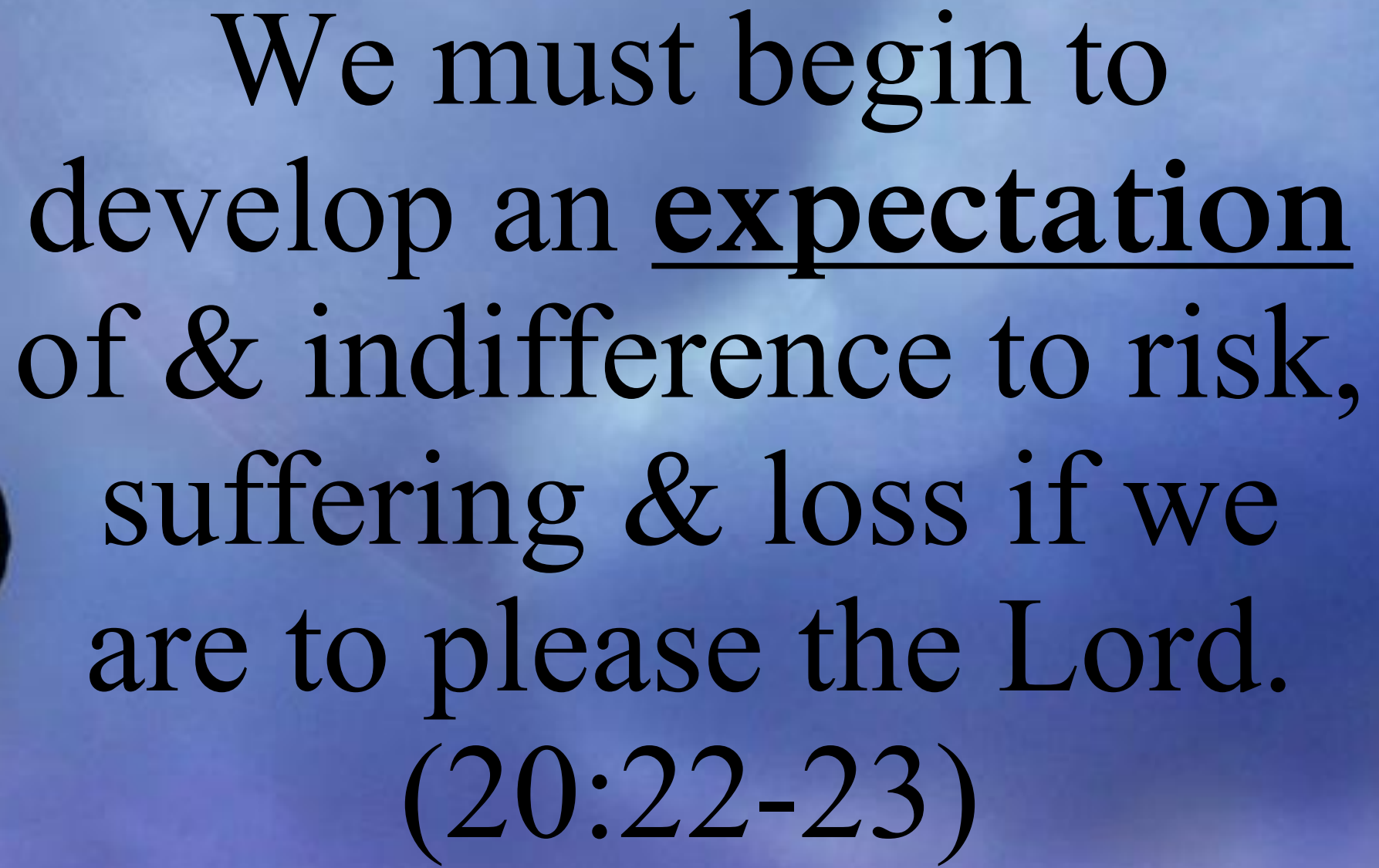
If we only know & really associate with people whose income, ethnicity & culture match our own...we are in trouble.



**Seek out people who are different than yourself.
Change your routine and get out of your comfort zone.
Schedule time with those different than yourself.**

“I am going to Jerusalem, constrained by the Spirit, not knowing what will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me.” (20:22-23)

5

A silhouette of a person in a suit walking along the edge of a dark, steep cliff. The background is a bright blue sky with a soft, hazy light source, possibly the sun, creating a lens flare effect. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

We must begin to
develop an expectation
of & indifference to risk,
suffering & loss if we
are to please the Lord.
(20:22-23)

PRACTICAL ACTION



We cannot fall into the American value system, where comfort is King! We must realize our greatest comfort is yet to come!



Practice being uncomfortable. Rush to the place of inconvenience. Nothing great is ever accomplished within comfort zones.

“I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.” (20:24)



We must consider the tasks of obeying God &
world evangelism as superior to our own life,
plans & comfort.
(20:24)



PRACTICAL ACTION



We must keep the end in mind. Study up on eternal rewards. Read biographies of great, sacrificial Christians.



Review how you felt after you served God vs serving yourself. Remind yourself that you are a created being, subservient to the Creator.

**“I testify to you this day that I am
innocent of the blood of all...” (20:26)**



(A) We must realize that to some great extent
we are accountable for the souls of the
unbelievers around us. (20:26)



Whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. If I say to the wicked, 'You shall surely die,' and **you give him no warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way**, in order to save his life, that wicked person shall die for his iniquity, but **his blood I will require at your hand**. But **if you warn the wicked**, and he does not turn from his wickedness, or from his wicked way, he shall die for his iniquity, but **you will have delivered your soul**.

(Ezekiel 3:18-19)

"This generation of Christians is
responsible for this generation
of souls on the earth!"

Keith Green

PRACTICAL ACTION



Make a list of the unbelievers in your life; whose primary Gospel influence is you! Ask yourself what their chance of coming to the Lord is, realistically, apart from you. That is who you are responsible for.



DL Moody resolved to not go to bed each day until he had shared the gospel with at least one person. Attempt to share the gospel with one person on your list each week, or each month.

“I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all, for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God.” (20:27)



(B) We must realize: it is only by proclaiming the word & will of God to them that we are released from that accountability. (20:27)



PRACTICAL ACTION



We have to remind ourselves daily that apart from hearing & believing the gospel, lost men & women will be condemned to hell, for all of eternity.

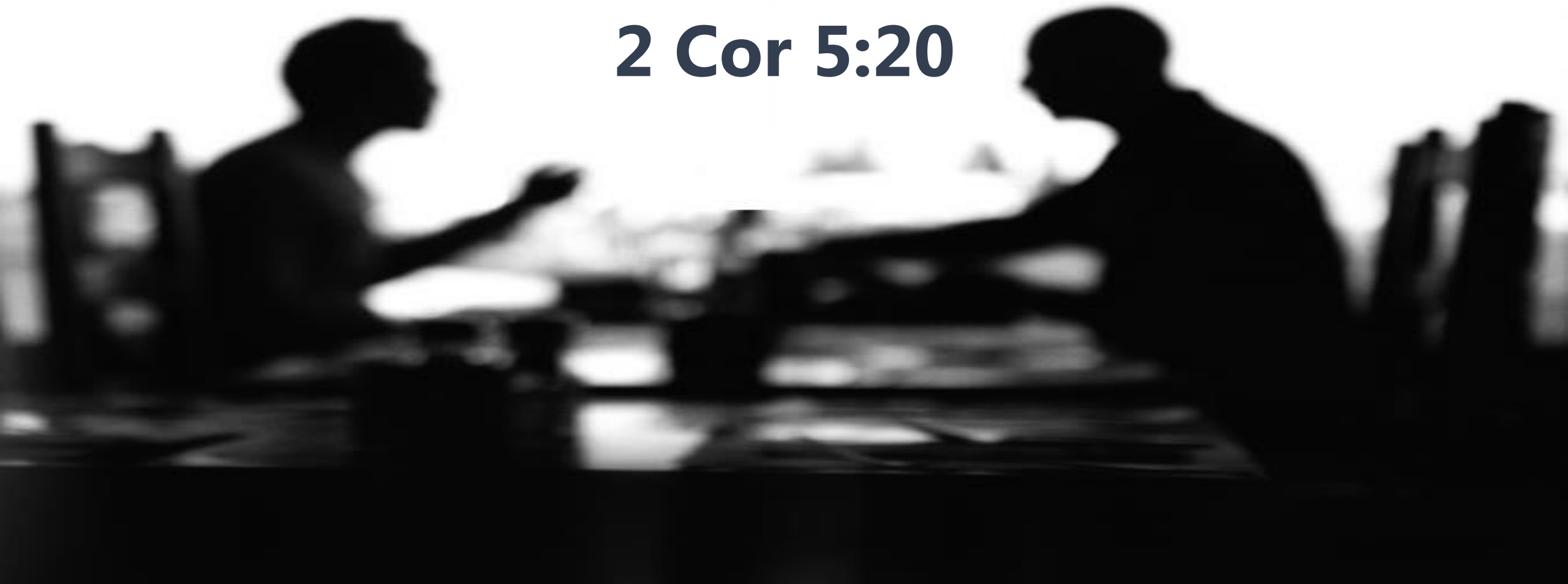


We have to remind ourselves that the Gospel is a story and the story must be told. And we are the means by which God has ordained for the lost to be saved.

So we are Christ's ambassadors;
God is making his appeal through us.

We speak for Christ when we plead,
"Come back to God!"

2 Cor 5:20





Comments or Questions