



**Life Point Church International
Sermon Journal 2019**

Acts 1:8

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you; and you will be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.”



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Acts 1:8

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Living in ACTION

Monthly Theme and Message Direction

January Theme: *Figuring it all out* Acts Chapter 1

January 6 th	Year Launch
January 13 th	Understanding the Mission
January 20 th	Understanding the Pattern
January 27 th	Applying it to Real Life

February Theme: *Pentecost & Pain* Acts Chapters 2-4

February 3 rd	Power Falls
February 10 th	Power Transforms
February 17 th	Power Equips
February 24 th	Power Sustains

March Theme: *Living on the Edge of Uncertainty* Acts Chapters 5-7

March 3 rd	Holiness & Sincerity Still Matter
March 10 th	Publicity is not just for Movie Stars
March 17 th	When God is for us and things are good
March 24 th	Let's get Organized
March 31 st	When God is for us and things are bad

April Theme: *God's Plan in Trial, Tragedy, & Turmoil* Acts Chapters 8-9

April 7 th	God's Plan...Not Mine
April 14 th	God's Words through Mine
April 21 st	Easter Sunday
April 28 th	God's Timing...Not Mine

May Theme: *I Belong*

Acts Chapters 10-12

May 5 th	Our Story Begins
May 12 th	Mother's Day
May 19 th	God Defines Us, Not Society
May 26 th	Using our Community & Story

June Theme: *First Missionary Journey*

Acts Chapters 13-15

June 2 nd	Learning to Hear from God for What's Next
June 9 th	Dealing with Jealousy & Lies
June 16 th	Father's Day
June 23 rd	Choosing Humility
June 30 th	What's Important?

July Theme: *Second Missionary Journey*

Acts Chapters 15-18

July 7 th	Mistakes Don't Define Me
July 14 th	When You Miss it, But it's Still O.K.
July 21 st	Suffering is Never Hidden
July 28 th	I'm All In

August Theme: *Third Missionary Journey*

Acts Chapters 18-21

August 4 th	Preparing for Another Mission
August 11 th	The Strength of the Church
August 18 th	Chains & Gains
August 25 th	Missions Celebration

September Theme *Along for the Ride*

Acts Chapters 22-23

September 1 st	Church Picnic & Water Baptism
September 8 th	When all things begin to Gel
September 15 th	Look up... See Christ
September 22 nd	Can I Trust the Process?
September 29 th	Go Ahead... Bring Em to Church

October Theme: *For a Noble Cause*

Acts Chapters 24-26

October 6 th	Enter Felix
October 13 th	Enter Drusilla
October 20 th	Enter Agrippa
October 27 th	When Kings Become Fools

November Theme: *Shipwreck*

Acts Chapter 27

November 3 rd	Barely Afloat
November 10 th	Stick to the Plan
November 17 th	Be the Voice of Encouragement
November 24 th	God's Promises are True

December Theme: *To Infinity & Beyond*

Acts Chapter 28

December 1 st	Pitstops are Needed
December 8 th	The Waiting Game
December 15 th	Never Alone
December 22 nd	Celebrating Christ
December 29 th	We Continue!



get cape.

wear cape.

fly.

Let's Begin →

Timeline of Acts

(All dates are approximate, based on F.F. Bruce, Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free.)

Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection; Pentecost **AD 30**

Martyrdom of Stephen (Acts 6:8-8:1) **AD 33**

Conversion of Paul (Acts 9:1-19) **AD 33**

Paul visits Jerusalem to see Peter (Galatians 1:18) **AD 35**

Paul in Cilicia and Syria (Galatians 1:21; Acts 9:30)
AD 35-46

Herod Agrippa I Dies (Acts 12:19-23) **AD 44**

Paul Visits Jerusalem to clarify the mission to the Gentiles
(Galatians 2:1-10) **AD 46**

Paul and Barnabas in Cyprus and Galatia (Acts 13-14)
AD 47-48

Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15) **AD 49**

Paul and Silas travel from Antioch to Asia Minor,
Macedonia, and Achaia (Acts 16-17) **AD 49-50**

Paul in Corinth (Acts 18:1-18) **AD 50-52**

Paul visits Jerusalem **AD 52**

Paul in Ephesus (Acts 19) **AD 52-55**

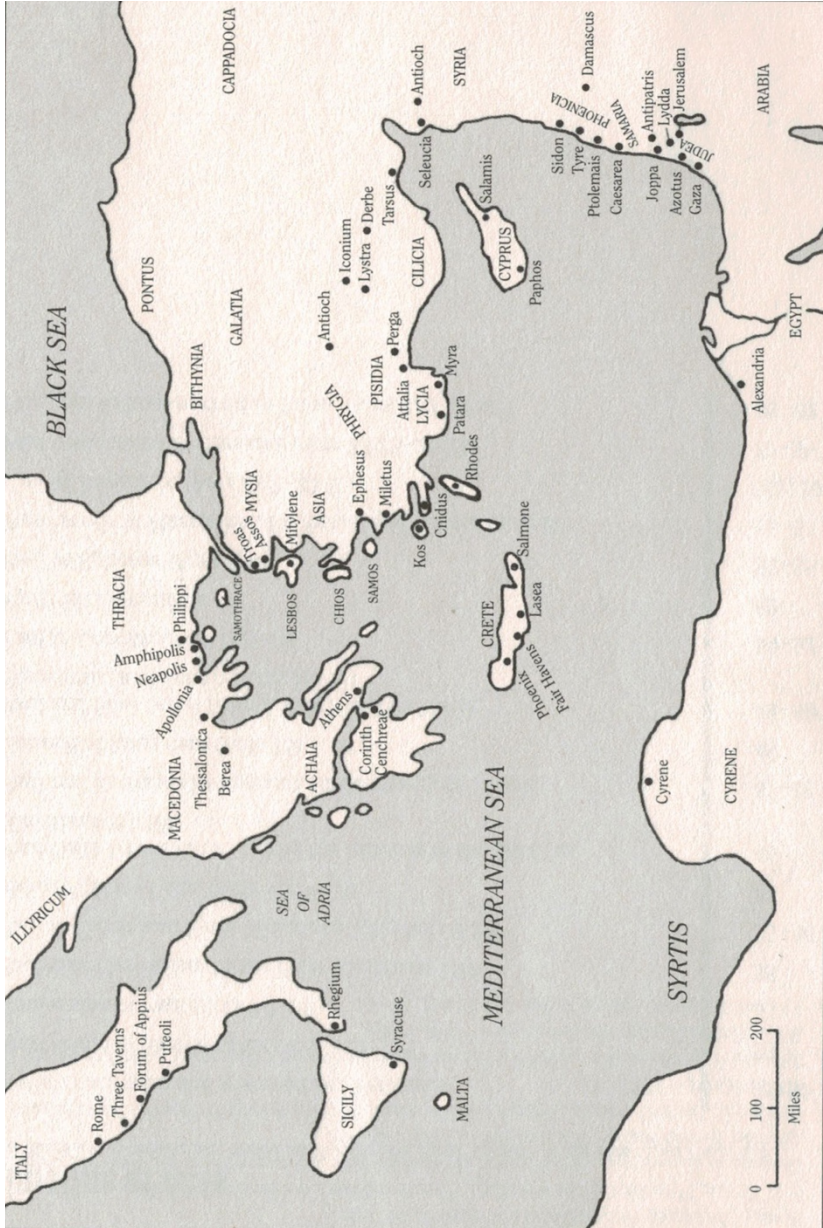
Paul travels to Macedonia, Dalmatia, and Achaia (Acts 20)
AD 55-57

Paul to Jerusalem (Acts 21:1-23:22) **AD May 57**

Paul imprisoned in Caesarea (Acts 23:23-26:32) **AD 57-59**

Paul sent to house arrest in Rome (Acts 27:1-28:31) **AD
59-62**

Map of Roman Empire



Map of the Roman Empire



Figuring it all out



january

Monthly Message Direction:

January 6th
January 13th
January 20th
January 27th

Year Launch!
Understanding the Mission
Understanding the Pattern
Applying it to Real Life

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: January 6, 2019



Year Launch!

Text: Acts 1:1-5, 9-11; Luke 24:45-53

Date of writing: 58-63 AD

Author: Luke the Doctor

Recipient: Theophilus, Official in the Roman Government.

*“Acts shows the **church** in its finest hour – under fierce attack but unstoppable, spiritually aflame, morally pure, impelled by love, and bound together by the living presence of Christ.” - Bob Girard*

As we prepare for this journey through the book of Acts, we find that the Spirit of Christ had prepared the early Believers (and those to come, us!) with the tools needed to impact and redeem the world in which we live. **These tools consist of:**

Luke 24:45-53

1 – We have received for our walk, insight.

Verse 45

- We must note that Jesus could have given His disciples so many different aspects of insight. Yet, He gave them insight to Scripture.
- This is the strength of the Church!

“If we can aptly devour the Word of God; we will receive insight from it. Insight from the Word of God gives understanding of Jesus’ place in our life, history, and experiences. If we have insight of Christ in our life, we have all we need to shake this world.”

2 – We have received for our walk, mission.

Verse 47

- Every Believer must have the same mission as primary before our trade in this world begins.

3 – We have received for our walk, promise and power.

Verse 49

- Jesus’ promise is the Holy Spirit.
- Jesus’ power is the Holy Spirit.

We must live lives full of the Holy Spirit.

4 – We have received for our walk, a pattern to follow.

Verses 52-53

- We find this pattern continued throughout the book of Acts despite non-agreeable situations.

1. We must develop worship.
2. We must develop joy.
3. We must develop community.

Living It Out!

- 1 – Read through the book of Acts this week. (4 chapters a day)
- 2 – Mark and count every time it mentions that someone *prayed*.

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: January 13, 2019



Understanding the Mission!

Text: Acts 1:6-8

“The Presence of Jesus always impels us to do greater than our own mission ever could. He pushes us to take more in, be more out, and broaden our scope to a greater worldview.”

1 – The disciples were looking for the “now” effect.

Verse 6

- If we look for the “now” effect, we greatly miss the part that we play in His incredible plan.

Do not waste moments on, “Why not now?” and miss the opportunities of God’s, “How!”

“The disciples, as far as is recorded, wasted not a moment wallowing in their situations. But, using each hardship as insight to God’s unfolding plan.”

2 – Our current situation is not our responsibility to figure out.

Verse 7

- A change of our current situation is not replacement for power.

Of the promises that are in God’s Word, the most common and poignant are the promises of His:

1. Presence – Hebrews 13:5
2. Power – Acts 1:8

3. Purpose – Ephesians 2:10

Romans 8:28

- All things work together for our *good* not always our *desire*.

3 – We are given Power to witness and Power for movement. Verse 8

Witness is the Greek word *martus* from which we derive the English word *martyr*.

“Why are so few of us in America willing to live for Jesus when others are so willing to die for Him?”
- Johnnie Moore

We are called to be Christians on the move. We are never called to be stationary.

- A stationary lifestyle breeds idleness which in turn brings contempt.

Do we want change...or power?

- The Martyrs Oath...

Living It Out!

1 – Determine in your current situation, that you will begin to pray for God’s will over your own.

2 – Memorize Acts 1:8 and confess it.

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.”

Illustration for The Martyrs Oath


I'll never forget witnessing two thousand followers of Jesus take a martyr's oath.

I was in India attending the graduation at a Bible school. The founder of the school knew firsthand the sting of persecution. He had survived at least fifteen assassination attempts and walked with a limp because he had been beaten so many times. He made it clear that each of his students would be qualified for graduation only once they confessed their willingness to serve Jesus even if it meant their death. They were to repeat after him, word for word, a martyr's oath.

The first time I saw this, it shook my faith in a way I had never felt before. The temperatures soared over one hundred degrees without even a whiff of breeze, as two thousand students pressed together with their family and friends. Unlike the American culture I was accustomed to, no one complained about the heat while singing "I Sur-render All." Word by word, the resolute roar of the students' voices rose from that dusty tent as they pledged their lives to Jesus. I remember thinking that I was standing in the book of Acts, witnessing a raw, first-century Christianity that I'd been shielded from in the United States. I felt deprived yet suddenly spiritually alive.

I asked myself: *Why are so few of us in America willing to live for Jesus when others are so willing to die for him?* Seeing Jesus through the eyes of the persecuted church transformed me.

Johnnie Moore



THE MARTYR'S OATH

I AM A FOLLOWER OF JESUS. I believe he lived and walked among us, was crucified for our sins, and was raised from the dead, according to the Scriptures. I believe he is the King of the earth, who will come back for his church.

As he has given his life for me, so I am willing to give my life for him. I will use every breath I possess to boldly proclaim his gospel. Whether in abundance or need, in safety or peril, in peace or distress, I will not—I cannot—keep quiet. His unfailing love is better than life, and his grace compels me to speak his name even if his name costs me everything. Even in the face of death, I will not deny him. And should shadow and darkness encroach upon me, I will not fear, for I know he is always with me.

Though persecution may come, I know my battle is not against flesh but against the forces of evil. I will not hate those whom God has called me to love. Therefore, I will forgive when ridiculed, show mercy when struck, and love when hated. I will clothe myself with meekness and kindness so those around me may see the face of Jesus reflected in me, especially if they abuse me.

I have taken up my cross; I have laid everything else down. I know my faith could cost me my life, but I will follow and love Jesus until the end, whenever and however that end may come. Should I die for Jesus, I confess that my death is not to achieve salvation but in gratitude for the grace I've already received. I will not die to earn my reward in heaven, but because Jesus has already given me the ultimate reward in the forgiveness of my sins and the salvation of my soul.

For me to live is Christ; for me to die is gain.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: January 20, 2019



Understanding the Pattern!

Text: Acts 1:12-14

“The disciples were all together with Jesus’ family. They kept close the ties of those that were of the same expectation.”

1 – Having “one mind” signifies having the same purpose. Verse 14a

- Having *one mind* is not about changing someone else mind to coincide with ours. It is finding Believers that have a desire to accomplish what Christ called them to do – and spend the time with them.

How to develop “one mind.”

1. **Worship together.** Worship is not just the singing of songs, but rather the focus on God with other people.
2. **Pray together.** Praying not for different needs and directions. But rather praying for each need together and believing for the same purpose.
3. **Have the same expectation.** When we have the same expectation, we are able to express faith for it and see it through till its materialization. This is best known as the Christians’ “working together” to accomplish a set goal.

- If we work together physically to accomplish a job, the goal seems simple. Praying and expecting from God together, accomplishes the same purpose.

2 – There must be prayer. Verse 14b

- Luke 24:49 – Jesus gives the Promise of the Holy Spirit and told the disciples to wait in the city for it.

Yet, the understanding of the disciples was that **waiting equated praying** and **praying ushered in the Promise and Power.**

“When Jesus asked the disciples to wait, He knew that times of prayerful waiting allow something profound and necessary to take place. They create a receptiveness to God’s power that enables it to sink down and revitalize our lives...In every transformation there is a time to wait...and pray.”

-Sue Monk Kidd

Prayer allows:

1. Something profound and necessary to take place.
2. A receptiveness to God’s power.
3. An enablement.
4. A transformation.

Living It Out!

1 – Don’t miss the first all church prayer meeting and service held on: Friday, January 25 at 6:30 PM @ Pastor Thomas’ Home – 9 Pinewood Road, Hartsdale, NY. Come expecting!

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: January 27, 2019



Applying it to Real Life!

Text: Acts 1:15-26

“Cultivate your trust and familiarity with the Lord in prayer now so that when the hammer comes down, when the dam bursts, and the earthquake hits, the door to the throne room of God is well-oiled and will open easily when you run through it.” – Steve Swartz (Strength in the River)

1 – They took hard life circumstances (Judas) and made a plan to move on. Verse 22

- Do we have a *plan* to move on?

If we are to move on from our situations, we must understand:

1. Everything in our life has a season.
Ecclesiastes 3:1
2. Situations against our progression do not interfere with God’s Promise of empowerment. Luke 24:44-49

2 – Our connections to meaningful friendships come through the context of ministry and apostleship. Verse 25a

- Desire to do God’s will connects us with like-minded people.
- Philippians 1:3-7

Difficulties that we have faced with prior relationships, only set us up for new and empowered friendships...if we move on.

“Let those be thy choicest companions who have made Christ their chief companion.” – Thomas Brooks

3 – Hardship and lack come in the life of a Believer, when there is the abandonment of a ministry mind. Verse 25b

- We must develop our faith past the idea of what it can do for us. Our faith is in what Christ has done for us and in the part we play in His plan.

Living It Out!

1 – Come up with a plan of what steps you will take to move on from tragedies in your life.

- These steps must include Christ and must focus on His plan.

2 – Use the tragedies of your life and declare God’s promises over them for your future.

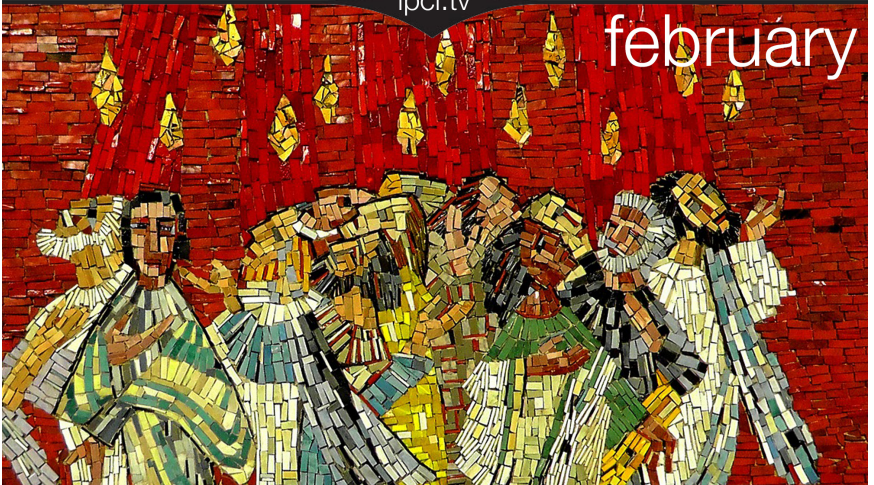
- Job 42:10-17

3 – Do not underestimate prayer together. The disciples waited and prayed for 10 consecutive days (240 hours).

PENTECOST & PAIN

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february



Monthly Message Direction:

February 3rd

February 10th

February 17th

February 24th

Power Falls

Power Transforms

Power Equips

Power Sustains

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: February 3, 2019



Power Falls!

Text: Acts 2:1-13

“Power can be used in at least two ways: it can be unleashed, or it can be harnessed... Explosions are spectacular, but controlled burns have lasting effect, staying power.” – Source Unknown

1 – There will always be evidence of the Spirit’s power and infilling over someone’s life.

Verse 4

There is a process that we cannot escape:

1. They were filled...
 - This is the willingness of God.
2. They began to speak...
 - This is our willingness to participate.
3. The Spirit was giving utterance.
 - This is the reliance in God’s plan.

When one of these is out-of-whack, we find a problematic church or Christian.

This evidence is personal! It challenges and redefines our walk with God.

This evidence is public! It challenges and redefines our behaviors and image.

2 – There is immediate effect upon the lives of those around us. Verse 6

- While we cannot say in definitive that the experience of those around us will be positive, we do know that the experience is undeniable and purposeful.

The crowd **gathered**:

- Opportunities will be present.

The crowd will sense **amazement**.

- Amazement is not always positive. They were more shocked than anything.

The crowd will hear as **relevant** to their situation.

***See Map of the Reach of Pentecost**

3 – There will be pressure and fear of what “the world” thinks about our experience. Verse 13

- There was mocking and accusation.
- This however, never invalidates the Pentecostal Experience.

Living It Out!

1 – Ask God to fill you with the baptism of the Holy Spirit just as they experienced in Acts.

2 – Participate in prayer meeting to be filled with the Holy Spirit and experience His Power.

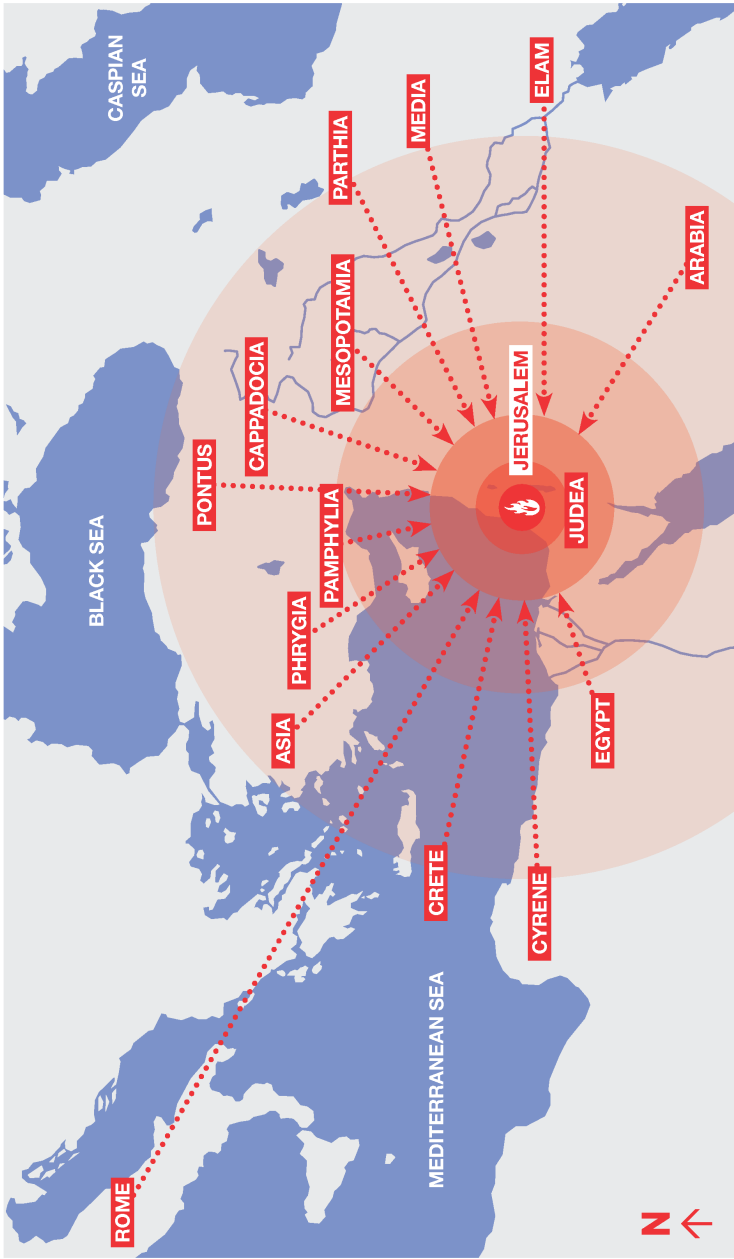
3 – In preparation for next week, read Acts 2:14-36.

Illustration Quote Opening of Power Falls

“Power can be used in at least two ways: it can be unleashed, or it can be harnessed. The energy in ten gallons of gasoline, for instance, can be released explosively by dropping a lighted match into the can. Or it can be channeled through the engine of a Datsun in a controlled burn and used to transport a person 350 miles. Explosions are spectacular, but controlled burns have lasting effect, staying power. The Holy Spirit works both ways. At Pentecost, he exploded on the scene; His presence was like “tongues of fire” (Acts 2:3). Thousands were affected by one burst of God's power. But He also works through the church--the institution God began to tap the Holy Spirit's power for the long haul. Through worship, fellowship, and service, Christians are provided with staying power.”

– Source Unknown

THE NATIONS OF PENTECOST ACTS 2:9-11



Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: February 10, 2019



Power Transforms!

Text: Acts 2:37-47

“The appearance of Jesus in our midst has made it undeniably clear that changing the human heart and changing human society are not separate tasks, but are as interconnected as the two beams of the cross.”

Henri J. M. Nouwen

1 – When the Holy Spirit’s power transforms us, a clear message will be defined throughout our life, activities, and relationships.

Verses 38-39

- We all have a message screaming in our life. What is it?
- Anger? Lack? Emptiness? Revenge? Lust?

The message that Peter heard and defined for his hearers was:

1. Repentance – The emptying experience.
2. Baptism – The imitating experience.
3. Infilling of the Holy Spirit – The empowering experience.

These experiences are not limited to the pages of Scripture. They are given to us today. Verse 39

2 – When the Holy Spirit’s power transforms us, there develops a drive for spiritual growth.

Verse 42

We must mark the points of devotion:

1. Teaching – Intake
2. Fellowship – Expression
3. Community - Support
4. Prayer – Connection to more

3 – When the Holy Spirit’s power transforms us, we become the recipients of supernatural effect.

Verses 43-47

Our life is peppered with:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------|
| 1. Awe | Verse 43a |
| 2. Signs and wonders | Verse 43b |
| 3. Legitimate connections | Verse 44 |
| 4. Purpose | Verse 45 |
| 5. Consistency | Verse 46a |
| 6. Real happiness | Verse 46b |
| 7. Favor with people | Verse 47a |
| 8. Growth | Verse 47b |

Living It Out!

1 – Change the message of your life. Receive a message that contains purpose and then run with it.

2 – Hold on to the message by your improved devotion to teaching, fellowship, community, and prayer.

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: February 17, 2019



Power Equips!

Text: Acts 3:1-10

“God, I pray Thee, light the idle sticks of my life and may I burn for Thee. Consume my life, my God, for it is Thine. I seek not a long life, but a full one, like You, Lord Jesus.”

– Jim Elliot

1 – It is in the context of devotion to the Lord that we are given opportunities to give of ourselves beyond our own means. Verse 1

- When we have spiritual structures in place is when we can be used in supernatural ways.

The Jews had a very disciplined plan for time with God. They had a dedicated 3 times a day plan. Evening prayer, morning prayer, and afternoon prayer.

- The ninth hour of prayer was at 3PM.

Devotion to God and human need always intersect.

- We can never have devotion to God and avoid human need.
- We ought to start opening our eyes to see the connection.

2 – In the context of devotion to the Lord, human need is met with either annoyance or impartation. Verses 3-4

- The extent of our devotion will determine which.

We are easily annoyed when we feel that people want from us materially.

- The beggar had a need, which was not the need that he was begging for.

Which do we see in the people around us? The money, or the healing.

Peter and John gave themselves to imparting their experience with Jesus.

3 – Peter gave out of the surety of what he possessed. Verses 6-7

- Peter's surety came from:
 1. Devotion.
 2. Boldness in his devotion.
 3. Action.

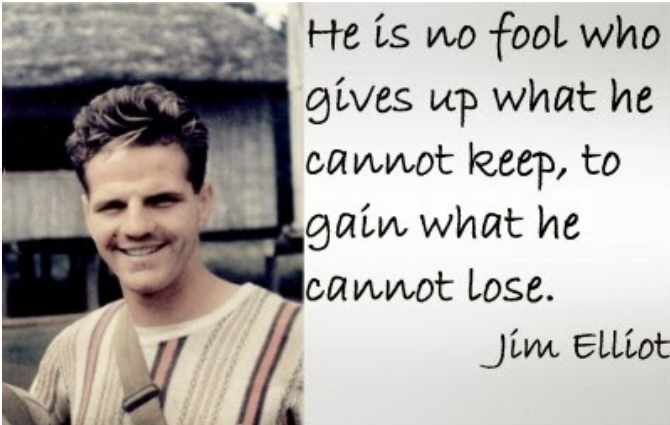
“He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose.” – Jim Elliot

Living It Out!

1 – In preparation for next week, read Peter's sermon in Acts 3:11-26.

Illustration for Quotes

Philip James Elliot (October 8, 1927 – January 8, 1956) (28 years old) was an evangelical Christian who was one of five missionaries killed while participating in Operation Auca, an attempt to evangelize the Huaorani people of Ecuador.



Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: February 24, 2019



Power Sustains!

Text: Acts 4:1-35

“Excitement for God and experience with His power will all face the transitional buffer of personal attack and situational discomfort.”

1 – The Holy Spirit changes our mindset so that uncomfortable situations are no longer about us, but about the opportunity of Christ.

Verses 3, 12

- John the Baptist coined this mindset in a powerful way – John 3:30.

2 – The Holy Spirit give a confidence that is supernatural in pressing circumstances, considering our background and situations.

Verse 13

- Confidence even though they were uneducated and untrained.
- Amazement from the persecutors.

Confidence in hardship comes **only** though relationship with Jesus.

Verse 13b

3 – The early Believers learned to pray proactively and not defensively.

Verses 27-30

- Strategically for Kingdom advancement and not trivially based upon feelings.
- How much of our prayers to God are about personal freedom and how many are about being used to advance God's Kingdom?

It is in this choice that we make wherein lies the continual flow of the Power and Presence of God.

- They wanted more confidence to preach. Verse 29
- They wanted more healing through the name of Jesus. Verse 30
- This is awesome considering verses 17-18.

The Results of Praying Proactively:

1. Tangible recognition Verse 31a
2. Filled and empowered Verse 31b
3. Unity Verse 32a
4. Resources and supply Verse 32b
5. Power and grace Verse 33
6. Sustenance Verses 34-35

Living It Out!

1 – Spend this next week beginning each morning by praying specifically for God to increase your boldness to proclaim the Gospel, and to do miracles through you, as you step out into your God-given role and responsibility.

Living on the Edge of Uncertainty

march

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Monthly Message Direction:

March 3 rd	Holiness & Sincerity Still Matter
March 10 th	Publicity is Not Just for Movie Stars
March 17 th	When God is For Us – and Things are Good!
March 24 th	Let's Get Organized
March 31 st	When God is For Us – and Things are Not So Good!

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: March 3, 2019

**Holiness & Sincerity
Still Matter!**



Text: Acts 4:36-5:10

“There is power behind the action of giving. But, giving, without relationship – is dead-giving.”

1 – The action of self-sacrifice and trust in God was the driving factor in Joseph’s experience with God and his expression towards the church. **Verse 4:36**

- Joseph was not looking to make a spectacle out of his life through his giving. He was looking to remediate his relationship with God.
- Joseph the Levite...
- Deuteronomy 18:1-2
- Numbers 18:20

Joseph evaluated his life and belongings and then made provision how his life and belongings played a part in serving God and the church.

- Through this was the fullness of peace displayed in his life.

2 – Joseph made it a point to become a Permission Giver and not a Self-Proclaimer.

Verse 36

- Joseph was so given to people's lives that he was re-named – Barnabas.
- Barnabas = Son of Encouragement.

Acts 9:26-39

- Nobody would receive Saul.
- Barnabas put his reputation and status on the line to see people be used by God.
- He lived to see people experience and be used by God.

3 – Barnabas trusted the institution of the church with no strings attached.

Verse 4:37

- Ananias and Sapphira wanted the same recognition but without the lifestyle.

The great morning questions:

1. What are you after in life?
2. What is your purpose in life?
3. Who do you want to please?

Living It Out!

1 – Practice the heart of Barnabas Giving!

- Look for an opportunity to give this week and do so with the heart of reaching and empowering someone's life. Make the gift count. Trust the institution of God's Church!

Publicity is not Just for Movie Stars!

Illustration for #3

Even today, many cultures still believe that unusual behavior that may be symptomatic of mental health problems is caused by spirit possession – especially in some less developed areas of the world where such beliefs are still important features of the local culture.

Interestingly, beliefs about spirit possession are not simply used to try and explain the effects of psychopathology-related experiences, but are also regularly used to control and coerce individuals.

In Western societies demonology survived as an explanation of mental health problems right up until the eighteenth century, when witchcraft and demonic possession were common explanations for psychopathology. Nevertheless, as I have described above, demonic or spirit possession is still a common explanation for mental health problems in some less developed areas of the world – especially where witchcraft and voodoo are still important features of the local culture such as Haiti and some areas of Western Africa.

Graham C. L. Davey, Ph.D., is an expert in anxiety and a professor of psychology at the University of Sussex.

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: March 10, 2019



**Publicity is not just for
Movie Stars!**

Text: Acts 5:11-16

1 – Whenever opportunity was available, the Church did everything publicly. Verse 12b

- Solomon's Portico ran the eastern length of Herod's Temple in the Court of Gentiles.

The Church was full of:

- Boldness – verse 12
- Resolve (There was a distinct split between the world and the church – verse 13a)
- Motivation – verse 14

Matthew 10:26-33

The only time public opportunity is not available is when persecution hinders it.

- Are we persecuted to the point where our Christianity must become secret?

2 – The Church prayed for the physically sick. Verse 15

- There was an active and deliberate move and motivation to pray for the sick.

We must activate our Christianity publicly and boldly make opportunity to promote our faith in the Healer, Jesus Christ.

3 – Those that were internally afflicted were brought to the Church. Verse 16

- Afflicted with unclean spirits is a very broad statement.

Mark 9:17-29

- What would be the boys condition today?

Too much of today's Church is built upon acceptance and management.

- The New Testament Church focused upon deliverance and progression.

“The early Christians were ‘supernaturalists’ – they believed in miracles. Based on their experiences with Jesus, they believed that when it serves God’s purpose He is willing and capable of setting aside natural laws or controlling them to accomplish His aims.”

Girard/Richards

Action prompts faith and faith does not fail because it originates from God!

Living It Out!

1 – Step out and DO Christianity publicly. Pray for someone this week out loud!

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: March 17, 2019



When God is for us – and things are good!

Text: Acts 5:17-32, 40-42

1 – Miracles that happen for the Believer, usually happen in the context of being a spokesperson for God. Verses 19-20

- The expression for miracles is also in the context of opposition and persecution. (Verses 17-18)

Being a spokesperson for God is the greatest criteria for the manifestation of miracles.

- Too often we expect the miracles without desiring the lifestyle behind it.

2 – We must learn to express and value obedience to God over fear of man. Verse 29

Fear of man brings so many limitations:

1. Embarrassment.
2. Compromise.
3. Muddied perspective.
4. Guilt.

“Obeying God does not cost...it pays.” K. Hagin

3 – Our obedience to being used by God raises the connection and the influence of the Holy Spirit through us. Verse 32

- The disciples were eye-witnesses of what Christ had done.
- But the witness of the Holy Spirit was the empowering of miracles because of what Christ had done.

4 – Pain and suffering for Christ is always opportunity for rejoicing. Verses 40-41

- Trial and circumstance establishes worth.

The disciples placed tremendous value on association with the *name* of Jesus.

- Association produces meaning, value, and power.

5 – Pain and suffering for Christ should push us to increase in devotion and productivity for Christ. Verse 42

- The deeper the association, the deeper the relationship, the deeper results, the deeper the Kingdom experience in earthly settings.

Living It Out!

1 – Evaluate the hardship you have faced this past week...from there, determine how you will progress and mature your faith. Mark it down:

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: March 24, 2019



Let's Get Organized!

Text: Acts 6:1-10

1 – Meeting needs is an absolute in the life of a Christian. **Verse 1**

- Increase was tied to the practice of serving food to widows.

*“A church committed to **fellowship** meets the need of **support**. A church committed to **discipleship** meets the need of **stability**. A church committed to **mobilizing members for ministry** meets the need of **self-expression**. And a church committed to **evangelism and missions** meets the need of **significance**.” – Rick Warren*

2 – Productivity is the responsibility of church members. **Verses 2-4**

- Empowering productivity is the responsibility of the pastor.

We must empower the “we can do” mentality by declaring what “I can do.”

- So many times, “we can do” is followed by “You should do.”

3 – Prayer and impartation play a very big role in what you can accomplish for God.

Verse 6

- When is the last time we have been prayed over for a specific task?
- When is the last time we have prepared ourselves for a specific task?

1 Timothy 4:4; 2 Timothy 1:6; 1 Timothy 5:22

4 – Everyone doing their part created atmosphere and gave opportunity for growth.

Verse 7

- People are drawn to transformation.
- We must live outwardly the inward transformation that we receive from Christ.

5 – An appointed and prayed-over work produces an opportunity for power with an increase of wisdom.

Verses 8, 10

- Stephen came from the connection of the church. He was a product of God's grace extended through those who were actively participating.
- Wisdom grew from his usability.

If we seek to be used by God, God will adequately empower our life.

Living It Out!

1 – What can **YOU** actively do through this church to promote God's transformation over your life?

Be Specific _____.

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: March 31, 2019



**When God is for us –
And things are not so good!**

Text: Acts 6:8-10, 7:51, 54-60; 8:1-2

**1 – Our perception is usually limited to what we
can immediately see. Acts 6:8-10**

- This seemed like a minor victory only to experience a major devastation.

Stephen did everything right, but was killed.

- Romans 8:28

All things work together for our good, not always our immediate benefit.

The status and result of this tragic persecution:

1. The Church was stationary (status). The Church became mobile and global (result).
2. The Church had limited reach – Apostles (status). The Church gained mighty influencers – Paul (result).

**2 – The world does not revolve around our life.
It revolves around Christ. Acts 7:54-60**

- So often our “sunrise” and “sunset” mentality causes more grief than purpose.

“When we realize that God controls every event of our life, we come to be secure in our emotions and confident in the outcome of our situation.”

➤ Colossians 1:13-18

Learning from Stephen:

1. Stephen had his **sight** on Christ, not his vindication towards the mob. Verse 55
2. Stephen had his **priority** on his inner man and not on his flesh. Verse 59
3. Stephen had his **purpose** on the mission of Christ – to reach those whom are lost – and not on his own salvation from tragedy. Verse 60

Are we okay with the part that we play in Christ?

Living It Out!

1 – Spend the beginning of your work/school week (Monday) thanking God that all you are walking through, does not remove you from being in His will.

Morning: Thank God that your day is orchestrated.

Noon: Thank God that you serve a great purpose.

Night: Thank God for insight where you fit in.

GOD'S PLAN IN:

Trials - Tragedies - Turmoil



Monthly Message Direction:

April 7th

April 14th

April 21st

April 28th

God's Plan...Not Mine!

God's Words...Through Mine!

Easter Sunday.

God's Timing...Not Mine!

Illustration for Trials, Tragedies, & Turmoil:

Definitions:

Trials: a test of the performance, qualities, or suitability of someone or something.

Tragedy: an event causing great suffering, destruction, and distress, such as a serious accident, crime, or natural catastrophe.

Turmoil: a state of great disturbance, confusion, or uncertainty.

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: April 7, 2019

God's Plan...Not Mine!



Text: Acts 8:4-7, 25-40

Define your tragedy/problem: _____

1 – Tragedy (Scattered) is always a set up for one of two responses. Verse 4

- The context of the tragedy in the Church is verse 3.

Our Responses:

- 1. A complete shut-down.** This is in our nature. We must fight against it.
 - Genesis 3:7-8 – This is also considering that the conflict was self-inflicted. Yet, God always has a plan (Genesis 3:15).

2. An opportunity for others to experience God's power. Verses 6-7

So often, this does not mean that **our** situation changes!

- Can we be a part of God's plan even if our situation does not change?
- This is the shift to spiritual maturity!

The disciples desired normalcy in their life. They wanted to go back home. Verse 25

This is not always God's plan for us.

- Phillip also had a family (Acts 21:8-9)

2 – Tragedy becomes an opportunity to reach and see someone else, other than ourselves.

Verses 26-30

- It may often seem like our problems are leading us nowhere (Verse 26b), but God has purpose for our “deserted roads.”

How to Develop Spiritual Eyes in Turmoil:

- A. We must decide to be concerned with accomplishing God's plan.
- B. We must learn to be a listener (to God's Spirit).
- C. We must not fear the unknown, but embrace that God is already there.

Living It Out!

1 – Write down your problem again: _____

Declare: God's Plan...Not Mine!!!!!!!!!!

2 – Look for the people surrounding your situation this week...listen to God's Spirit telling you what to do.

God's Words Through Mine!

Quotation Illustration:

Bishop Festo Kivengere

“I remember [a former Mau Mau fighter who had turned to Christ]...he said, “I was one who led a group of fighters to attack a Christian family at night. We were ordered to do it because they were ‘hard-core resisters.’ But to my surprise, that man loved us. He said he was not at all afraid to die, for he would immediately be with Jesus. Then he pleaded with us, not for his life, but for ours, that we awake and repent while there was still time. We killed him, but he died praying, ‘Father, forgive them and give them time to turn about.’ We went back to the forest, but the face of that man and his love never left me. At last his Jesus has found me, and now I want to tell everyone about him.”

How do you destroy Christians like that? You beat them; they love you. You put them to shame; they think you have given them an opportunity to be creative. You kill them and they win you!

Speaker: Dr. Rai Papparatti

Date: April 14, 2019



God's Words Through Mine

Text: Acts 9:1-19

“How do you destroy Christians like that? You beat them; they love you. You put them to shame; they think you have given them an opportunity to be creative. You kill them and they win you!” – Bishop Festo Kivengere

**1 – Saul’s conversion is incredible (Verses 3-9),
but what God does in the life of Ananias is even
more so. Verses 10-12**

- So often we have our eyes set on the amazing stories of other people and miss out the part we play in God’s story.

Both had an experience with Christ:

- For one it was chaos. (v.4)
- For another it was stability. (v.10)

- For one it was uncertainty of future. (v.6)
- For another it was clarity. (v.11)

- For one it was anxiety. (v.9)
- For another it was purpose. (v.12)

We must never underestimate our value!

2 – God’s instructions will go against the internal fears and turmoil we face.

Verses 11, 13

- We often choose vengeance than grace.

“More often than not, however, the moral equilibrium restored by vengeance is only temporal. For the extra retaliation to which a victim is entitled may enrage the offender and so create a perpetual cycle of animosity or feud...This dilemma can only be resolved by an act of renunciation.” Barry Schwartz, University of Georgia

3 – We must live life through the expression of obedience to God’s words. Verses 17-19

The Pattern of Obedience:

1. Ananias departed (v.17a). He put action to his obedience and did not waste time ‘figuring it out.’
2. Ananias entered (v.17b). He stood up against fear and rested in his calling and mission.
3. Ananias laid his hands on Saul (17c). Personal touch is equated here with acceptance.
4. Ananias spoke (17d). We can see how much he accepted God’s plan for his speech changed and he even used the words, “*brother Saul.*”

Living It Out!

Palm Sunday is about the obedience of Christ so we can live free. Let us be obedient to God and bring freedom so someone in our life this week.

Illustration for Easter Sunday

A Welcome Phone Call

On February 27, 1991, during the Desert Storm War, a woman by the name of Ruth Dillow received the worst call of her life. Her son, Clayton Carpenter, Private First Class, had stepped on a land mine and was dead. For the next three days she grieved. No one could comfort her.

On the third day after receiving the terrible news, the phone rang. On the other end of the phone there was a voice that said, “Mom, it’s me. I’m alive.” At first she thought it was a cruel joke, but as the conversation continued, she realized it was her son.

Later she said she laughed and cried and rejoiced because what seemed to be a hopeless situation turned out to be the greatest day of her life. That’s what news from a graveyard can do for you when your faith is in Jesus Christ.

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: April 21, 2019

Text: Luke 24:13-49



“I laughed, I cried, and I rejoiced because what seemed to be a hopeless situation turned out to be the greatest day of my life.” – Ruth Dillow

1 – There is a Resurrection **Walk for us to travel. **Verse 13****

- Life continues with or without Christ.
- Which walk do we choose?

It must be a daily choice. It must be an part of what we do and say.

- The disciples were walking and talking about what had taken place.

2 – There is a Resurrection **Hope like we have never known. **Verse 21****

- Our hope is usually hinged upon what we determine is right.
- Christ is the one who determines hope – Verse 25-26.

Before all hope is difficulty and suffering. But Christ is Risen!!!!

3 – There us a Resurrection **Revelation opened up for those who walk with Christ. Verse 27**

- Why is this so important for us?

With revelation of Christ, we can interpret and define purpose for whatever we walk through.

- Prophets were the introduction to judgment. But, if we can see Christ, we see His plan.

4 – There is a Resurrection **Power for us to experience. Verses 31-32**

- The disciples had an encounter in which they recognized Christ in there situation.
- The recognition of Christ in our daily walk is the greatest power we can possess.

5 – There is a Resurrection **Promise for us to receive. Verse 49a**

- It is interesting to note that the Promise of the Holy Spirit came after their understanding of the Scripture.

6 – There is a Resurrection **Plan for us to walk in. Verse 49b**

- Wait for power!!!!!!

Living It Out!

Bring Christ into the conversation. Talk about the difficulties you have faced and the difference that the resurrection of Christ makes.

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: April 28, 2019

God's Timing, Not Mine!



Text: Acts 9:20-31

“When we endure and mature through God’s timing, we experience and release of relief that so far surpasses our understanding.”

5 results of God’s plan in trials, tragedies, and turmoil.

1 – The Church enjoyed a perfectly timed interruption of peace. Verse 31a

- Peace is greater than relief from problems.
- Interesting that personal peace is tied to the Church community!

Christian peace is a season of relief for the preparation and building of greater character, responsibility, and impact.

- Whenever there is peace, God is pouring into us for greater things.

2 – The Church was being “built up!”

Verse 31b

- Being *built up* is the Greek word *oikodomeo* and means *being built up in character. Being a house builder.*

The Church had seen the lessons of the power of God through difficulty. They had determined to build on that foundation.

3 – The Church was going on in the fear of the Lord. **Verse 31c**

- The fear of the Lord in this context is the commitment to not compromise.
- Proverbs 8:13

4 – The Church was experiencing the comfort of the Holy Spirit. **Verse 31d**

- While the word for comfort holds the idea of being comforted, it also holds the idea of exhortation.
- The Holy Spirit was speaking to the Church and the Church was listening...obeying!

5 – The Church continued to increase.

Verse 31e

- While this is descriptive of the Church as a whole, its effects were magnified through the lives of individual Believers.
- Increase in personal peace, character, fear, and comfort.

These were given to the Church during a season of peace. Yet, when trials began again, individual Believers had the *increase* of these results even when the Church was scattered.

Living It Out!

In preparation of next week, read: Acts 9:32-43



Monthly Message Direction:

May 5th

May 12th

May 19th

May 26th

Our Story Begins!

Mother's Day!

God Defines Us...Not Society!

Using our Community and our
Story!

Opening Illustration for:

Our Story Begins

May 5, 2019

In his autobiography, Mahatma Gandhi wrote that during his student days he read the Gospels seriously and considered converting to Christianity. He believed that in the teachings of Jesus he could find the solution to the caste system that was dividing the people of India.

So one Sunday he decided to attend services at a nearby church and talk to the minister about becoming a Christian. When he entered the sanctuary, however, the usher refused to give him a seat and suggested that he go worship with his own people. Gandhi left the church and never returned. "If Christians have caste differences also," he said, "I might as well remain a Hindu." That usher's prejudice not only betrayed Jesus but also turned a person away from trusting Him as Savior.

Our Daily Bread, March 6, 1994.

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: May 5, 2019



Our Story Begins!

Text: Acts 10:1-35, 44-48

“If Christians have caste differences also, I might as well remain a Hindu.” – Mahatma Gandhi

1 – We are to pray and evaluate any prejudices we might have towards a certain people group.

Verses 9, 14-15

- We must see that the settling of prejudice does not happen outside of prayer.
- If we do not spend time in prayer, we can never settle our issues.

I am better mindset...

Verse 14

- Peter may never have eaten anything unholy, but he sure had acted unholy!

Our prejudices are opportunities for the Gospel to those people groups.

- Prejudice is a tool of the devil and his purpose is always to hinder the Gospel.
- Therefore, prejudice is an inclination of our calling to reach them.

“I can’t stand...,” is a call to reach!

- Answer the call!

2 – Only in speaking God’s Word do we break words of prejudice. Verses 34-36

- Our words can only change if our desire for *the* Word begins to change.
- A rock or a sponge?

1 Peter 4:10-11

- If we convey our own words, we leave room for our ego to determine value.
- If we convey God’s words, we assign the value that God assigns and we benefit from a transformed life.

3 – Racial unity provides an incredible display of worship and experience in God’s presence.

Verses 44-45

- Each culture has something to express and teach about the worship of God.
- Revelation 7:9-12

Countries provide worship learning:

- Africa, India, Samoa...

Individuals provide worship learning.

Living It Out!

1 – Scary as it is...name your prejudice here:

Ask God for the opportunity to reach this person or people with His love through you.

Illustration for Mother's Day!

A teacher gave her class of second graders a lesson on the magnet and what it does. The next day in a written test, she included this question: " My full name has six letters. The first one is M. I pick up things. What am I?" When the test papers were turned in, the teacher was astonished to find that almost 50 percent of the students answered the question with the word Mother.



Societies' Expectation.

Mother mistakes!



Just for Fun.

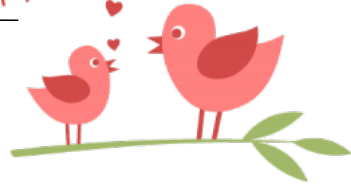
Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: May 12, 2019

Happy Mother's Day

Mother's Day!

Text: 1 Samuel 1:1-20



“Societies’ Mother’s Day expectations do not define a mother. A mother is defined by the intent of her Creator.”

1 – One of the greatest human expressions is emotional transparency before the Lord.

Verse 10

- Emotions are needed in life.
- But before people, emotions are most often misunderstood.

When Hannah expressed her feelings before her husband, he turned the attention to himself.

- Verse 8

But, when feelings are expressed before God, God takes notice and fills the void that our feelings are crying out for.

- Before her husband, (verses 8-9) she went through the motions but sadness remained.
- Before God, (verse 18) she was genuinely fulfilled and her sadness was lifted.

2 – When working out our troubles before God, be on guard against the misunderstanding of people. Verses 12-15

- We must be quick to cast off offense!
- We must be quick to turn our focus upon God.

3 – Worshipping God sets perspective and fulfillment. Verse 19

- She was able to worship God because He took away her sadness.
- She was made happy and fulfilled before God gave her a child.

The answer we are emotionally seeking from God is first found in Him.

When God fulfills us, we can give back to God what He has given to us because He becomes the fulfiller. Verse 28

Living It Out!

1 – Emotional “*chaos*” expressed before God is really strength and wisdom.

- Go ahead, let it all out to the Lord!
- Tell Him out loud your need to have fulfillment!

2 – Declare to God, “Before I follow _____, I follow you!”

Illustration for: God Defines Us, Not Society!

Antioch, the Queen of the East: from Acts, Smart Guide to the Bible.

A few persecution-escapees stopped when they reached the free Roman city of Antioch on the Orontes, third largest city in the Roman Empire, with a population of 500,000. Antioch was one of the most beautiful cities in the empire, often called “Antioch the Beautiful” or “Queen of the East.” Its balmy air was fragrant with the scent of roses from which rare Antiochene perfumes were made. It was a cosmopolitan town. From all over the empire people moved there to share the prosperity. Among the migrants were many Jews. Jews were well treated in Antioch. The synagogue there was considered the second most beautiful on earth. Gentile converts to Judaism and “God-fearers” were numerous.

Antioch was a pagan city filled with temples. At the foot of Mount Silpius, south of the city, was a huge rock formation that looked like a faceless human head. Pagan mythology said this was the head of Charon, the god in charge of transporting dead souls to the underworld. Nearby was the Grove of Daphne, worship center for Apollo, Artemis, Astarte, and other gods. Worship at the grove featured ritual prostitution. “The morals of Daphne” was a worldwide expression for sexual immorality.

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: May 19, 2019



God defines us, not society!

Text: Acts 11:19-30

The Queen of the East!

- Head of Charon

1 – We may not have started the work, but we must jump in, join in, and bring numbers to the Lord. **Verses 23-24**

Barnabas arrived and witnessed God’s grace:

- He began to encourage them. If we don’t know where to begin, this is a good place.
- His message was consistency and devotion.

2 – We must bring someone with us to accomplish the task and do the work.

Verses 25-26a

- He had in mind to bring in reinforcements.
- Who do we know in our circles that we can bring in for reinforcement? _____
- Ecclesiastes 4:9-10

“There is too much modern day “partnership” where only one person does the work while waiting for the other to fund it.”

Funding is integral to accomplish ministry. Yet, creating ministers goes farther than the efforts of one.

3 – We must commit to discipling and teaching.

Verse 26

- We cannot miss the time frame.
- They committed for one year!

“You are basically a composite of the five people with whom you spend the most time.” – Chris Russell

Interesting to note that the term, *Christian* was first coined in Antioch during intensive church commitment.

- We will find true definition of who we are in this type of context.

4 – We must determine to be a part of reaching through our means.

Verse 29

- Each person gave in direct proportion to what they had.

“You can give without loving. But you cannot love without giving.” – Amy Carmichael, Missionary to India

Living It Out!

1 – Make a commitment to meet with someone from this church this week and speak encouragement.

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: May 26, 2019



Using our community and our story!

Text: Acts 12-1-19

“The combination of peace and hardship allows us the advantage of relatability to the human condition, which then brings connectivity to the Gospel.”

1 – God’s sustaining power manifests itself in a powerful way, an unexpected way! Verse 6

- We must not keep looking for the prison doors to open that we miss the peace that we receive to handle the situation.
- The intention of Herod was death (verse 2)
- The intention of Christ is trust. Everything else is God’s “after-plan.”

Proverbs 3:24-26 - Psalm 3:4-6

2 – There is power, comfort, and peace in the togetherness of Christian community.

Verses 2, 5, 12

- The Church became a support system (2)
- The Church did not know the outcome but had a plan! (5, 12)

When is the last time someone in need or struggle called the Church body to say, “*Please come over and join with me in prayer and support?*”

➤ James 5:13-16

3 – Our testimony is for the purpose of building the Church.

Verse 17

➤ We must use what we have!

Far too often the excitement of our testimonies is drowned out by the turmoil, saga, and hardship that modern society praises above results in God.

Revelation 12:11

Peter was quick to share his testimony with the church (verse 17) and with those who had just come to the faith (verse 19n – Caesarea)

Living It Out!

1 – Cling to the Church and get as close as you can. The closer you reach for those inside the Church, the deeper your commitment and gain from the Church becomes.

2 – Share your testimony. Make it a point this week to share with someone how your life has changed because of Christ.



Monthly Message Direction:

June 2nd

Learning to hear from God for what is next.

June 9th

Dealing with jealousy and lies.

June 16th

Father's Day

June 22nd

Anointing Service!

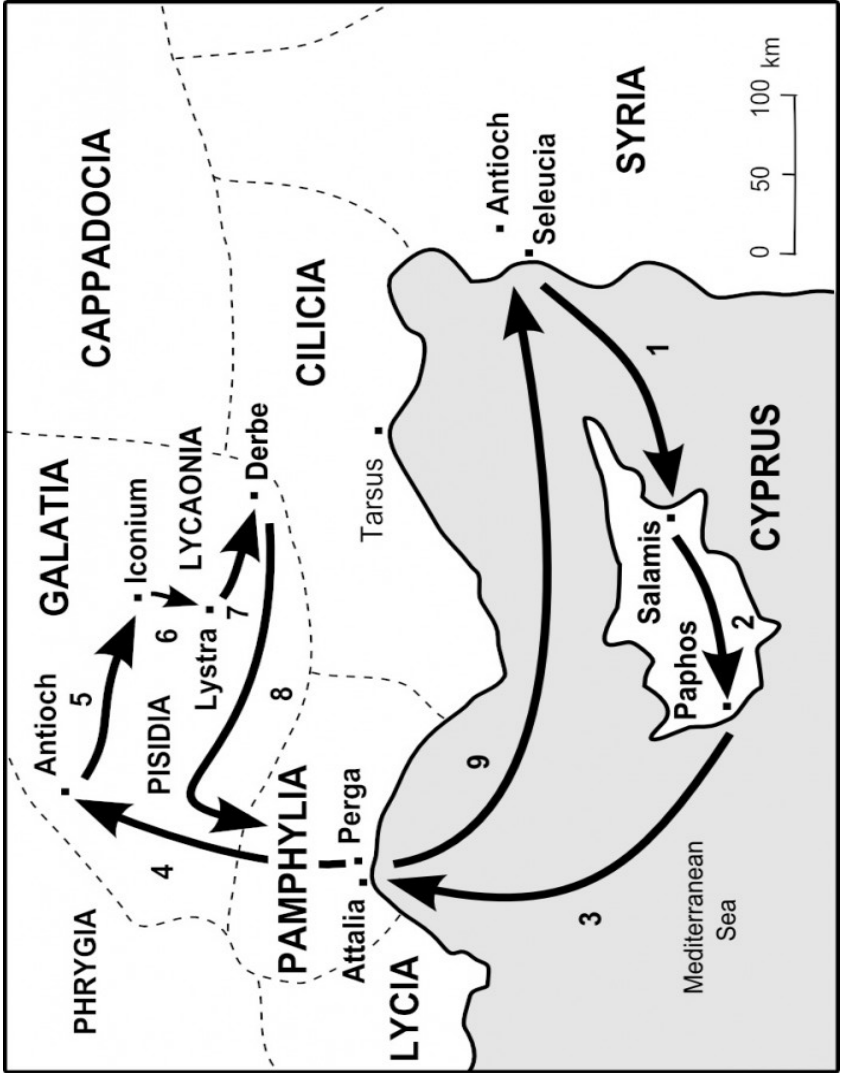
June 23rd

Bishop Adams Lwesya

June 30th

Choosing Humility.

Paul's First Missionary Journey



Bible Location

Antioch
 Salamis/Paphos
 Pamphylia
 Galatia

Modern Location

Antakya, Turkey
 Cyprus
 Antalya, Turkey
 Ankara, capital of Turkey

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: June 2, 2019



**Learning to hear from God
For what's next!**

Text: Acts 13:1-4

Hindrances to hearing the voice of God

1. Lack of time spent with God.
2. Sin.
3. Personal busyness.
4. Self-preservation.

1 – There was ministerial activity prior to God speaking direction. **Verse 2a**

- Activity yields direction.
- Inactivity leads to frustration.

There is something to be said about serving God and coming to realization about what direction to take in life.

Serving God initiates right priority. Right priority allows for the flow of direction.

2 – The discipline of fasting was so important that it followed before and after hearing God's direction. **Verses 2b, 3a**

“Activity with self-sacrifice opens receptivity.”

Fasting breaks the control of self.

- It sharpens the mind.
- It forces importance.
- It provides for spiritual receptivity.

3 – The disciples surrounded themselves with Christian partners and wisdom. Verse 3

- There is an incredible source of power and comfort when we have a network of Christian community.

They fasted with people.

They prayed with people.

They were prayed for by people.

And...then they went out!

- None of this happened without the context of Christian community.

Living It Out!

1 – Become a server and minister through this church. Start an outreach and see it through!

2 – In anticipation for next week, read Acts 13:5-43.

Illustration for Message: Dealing with Jealousy

Christ the Redeemer of the Andes (Spanish: *Cristo Redentor de los Andes*) is a monument high in the Andes at 3,832 metres (12,572 ft) above mean sea level on the border between Argentina and Chile.

It was unveiled on 13 March 1904 as a celebration of the peaceful resolution of the border dispute between the two countries.

The Christ of the Andes, a symbol of eternal peace, is commonly believed to have been made from the cannons of war. Engraved at the feet in Spanish are the words, "Sooner shall these mountains crumble into dust than Chileans and Argentinians break the peace which at the feet of Christ, the Redeemer, they have sworn to maintain."



Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: June 9, 2019

**Dealing with Jealousy
& Lies!**



Text: Acts 13:44-52; 14:1-7

It is especially difficult to show love to our enemies when we believe that Jesus only loves us!

1 – When dealing with jealousy & lies, we must reject the notion to take it personally.

Acts 13:51

When we are offended as a Believer, we allow ourselves to become entangled in:

- Bitterness and rage.
- Vengeance.
- Our own plan rather than God's.

2 – Boldness with reliance on the Lord brings signs and wonders.

Acts 14:3

- The key is that they were bold because they had trusted their situation, struggle, and outcome to the Lord.

We can release our situation to the Lord by bringing Him into it.

- They testified to the word of His Grace.

We can release our struggle to the Lord by believing for miracles through us.

- Signs & wonders were done through their hands.

We can release our outcome to the Lord by using each situation as an opportunity.

- They continued to preach...

3 – Opposition should never dictate our commitment. **Acts 14:7**

- Mistreat & stoning = continued ministry.

Calling dictates our commitment.

- Isaiah 42:6
- John 15:16
- Romans 8:28
- 2 Timothy 1:9

Living It Out!

1 – Name the person you are most frustrated with:

Forgive them...

See someone in that very situation that needs to hear about the love of Christ. And begin sharing it with them.

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: June 16, 2019



Father's Day!

Text: Jonah 4:1-2; Exodus 34:6-7

“Train up a child in the way he should go – but be sure you go that way yourself.” – Charles Spurgeon

1 – A godly father is gracious. Verse 4

- The word for gracious is only used in the Scripture as an attribute of God.
- It is used of God in hearing the cry of a vexed debtor.

We will so very often face the vexed debtor, especially in the relationships close to us.

- A godly father feely offers forgiveness and restoration – at his own cost.

2 – A godly father is compassionate. Verse 4

- Compassion is never compassion without action.

3 – A godly father is slow to anger. Verse 4

- He does not wait long for the sinners return.
- His activity becomes progressively redemptive.
- 2 Corinthians 5:17-20a

4 – A godly father is abundant in lovingkindness, covenant loyalty, and favor.

Verse 4

- He is continually looking to meet the needs that constitute fatherhood.

5 – A godly father relents in calamity. Verse 4

It is interesting to note that all these attributes were professed from a son who was annoyed at his father.

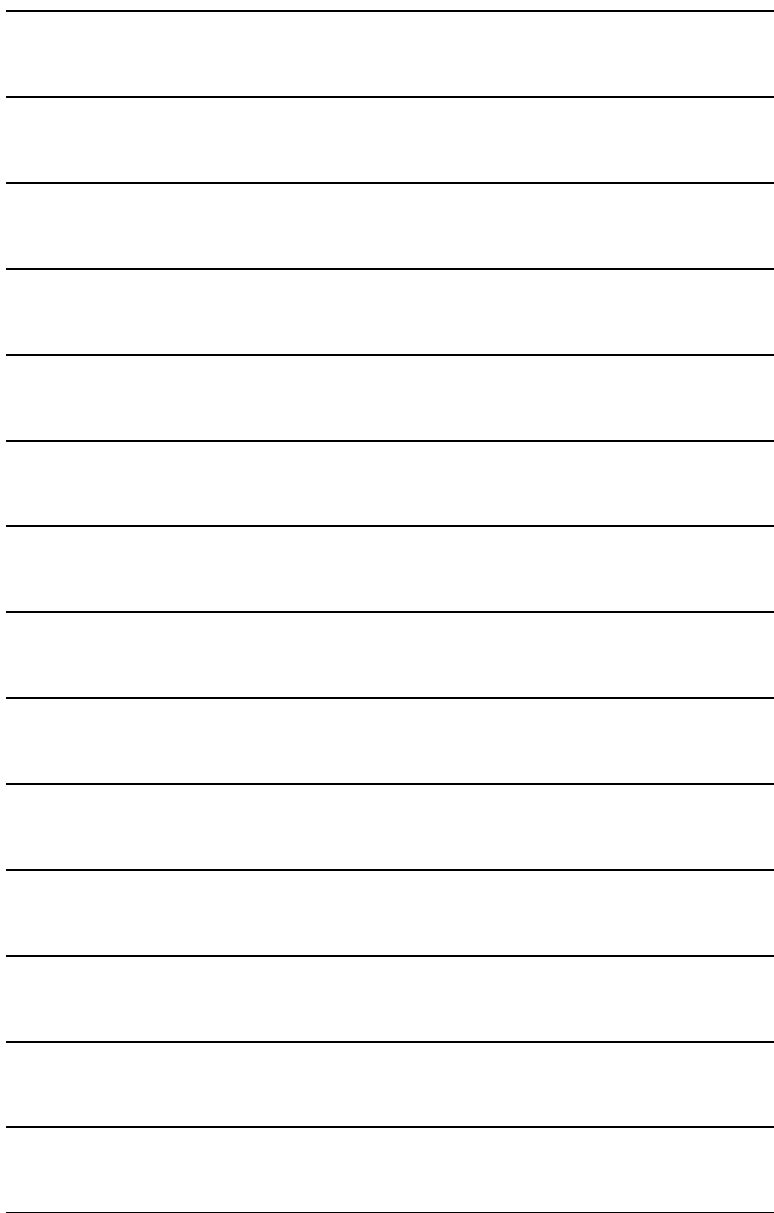
- It is a testimony to strive for, that in our children's frustration, they proclaim our godly attributes.

Living It Out!

1 – Practice living out God's characteristics by praying that your actions would reflect Jesus Christ.

2 – Live it out by intentionally displaying one of these attributes to someone that has frustrated you this week.

3 – How much have you avoided God as Father in your life? Time to make restitution.



Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: June 30, 2019



Choosing Humility!

Text: Acts 14:8-23

1 – There will always be opportunities in our life to stand tall and advance ourselves.

Verses 11-13

Zeus – Known as the Greek god of the sky and king of the gods.

Hermes – Known as the messenger of the Olympic gods.

The Dangers of Promoting Self:

1. Confusion in knowing Christ.
2. Positioning oneself for a fall (Proverbs 16:18).
3. Losing our purpose!

Is Christ our purpose? At home? At work?

2 – Humility lifts and exalts Christ over all.

Verse 15

- Humility teaches about the nature of Jesus and not about *our* sinful nature.

Humility Advances the Characteristics of Jesus!

(Verses 15-17)

1. **He is the Living God.** **Verse 15c**
By this they were declaring that Zeus & Hermes were not!
2. **He is the Creator.** **Verse 15d**
By this they were dispelling a polytheistic view and declaring Jesus as of sole importance.
3. **He is Patient.** **Verse 16**
By this, God did not destroy them for their sin, but allowed this opportunity to come so they can hear and choose.
4. **He is Kind.** **Verse 17**
God provided basic need even though they were far from Him.

3 – Humility confronts difficulty and rejects revenge.

Verse 22

- Pride will always take the path of vengeance.
- Humility will always lift the purpose of Christ.

Living It Out!

1 – Take inventory. What is the most time consuming event of your day? _____.
Is that event about you? Or is it about Jesus?

PAUL'S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY



july
lpci.tv

Monthly Message Direction:

July 7th

July 14th

July 21st

July 28th

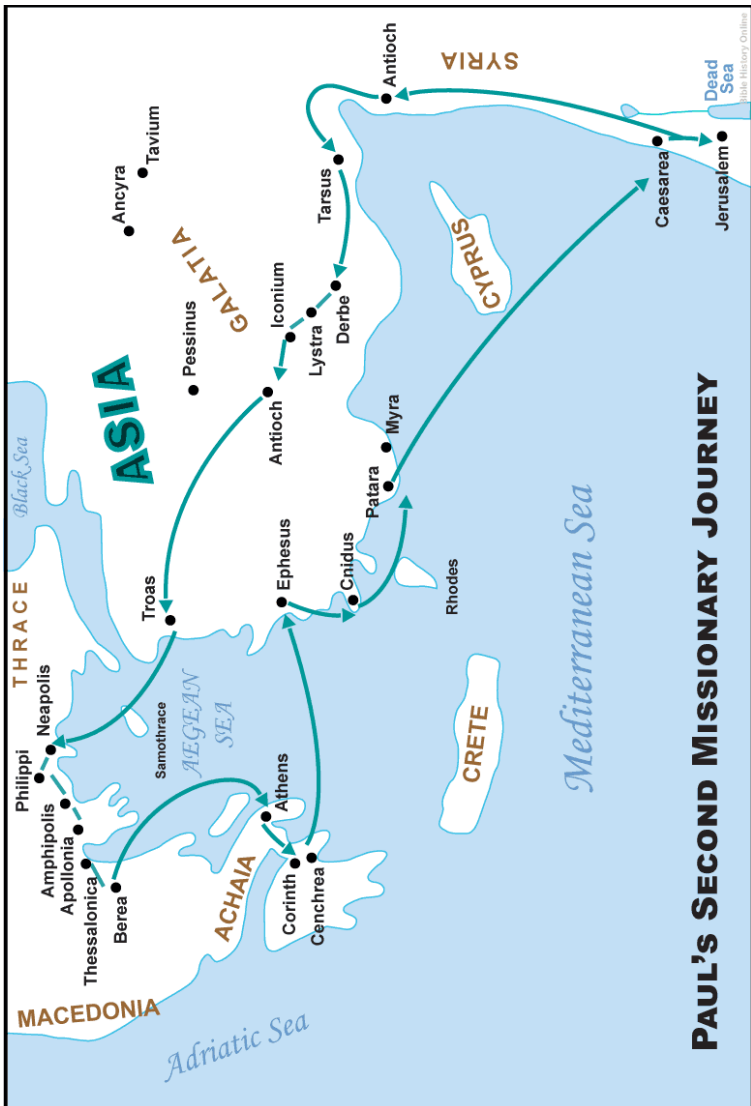
Mistakes don't define de.

When you miss it; but it's still
okay.

Suffering is never hidden.

I'm all in!

Paul's Second Missionary Journey



Notable History: Paul reaches Europe at Philippi, Greece!

“Progress is doing what you do faithfully but extending to add new continually.”

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: July 7, 2019

Mistakes Don't Define Me!

Text: Acts 15:36-41



“A judgmental attitude mixed with a strong disposition to fight for one’s own viewpoint often times leaves many people of impact wounded.”

John Mark weak, wounded, and worried.

- Acts 13:13
- Acts 12:1-2, 12 (no father), 25

Paul was completely wrong in his treatment of Mark even though his motive for not wanting him was right.

John Mark deserted Paul and Barnabas because of his insecurity. His mistake brought sharp relational problems with his two mentors. Yet:

1 – Mistakes should not define our lives. Nor should the voices of those around us!

Verse 39

- The events that occurred are enough to cause even the most devoted person to sink into depression.

Mark faced:

- Rejection by the most influential leader at the time.
- Reliving a dark moment by the reminder of those whom he respected.
- Shame in feeling God has no place for him.

Striving to know God should be and is the definition of our lives.

2 – Mistakes should never make us quit!

Colossians 4:10-11

- Mark served throughout the years proving himself to be called by God.

In Paul's imprisonment in Rome, Mark finds him and becomes:

- An encouragement to Paul.
- One of only 3 Jews to risk their lives in association with Paul.

We should never separate ourselves from those who have disagreed with us.

3 – Mistakes are always conquered and redeemed by having a serving heart.

2 Timothy 4:11

- 2 Timothy 4:9-10 speaks of those who have deserted Paul. All...except Mark!

Living It Out!

Take your mistake to the altar! Leave it there.

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: July 14, 2019



When you miss it; but it's still okay!

Text: Acts 16:1-13

Observation: Paul is fresh off a split with Barnabas due in part because of John Mark. Could it be that Paul is feeling bad for what transpired? What Paul does in verses 1-3 with Timothy, he should have done with John Mark.

1 – Sometimes we miss doing what we are empowered by God to do. Verses 6-7

- Paul and Silas missed hearing from God twice in the beginning portion of this second journey.
- Hurt feelings were fresh and direction was cloudy.

It is okay! As long as we have a heart to follow and be used by God.

2 – What God allows the first time, does not mean He will allow it the second time.

Acts 15:36

- Paul & Silas wanted to do a mission of fellowship and encouragement. God had a plan of stretching and trusting.

So often we get stuck feeling that if God does not produce in our lives the way He did it some time ago, we are lost and far from Him.

- God is not nostalgic.
- God is opportunistic.

3 – These missionaries that missed hearing their direction did not sit idle and wait to see what they were supposed to be. Verses 6-10

- Verse 6 They passed...
- Verse 7 They came to...
- Verse 7 They were trying...
- Verse 8 And passing by...
- Verse 8 They came down to...
- Verse 9 A vision appeared...
- Verse 10 Immediately we sought to go...
- Verse 10 Concluding...

Their conclusion of God's will came after they were actively seeking to be used for God's purpose.

- We must also note that it is in this activity that they received divine intervention (vision).

4 – Activity before the Lord will reap purpose and direction not defeat and failure. Verse 10

- Persistence in being used for God.

Living It Out!

Evaluate your activity before the Lord and make it a priority to be active for Him this week!

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: July 21, 2019



Suffering is never hidden!

Text: Acts 16:22-40

“You don’t really know Jesus is all you need until Jesus is all you have.” Tim Keller

1 – Our words carry power in hardship to command peace and prosperity to those who are listening. **Verses 25b, 28-30**

There is a sequence that we cannot avoid. To meet it, we must completely remove ourselves and our self-preservation out of the way.

1. The prisoners were listening (vs. 25b).
Those in bondage.
2. The jailor was asleep (vs. 27a). Those in neglect of their duty were the target.
3. The world is in self-destruct mode (vs. 28).
We must understand and empathize with the condition they are in.
4. The world is searching for something greater than our own positional peace (vs. 30b).

2 – Our hardships are always opportunity forums to reach someone in spiritual prime being sought out by God’s grace. **Verse 27**

From suicide (verse 27) to salvation (verse 30).

- How did the jailor come to that conclusion?
- God was working in his life before Paul and Silas ever crossed over into Macedonia.

*A puzzle piece is not the point of the whole puzzle.
The picture is. A single puzzle piece makes the
reality of the picture evident.*

This is the first encounter of a Macedonian man being converted to the Gospel.

- Acts 16:9

3 – God’s leading and direction for our lives is always multi-faceted. Verses 40

- We must learn to look at hardship through the lens of purpose!
- Genesis 50:19-20

Living It Out!

1 – Who has been watching your life or who has recently come into your life in the midst of difficulty? Purpose in your heart to reach **them** while you trust God for your deliverance.

2 – In preparation for next week’s sermon, read through Acts chapter 17.

Illustration for message: I'm All In!

Top 10 fears of people from ABC News in (2015)

1. **Social Phobias** – which include anxiety disorders and self-consciousness in social situations.
2. **Fear of Open Spaces** – People with this fear often don't go out in public because of it.
3. **Fear of Heights** –
4. **Fear of Flying** –
5. **Fear of Enclosed Spaces** – Tight spaces.
6. **Fear of Insects/Spiders** –
7. **Fear of Snakes** –
8. **Fear of Dogs** –
9. **Fear of Storms** –
10. **Fear of Needles** –

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: July 28, 2019

I'm all in!



Text: Acts 18:1-22

“What can I fear? Will it be death? But you know that Christ is my life, and that I shall gain by death. Will it be exile? But the earth and all its fulness are the Lord’s. Poverty I do not fear; riches I do not sigh for; and from death I do not shrink.”

John Chrysostom A.D. 398

Jesus’ words to Paul indicate that he was afraid for some time of being persecuted.

- Paul had not been persecuted in this place, but the fear of it was with him.

This fear seemed to hinder his desire to stay put and commit to the church there.

1 – Fear always looks for opportunities to infiltrate and disrupt what could happen.

Verse 9

- Fear wanted to put an end to Paul’s preaching.
- Fear wanted to keep Paul insecure and questioning what he was called to do.

Fear wanted...

- Fear, when against our call, is a spirit to be confronted.
- 1 Timothy 1:7

2 – Fear targets our influence through our words. **Verse 9b**

- Fear desires to hinder our testimony and the Gospel through our life.

Interesting that the fear initiated in Paul wanted to mute his words.

We will often face this in our lives.

3 – We can defeat our fear by committing to be used by God through the Church.

Verse 11

- We must commit to something bigger than we can see.

Commitment always conquers fear.

Living It Out!

1 – Our desire to break fear must be used through ministry in and through this church. What can you do? What makes you afraid in stepping out and doing something unique and life-changing? Jump in! Serve like never before!



Monthly Message Direction:

August 4th

August 11th

August 18th

August 25th

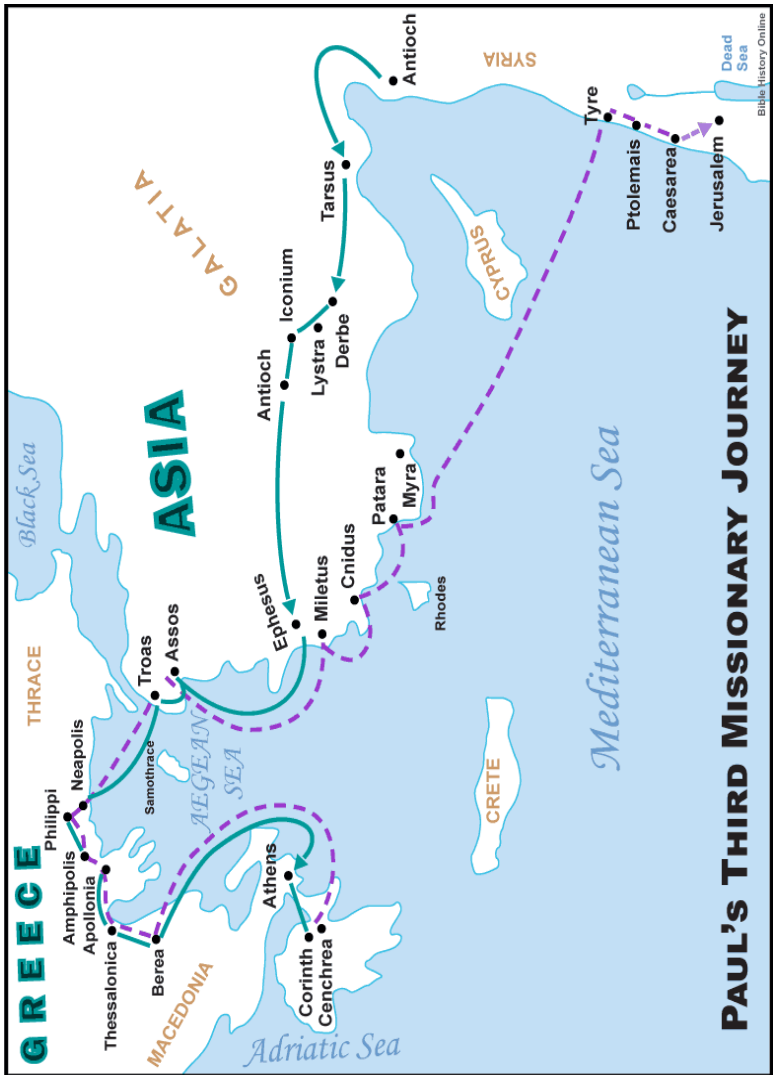
Preparing for another mission.

The strength of the Church.

Chains and gains!

Missions celebration – Malawi!

Paul's Third Missionary Journey



Notable History: Paul spends about 4 to 5 years in this missionary journey. While in Corinth, he pens the letter we know as Romans.

Illustration for August 4th,

Preparing for Another Mission!

➤ Introduction Quote

February 18, 1781 -- Henry Martyn, missionary and Bible translator in India, was born in Truro, Cornwall, England (died 1812). He sailed for India in 1805 as an Anglican chaplain for the East India Company. Martyn began his mission work in Dinajpur in 1806. **He translated the New Testament into Hindustani and Persian**, the **Psalms into Persian** and the *Prayer Book* into Hindustani. In Persia, **where he went for health reasons**, **he translated the New Testament into Arabic**. On his way back to England in 1812 via Asia Minor, **he died at Tokat at the age of 31**.

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: August 4, 2019

Preparing for another missions!



Text: Acts 18:23-28; 19:9-10

“The spirit of Christ is the spirit of missions. The nearer we get to Him, the more intensely missionary we become.” Henry Martyn

Why keep going to the same place?

1 – In faithfulness to the mission work, we will always find people who become great assets to the work. Verses 24-25

- We need people of great faith surrounding us.

Apollos was eloquent in speech, mighty in Scripture, fervent in spirit, and accurate in teaching.

- Yet, he was also humble and teachable.
- Verse 26

God will supply power for the work by sending who we need, what we need, and in the right time we need it!

2 – The more missions we do, the more connection we make, the greater benefit for our lives. Verses 27-28

- He helped them solidify their faith.
- We need people around us to help strengthen our faith.

The church had trouble bringing into words the truth of Jesus. Apollos, encouraged the church, proved the Scriptures, and helped them fight the battle.

3 – The more missions we do, the greater becomes the responsibility and expansion. Acts 19:9-10

- School of Tyrannus – school of Philosophy in a heathen market.

Through the school of Tyrannus, they were able to reach the most educated influencers and philosophers of the day.

- The impact was extreme!

Living It Out!

1 – Your dedication to pray, give, and go for missions increases your impact. God has specifically placed around your life someone whose life will transform the world they are in.

Pray and ask God for greater missional reach!

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: August 11, 2019

The Strength of the Church!

Text: Acts 19:11-20



“Whenever there are awesome things happening inside of the church (depth & teaching), and testimonies of what God is doing outside of the church (missions), it should drive the church to raise the bar of personal commitment and sanctification.”

1 – There is an emphasis and distinction on the phrase, “They kept coming.” Verse 18a

- This is a contrast to those who did not *keep coming*.

The emphasis is that their coming was for the purpose of the next phrase: Confessing and disclosing their practices.

Their commitment to the church became their moral strength and stability.

2 – There was community confession.

Verse 18b

- This is not to be misunderstood as a Catholic practice for forgiveness.

It was for growing accountability!

The more they surrounded themselves amongst Believers, the more they felt compelled to change their lives and let God take control of each area of their life.

“A man who confesses his sins in the presence of a brother knows that he is no longer alone with himself; he experiences the presence of God in the reality of the other person. As long as I am by myself in the confession of my sins, everything remains in the clear, but in the presence of a brother, the sin has to be brought into the light.”

– Dietrich Bonhoeffer

3 – There was intentional transparency.

Verse 18c

- They disclosed what they were doing so God’s word would prevail in and through their life (verse 20).
- Ephesians 5:8-11, 21 (Key verse 11)

Living It Out!

1 – Try it out! Spend a moment with a brother or sister in this church and share your heart with them. Allow God to bring to light that which is hidden and cause the forgiveness and restoration of Jesus to be over your life!

2 – In preparation for next week, read:
Acts 19:21-41; 20:1-16

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: August 18, 2019



Chains and Gains!

Text: Acts 20:17-38

Paul received confirmation in each city he travelled through that bonds and affliction waited for him...yet, he continued. How? Verse 23

1 – We must compare and evaluate our life with the course and ministry that we have received from Christ. Verse 24

- Any comparison outside of our calling and ministry produces feelings of fear and defeat.

Paul came to the conclusion that there was nothing in this life, or anything that can happen to us in this life that compared with the calling he received from Christ.

- He was able to yield his personal comfort because it was through his calling that he received special power, demonstration, and fulfillment.
- 1 Corinthians 2:3-5; 2 Corinthians 12:9

Power for living is demonstrated through our calling!

- 2 Corinthians 12:10

2 – We must fight to allow God’s word and influence to have first place in our life.

Verses 26-32

- Be on guard...verse 28
- Be on the alert...verse 31
- From perverse things which will try to draw disciples away...verse 30

Perverse things are things which are twisted forms of truth or righteousness that appeal to our flesh.

- It will usually develop in someone’s life through: Pride, Sex, or Money.

3 – We must live out the Christly practice of giving over receiving.

Verse 35

- Paul taught the church that by working hard, his provision and accrument (verse 34) was strategically directed towards the advancement of God’s kingdom.
- Our giving contains helping and remembering.
- Helping the weak...
- Remembering the words of Christ.

Living It Out!

1 – Practice by meeting a need. Give from your abundance. Give from your need!

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: August 24, 2019



Missions Celebration!

Text: Acts 21:8-14

“To what extent are you willing to go for the sake of Jesus Christ and His calling over your life? I question myself and am continually confronted with the extent that Jesus went for me.” – Missionary (Asia)

1 – Paul displayed a continual readiness for whatever the situation demanded. Verse 13b

- Paul was prepared for the difficulties before they struck so that he was not taken by surprise and question God’s plan when they did arrive.

2 Corinthians 4:7-12

2 – Paul’s acceptance of the possibility death exposed his abandonment to Christ.

Verse 13c

- Philippians 1:20-24

*“If Jesus Christ be God and died for me, then no sacrifice can be too great for me to make for Him.”
– C.T. Studd*

3 – Paul’s life highlights the power available in the name of Jesus. Verse 13d

- Why does Paul emphasize the name of Christ and not just the Person of Christ.

It is in the name of Jesus that the work done for Him is empowered.

- Philippians 2:9-10
- Acts 4:12
- John 14:13
- Luke 10:17
- Acts 4:30
- Mark 16:17

Living It Out!

1 – In preparation next week, read Acts 21:15-40.

2 – Spend some time this week evaluating what you can yield to God for the sake of His calling over your life.

List them here:



Monthly Message Direction:

September 8th
September 15th
September 22nd
September 29th

When all things begin to gel.
Look up... See Christ.
Can I trust the process?
Go ahead... bring em to church!

- God has made no mistakes in our ethnicity and in the position of where He has placed our lives.

Our ethnicity will always play a part in our ministry!

Our upbringing will always make the connection of the Gospel in our conversations.

3 – What God has done for us should be the thrust of our testimony to a world eager to listen.

The world is listening to what we have been through. We must tell them about:

1. What God has done for us; instead of,
2. What our trials have done to us.

We often feel as if we gain more sympathy and recognition when we focus on what is wrong.

But we receive more healing and purpose when we focus on what God has done in us throughout our challenge.

Living It Out!

1 – Make it a point to use your failures and your ethnicity and upbringing for Christ's advantage. Look for the subtle clues.

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: September 15, 2019



Look up...see Christ!

Text: Acts 23:6-11

“You don’t realize that Jesus is all you need until Jesus is all you have.” Timothy Keller

1 – When we are faithful in our calling to Christ, we can be assured of His presence.

Verse 11a

- Jesus appears to Paul in a way that no one else could have. He broke through every barrier.

**Joshua 1:9 . Isaiah 41:10 . Deuteronomy 31:6
Zephaniah 3:17 . Matthew 28:20 . Hebrews 13:5
Romans 8:38-39**

He is with us wherever we go.

He will strengthen, help, and uphold us.

He will not leave us or forsake us.

He is in our midst.

He is with us always.

His presence is the greatest contentment.

Nothing can separate us from His love!

2 – When we are faithful in our calling to Christ, we can be satisfied with whatever the outcome.

Verse 11b

Paul had accomplished what Christ wanted him to accomplish in Jerusalem.

- *“For you have testified of me in Jerusalem.”*
- Sometimes we are discouraged because our testimony for Jesus only brings mocking and derision.
- Paul had stirred up more trouble than there were followers of his through his sessions.

Yet, we are rewarded for our faithfulness to testify for Jesus, not for how many respond to our witness.

3 – When we are faithful in our calling to Christ, He enlarges the scope of our reach!

Verse 11c

- Jesus tells Paul he will go to Rome.
- Paul had desire to go there (Acts 19:20-21).

Can we be faithful to God in our actions whether we are before kings or peasants?

- God will send you both!

Living It Out!

1 – It all really comes down to time spent with God. We need it! You need it! We must learn to rely on God through prayer! Join us!

Illustration for Can I Trust The Process

Introduction

John Paton was a missionary in the New Hebrides Islands, known today as Vanuatu. One night hostile natives surrounded the mission station, intent on burning out the Patons and killing them. Paton and his wife prayed during that terror-filled night that God would deliver them. When daylight came they were amazed to see their attackers leave. A year later, the chief of the tribe was converted to Christ. Remembering what had happened, Paton asked the chief what had kept him from burning down the house and killing them. The chief replied in surprise, "Who were all those men with you there?" Paton knew no men were present--but the chief said he was afraid to attack because he had seen hundreds of big men in shining garments with drawn swords circling the mission station.

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: September 22, 2019



Can I trust the process?

Text: Acts 23:12-24

“Nothing so clears the vision and lifts up the life, as a decision to move forward in what you know to be entirely the will of the Lord.” John Paton

1 – God hears and knows what the enemy plots for our lives. It is not beyond His knowledge.

Verses 12-15

- These verses show the formation, dedication, and vows of over 40 men waiting to murder Paul.

This threat came immediately after Christ reassured Paul.

The enemy often wants to inflict fear causing us to question God's:

- Presence
- Word
- Plan for our lives.

Yet, the Omniscience and Omnipresence of God, is our source of excitement for our enemy cannot plan the way God plans!

- Psalm 139:1-12
- Job 1:6-7

If God is all-knowing, He is ever-present. If He is ever-present, He is all-powerful.

2 – God prepares His own people to intercept the bad news plan! Verse 16

- There is a small conjunction that makes all of the difference in our lives...but! (Gk, *de*)
- There was a terrible plot – but!

To combat a mob of people designed and plotted by the hordes of hell themselves, God chooses a young boy.

- 1 John 4:4

3 – The working of God in the midst of our hardship is always for greater reachability.

Verse 24

- The cause of Christ is always at the forefront.

God uses and turns the plan of the enemy for the advancement of His kingdom!

- It is always to the benefit of the Believer.

Living It Out!

1 – Accept the current process you are in and pray that God would use you for His purpose in this current trial!

Opening Quote and Illustration for Yielding to the Process Message

In his book Facing Loneliness, J. Oswald Sanders writes, "The round of pleasure or the amassing of wealth are but vain attempts to escape from the persistent ache...The millionaire is usually a lonely man and the comedian is often more unhappy than his audience."

Sanders goes on to emphasize that being successful often fails to produce satisfaction. Then he refers to Henry Martyn, a distinguished scholar, as an example. Martyn, a Cambridge University student, was honored at only 20 years of age for his achievements in mathematics. In fact, he was given the highest recognition possible in that field. And yet he felt an emptiness inside. He said that instead of finding fulfillment in his achievements, he had "only grasped a shadow." After evaluating his life's goals, Martyn sailed to India as a missionary at the age of 24. When he arrived, he prayed, "Lord, let me burn out for You." In the next 7 years that preceded his death, he translated the New Testament into three difficult Eastern languages. These notable achievements were certainly not passing "shadows."

Our Daily Bread, January 21, 1994.

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: September 29, 2019



Yielding to the process?

Text: Acts 23:23-35

“The round of pleasure or the amassing of wealth are but vain attempts to escape from the persistent ache...The millionaire is usually a lonely man and the comedian is often more unhappy than his audience.” – J. Oswald Sanders

1 – Often times in our life, the picture is a whole lot bigger than what it seems. Verse 29

- It is so easy to be derailed in our pursuit towards God that we become so focused on self, that we miss both God and purpose.

A clear indication of misaligned attitude in difficulty is how often we gripe about it.

Paul travelled with a letter declaring his innocence. Yet he was still held captive.

We must be able to conclude that our situations are not about being right or wrong, but about direction and opportunity.

Fulfillment is found in our resignation to receive from and be used by the Master IN the midst of our trials.

Remember Henry Martin.

2 – When we yield to His process, we find that we receive power to handle each earthly situation. Verses 33-34

Clarification of *handle*:

- Power to deal with...
- Authority in speech...
- Conviction in dialogue...
- Peace in delay...

Mark 13:9-10

1. You will stand...for My sake;
2. You will be a testimony to them;
3. The Gospel must be preached to all Nations.

3 – When yielded to His Process, our words develop weight. Verse 34

- Mark 13:11
- “*What type of place are you from?*”

Cilicia – Imperial Province over a Senatorial Province.

- With one word (*Cilicia*) Paul, through the Holy Spirit, pushed his way into an audience of governors and kings!

Living It Out!

1 – Ask a simple question! “*God, what do you want me to do in the situation I am in?*”

NOW LISTEN.....

For a Noble Cause



October

Monthly Message Direction:

October 6th

October 13th

October 20th

October 27th

Enter Felix.

Enter Drusilla.

Enter Agrippa.

When kings become fools!

Governor Felix Profile for Entering Felix Message

Marcus Antonius Felix was born a slave in the household of Antonia, mother of Claudius Caesar. Claudius Caesar freed him. In AD 52 he was appointed as procurator of Judea. Felix married a succession of three wives, all princesses.

1. Drusilla of Mauritania the Younger
2. Drusilla of Judea, daughter of Herod Agrippa I. She divorced the king of Emesa to be with Felix. This Drusilla is one of only two major figures reported of dying at the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius in Pompeii.
3. Not much is known about the third.

Roman historian Tacitus wrote that Felix “*was a master of cruelty and lust who exercised the powers of a king in the spirit of a slave.*”

He was recalled in AD 57 or 58 by Emperor Nero and is thought to have died by Tuberculosis.

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: October 6, 2019



Enter Felix!

Text: Acts 24:1-23

“The conviction of the Holy Spirit is attractive no matter how hard a person’s fight against it may be.”

- In people’s fight against Jesus, they can’t see to shake Him from their life.

Paul found himself before a governor who struggled with the conviction of Christianity

- Marcus Antonius Felix
- Verse 22 possibly from Acts 10:1-2

Paul was on trial for his blatant Christianity! If we were on trial for the following points would we be accused before the court.

1 – Do you serve God through the Church?

Verse 14

- *“According to the Way which they call a sect I do serve!”*

Our service to God through the institution He has placed (Church) reflects the depth of our belief system.

How we serve determines how we believe. The more we believe in Christ, the deeper becomes our service through the Church.

- Serving the Mission of the Church,
- Serving the People of the Church,
- Serving the Global Church.

2 – Do you have a hope in God; living life believing there will be a resurrection?

Verse 15

- Belief in this resurrection is paramount to our faith.
- It is living life in the power of God whom raised Jesus from the dead.

1 Corinthians 15:12-19

- It is our belief in the resurrection to come that gives this life meaning and eternity its power in this life.

3 – Do you live a blameless conscience before God and men?

Verse 16

It is powerful to note that Paul's determination in keeping himself blameless before God and men stemmed from his service and his hope in God.

Living It Out!

1 – keeping a clean conscience stems from the depths of service and hope. Increase service to God...experience greater conviction in sin.

Introduction for Enter Drusilla

Drusilla, Felix's second wife, was daughter to King Herod Agrippa I. Acts 12:1, 23

- She was 16 when seduced by Felix to leave her husband and run away with him.
- She was 19 when confronted by Paul.

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: October 13, 2019



Enter Drusilla!

Text: Acts 24:24-27

“Their accusers, who demanded the Christians answer for their faith, often times found themselves on trial in the court of their own conscience.” – Dr. Larry Richards

Paul hit the nerve of secular society! He stood up in the midst of his persecution for what was right even if it meant personal loss or discomfort.

Faith in Jesus Christ is tolerated until self-indulgence is threatened. Verse 24b

1 – Paul discussed the righteousness of God to a self-made man. **Verse 25a**

- Righteousness is never about a set of rules to keep.

Jesus paves the way for attainable righteousness.

- 2 Corinthians 5:21
- Romans 5:17

For Felix, this meant yielding his own method of attaining favor – through bribery and extortion.

This brings fear into his life.

- Fear that all his accomplishments, in the end are in vain.

2 – Paul discussed self-control to a couple that struggled with the sensuous life. Verse 25b

- This is the greatest defining aspect of secular society.
- Sensuality is the defining sin of self.

For self-gratification, many hurts are made. It is a difficult struggle to release from.

“True self control is a gift from above, produced in and through us by the Holy Spirit. Ultimately, our controlling ourselves is about being controlled by Christ.” – David Mathis
2 Corinthians 5:14; Hebrews 2:8

This brings fear into his life.

- Fear that all he has strived for indulgently, has left him convicted and unhappy.

3 – Paul discusses judgement to an audience who is responsible for judging him.

Verse 25c

- No matter where or with whom we are in life, we stand alone before our Heavenly Judge.

This brings fear into his life.

- Fear that all his power cannot grant him safety.

Living It Out!

1 – What is it in your life that keeps bringing fear?
_____. Time to deal
with it...1 John 4:18 Give yourself over to
Christ's love.

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: October 20, 2019



Enter Agrippa!

Text: Acts 26:1-20

King Agrippa's full name was Marcus Julius Agrippa II. He came from a very renowned family.

1. Great-grandson to Herod the Great (Matthew 2:16).
2. Son of Herod Agrippa I (Acts 12:2).

Paul was not swayed or deterred by standing before great people. Paul held on to the mission that was set before him. Verse 18

The mission that was at the forefront is our mission as well: 2 Corinthians 5:11-21

- Knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade men. Verse 11a
- The love of Christ controls us. Verse 14a
- Gave us the ministry of reconciliation through Christ. Verse 18b
- Christ committed us to the ministry of reconciliation. Verse 19b
- Therefore, we are ambassadors. Verse 20a

1 – Mission – Open their eyes. Verse 18a

- We are to show truth and reality to people.

We are not to live a “hidden Christianity,” but are to boldly declare the truth of our life.

What is our fear? Our greatest fear is that God will change and disrupt the direction of our life – which has become a comfort to us.

2 – Mission – Turn them from darkness to light.

Verse 18b

How do we turn someone from darkness to light?

- By shining all the brighter!

We must have intentional visible separation!

3 – Mission – Turn them from the dominion of Satan to God.

Verse 18c

- The only way to move someone from one dominion to the next is through warfare.
- We must storm the dominion of darkness!

PRAY – EVANGELIZE – GIVE – SERVE

4 – Mission – Bring them to forgiveness.

Verse 18d

If we target the guilt in people’s lives, we will never lack a ministry.

Living It Out!

1 – Give to God one complete day, where your sole purpose is to be used by God. Don’t fear the outcome!

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: October 27, 2019



When Kings Become Fools!

Text: Acts 26:21-32

“Though tragedies threatened and loomed over Paul’s life during his last few years, Paul became more evangelistic and specific in his outreach.”

If we raise Christ over trial, we see Christ’s nearness.

If we reach people when we need to be reached, we are ministered to by the power of Christ.

If we recognize God’s ministry for us in trial, we will never lack contentment and purpose.

1 – Paul universalized Christ as the answer for every people group. Verse 23

- By doing such, he was confronting royalty on their need for a savior.

“Paul had become the interrogator, for he was indeed free and Agrippa the one enslaved. In this challenge, Paul brings Agrippa to a decision – not about his innocence, but about Agrippa’s relationship before God.”

What people group intimidates us in declaring their need for Christ?

The reaction: Festus screamed out, “*Paul you’re crazy!*”

- There will always be fear of rejection and the process of working through insult.

Paul’s reaction:

Verse 25

1. Paul was not swayed.
2. Paul was not offended.
3. Paul was respectful and genuine.
4. Paul did not misinterpret truth.

Instead of internalizing the insult or even reacting to the insult, Paul held to the truth of the Gospel and set his sights on one whom he saw the Holy Spirit convicting.

2 – Paul’s questions brought Agrippa to a place of decision.

Verse 27

As Paul was questioning royalty, he brought them to a decision making place.

- We must develop our lives in such a way as to bring people to a confrontation with Christ.

Living It Out!

Think for a moment about the last time that you brought people around you to respond to a decision about Jesus Christ. Encounter them this week!

Shipwreck

November

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Monthly Message Direction:

November 3rd

November 10th

November 17th

November 24th

Barely Afloat.

Stick to the Plan.

Be the Voice of
Encouragement.

God's Promises are True!

Speaker: Jen Papparatti

Date: November 3, 2019



Barely Afloat!

Text: Acts 27:1-26

“Shipwrecks provide what sessile deep sea creatures crave most in a habitat: a hard substrate on which to live...”

Nautilus Live

1 – God’s plan for our lives will always include the lives of many others. Verse 24

- How often we get so consumed with the plan of God for our own lives that we forget to see that God’s plan for our lives is about reaching others.

Do not be afraid, you must stand before Caesar...

- *God has granted you all those who are sailing with you.*
- 276 people – Verse 37

The trials of our lives often produce for us a “captive audience.”

- While we are often complaining to God about the condition, God has surrounded us with an audience and small time-frame to accomplish His plan.

2 – God calls us to raise courage in those around us. Verse 25a

- Courage is contagious. Courage is imparted.

The situation may be bleak – Verse 20

“True courage is not the absence of fear – but the willingness to proceed in spite of it.” Author Unknown

Courage hears God’s word over the resounding storms of life.

Courage is urged upon those near to us by emphasizing our belief in God.

3 – We must believe God and not question the turmoil around us. Verse 20, 25b

- Courage sees God’s grace and refuses to put God on trial for little situational hardships.

Sun & stars – dark

Storm – severe

Sickness– no eating

Personal possessions – lost

YET, God is still in control!

1. God is in control when the entire ship makes it safely!
2. God is in control when we lose the ship and are completely wet and afraid.

Living It Out!

1 – How can you advance the courage of Christianity in the situation you are in...think of the people around you? Take a step of faith and let them know that they can trust in the word of God!

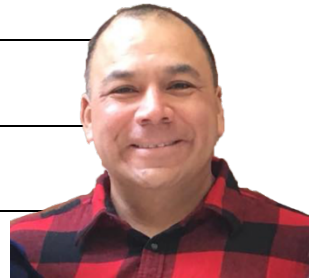
Speaker: Jose Gavidia

Date: November 10, 2019

Stick to the Plan!

Text: Acts 27:27-31

Notes: _____



Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: November 17, 2019

**Be the Voice of
Encouragement!**



Text: Acts 27:32-36

“One of the highest of human duties is the duty of encouragement...It is easy to laugh at men’s ideals; it is easy to pour cold water on their enthusiasm; it is easy to discourage others. The world is full of discouragers. We have a Christian duty to encourage one another. Many a time a word of praise or thanks or appreciation or cheer has kept a man on his feet. Blessed is the man who speaks such a word.” – William Barclay

1 – Encouragement is persistent.

Verses 33a, 34a

When we encourage one another in the Lord, we are transmitting the active and transforming word of God.

- Joshua 1:9 – God’s Encouragement!
- 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 – The Purpose of His Encouragement.
- 1 Thessalonians 5:11 – The Ministry of Encouragement.

2 – Life changing encouragement must involve prayer.

Verse 35

- Paul in his encouragement, distributes food and stops to turn the attention towards God.

As we pray, we allow the Holy Spirit to actively work in the lives of those listening.

- When people allow for prayer, they open their lives for the work of the Holy Spirit.
- It is permission to enter in.

Acts 9:31

Prayer moves the source of encouragement from our lips to the presence of God. It is then that lives are truly touched.

- Melvin

3 – Encouragement takes root through the example we give of its power.

Verses 35b-36

- We encourage because we ourselves have received the encouragement of God.

Romans 15:1-5

The more we receive from the Lord and then immediately give out, the more what we receive from the Lord solidifies in our own life.

Living It Out!

1 – Practice the ministry of encouragement! Find someone to encourage, turn the attention to God, and pray for them. Let the Holy Spirit use your life for His complete purpose!

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: November 24, 2019



God's Promises are True!

Text: Acts 27:37-44

"You cannot break God's promises by leaning on them." Source Unknown

1 – Trust involves total abandonment.

Verse 38

- *They cast all the wheat into the sea.*
- They had completely been encouraged in the Lord that they took drastic measures for the safety of their lives.

We must encourage ourselves in the Lord, then take drastic measures in our life to see the promises of God fulfilled.

Drastic Measures: The Christian's Big 5

1. Reading the Bible.
2. Praying.
3. Surrounding ourselves with Believers (Church).
4. Sharing our faith (Witnessing).
5. Tithing.

If we increase the measure in which we do these things, we see fruit from them in more areas than just the one. Luke 6:38

2 – God’s provision and promises usually unfold while we are actively pursuing life.

Verses 41, 43b-44

God could have saved them without any struggle or effort on their part.

- Yet, many times, we must strive and work hard to see the promises of God fulfilled.

3 – Our abandonment to God has with it the care of many lives and the excitement of new opportunities.

Verses 42-43

- Acts 28:1-2
- God’s plan is always bigger than our situation!

God was taking Paul to Rome...eventually. But, God needed him on Malta immediately.

Our work and effort to trust God leads us to many different places. We must be ready and open to step into where God is leading us.

Living It Out!

1 – Increase the drastic measures of your life. Make a commitment to God. Which one(s) will you change this week?

- Reading the Bible
- Praying
- Surrounding with Christians
- Witnessing
- Tithing

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December



To Infinity and Beyond

Monthly Message Direction:

December 1st

December 8th

December 15th

December 22nd

December 29th

Pitstops are needed.

The waiting game.

Never alone.

Celebrating Christ!

Our Journey Begins!

Illustration for Introduction for message: Pit Stops are Needed – December 1st, 2019

Formula One Racing: What Happens during an F1 Pit Stop

By Jonathan Noble, Mark Hughes

Pit stops are one of the most tense and exciting features of a Grand Prix or other formula one auto race. In fact, **auto races are frequently won and lost because of the pit stops and pit crews.** Here they are broken down.

● -1 lap	Race strategy is discussed in detail before the race, so the driver knows when to enter the pit. This is confirmed via radio one lap before the stop is scheduled to take place.
● -10 secs	The car enters the pit lane.
● -3 secs	The car approaches the garage.
● 0 secs	The car is stationary, and driver sets it in neutral and keeps his foot on the brake.
● 1 sec	The “wheel gun” crew use air guns to undo the wheel nuts and lean back; at the same time, the front and rear jack men raise the car off the ground with their jacks. The refueller should be connected by 1.5 secs.
● 2 secs	As the fuel is going in, the “wheel off” crew have started their work. All four wheels will be off by 2.5 secs, and the four “wheel on” crew start placing new wheels. Another crew member cleans the driver’s helmet visor.
● 3 secs	The new wheels are on by 3.5 secs, and the “wheel gun” crew lean forward to tighten the nuts. When they’ve finished, they raise a hand to signify that everything is okay.
● 4 secs	All four wheels have been changed, so the car is dropped from its jacks. Now everyone waits for the refuelling to be completed.
● 5.5 sec	The lollipop man signals to the driver to select first gear, while the refuelling continues.
● 6.5 secs	The fuel hose comes off, and the refueller wipes any spillage from the car. The lollipop man signals for the driver to leave, and the driver should be able to shoot off within 0.3 secs of the fuel hose coming off.
● 7 secs	The car is on its way. The fuel flap automatically closes, and the car’s tyres have been preheated to allow the driver to speed up without danger.

Speaker: Jen Paparatti

Date: December 1, 2019



Pit stops are Needed!

Text: Acts 28:1-10

God had promised Paul that he would go to Rome, but told him nothing of the pit stops on the way.

- It is in these “pit stops” that we see the most genuine manifestations of God’s grace over those we come in contact with.
- Rome was about Paul – The Pit stops were about people.

1 – God delivers Paul, not for Paul, but for the people of Malta. Verses 4-6

- The people of Malta were superstitious and searching for a god to follow.

God allowed Paul to be bitten by a venomous viper.

- God’s allowance of struggle in our life is not for the sake of struggle but for the sake of victory to those watching.

What if Paul’s demeanor during this attack was one of fear? It would solidify the people’s pagan superstition.

We must yield our complete feelings to the Lord.

2 – Paul was aggressive in taking opportunities that did not immediately suit his own needs.

Verses 7-8

- He was invited into Publius' home because of the snake attack recovery.

We must not miss the “*and it happened that*” opportunities.

He was invited into a home and there was someone in need.

DON'T PRAY FROM AFAR! GO, OPEN OPPORTUNITY, LAY HANDS AND PRAY.

3 – Revival sweeps through Malta, Paul is honored, supplies are provided for, all the while still being prisoners.

Verses 9-10

- We can experience the mighty provision and love of God through people's lives being changed even if our current situation does not change!

We need to pray for usability in our situation not situational change.

Living It Out!

1 – Pray for open-opportunity eyes and reflexive obedience to God!

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: December 8, 2019



Never Alone!

Text: Acts 28:11-31

There is always richness in hardship, growth in disparity, and victory in trial when the Lord speaks His purpose over our life... which He has:

➤ Philippians 1:6

From prison, Paul accomplished four things that were vitally important to the spread of the Gospel:

1 – He wrote!

From his prison cell awaiting trial (1st imprisonment), Paul wrote:

1. Ephesians
2. Philippians
3. Colossians
4. Philemon

Instead of self-internalizing the dire situation, Paul led from his depth and poured into people's lives.

We are called to do the same thing. We must lead out of our emptiness so that the Lord can flow through us filling others while refreshing us.

2 – He directed a team of ambassadors for Christ.

- Luke and Aristarchus were with him – Acts 27:1-2.
- Timothy came and went with apostolic instructions for the churches – Philippians 1:1, Colossians 1:1, Philemon 1:1.
- Tychicus served Paul’s needs – Ephesians 6:21.
- Epaphroditus spent time with Paul and met some needs – Philippians 4:18.
- John Mark became Paul’s valued aid – Colossians 4:10, 2 Timothy 4:11.

He surrounded himself with believers by pouring into believers. How will you have more Christian friends? Intentionally making them!

3 – He personally introduced people to Jesus.

- **Those against him** – the praetorian guard – Philippians 1:13.
- **Those around him** grew in boldness – Philippians 1:14.
- **Those close to Caesar** – Philippians 4:22.

4 – He witnessed to Caesar.

- 2 Timothy 4:16-17
- God took him where no one else could go.

Living It Out!

Where is the opportunity? _____

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: December 22, 2019



Celebrating Christ!

Text: 2 Corinthians 8:9

“The mystery of the humanity of Christ, that He sunk Himself into our flesh, is beyond all human understanding.” – Martin Luther

1 – Jesus gave to us the greatest example by giving His very riches. Verse 9a

- The riches of Christ do not hold the same value as we measure richness.
- We value wealth by what material value we have.
- Christ owns it all already.

The wealth of Christ is valued by His eternal value.

- Micah 5:2
- John 17:5

“He is rich in the sense that He is God and as rich as God is rich, possessing eternity and all that it contains.”

He gave from His eternity so that we who were mortal would inherit His portion.

2 – Jesus gave to us the greatest example by becoming poverty. Verse 9b

- In the same way that the richness of Christ cannot be equated with material wealth, so too the poverty of Christ cannot be equated with economic poverty.

The poverty of Jesus was His incarnation.

- **Galatians 4:4** – Born of woman, under the law.
- **Romans 8:3-4** – The law became a stumbling block for humanity because we could never keep it. We were born tarnished.
- **Philippians 2:6-11** – Jesus was born into death. From eternity to human death (verse 8).

3 – Jesus gave to us the greatest example by making us rich. Verse 9c

- This verse begins with eternity and ends with eternity.
- Romans 8:17

Christ's example for us provides us with the opportunity to:

- a) Be ready to meet anyone's suffering even if we suffer loss in the meeting.
 - b) Be ready to become poor to make someone rich.
-

Living It Out!

1 – Take the pains and lift up the purpose of Jesus before the presents are unwrapped!

Speaker: Dr. Rai Paparatti

Date: December 29, 2019



We Continue!

Text: Acts 28:31

“As the book of Acts comes to a close; as Paul’s life comes to a close; we find that purpose for every generation that reads these words continues.”

1 – The thrust of our life through every conceivable trial and circumstance is preaching the Kingdom of God! Verse 31a

Being active in preaching the Kingdom of God is our source of:

1. Stability.
2. Sanity.
3. Perspective.
4. Strength.

Matthew 24:35 . James 1:17 . Psalm 46:1-7

To preach is to outwardly and publicly proclaim.

- When we are at the point of being very public in our confession of faith, we will receive the benefits from the Kingdom of God.
- We must live a preaching life!

2 – We must involve ourselves in teaching concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. Verse 31b

- The Greek word for *teaching* is *didasko* and nearly always refers to the teaching of the Scriptures (the written word of God).
- Hebrews 5:12-14

Teaching Christ, pushes us to be more involved in Scripture, which in and throughout our lives is the only thing that brings true maturity!

How was it that Paul was teaching those that were around him? Philippians 4:4-7

- Through words.
- Through perseverance.
- Through personal joy.

3 – We must live out our Christianity with all openness, completely unhindered. Verse 31c

- This verse is the very maturity of Paul's life through the book of Acts.
- We are encouraged to live an open and unhindered Christian life for the sake of all who see and hear us.

Living It Out!

1 – We must take the plunge and abandon all to Christ. How we live, what we live for, and the purpose of our living! It must be for Him...about Him!