

Acts 48 – **Living in Victory - Acts 28:1-16**

It's **great to be back** - **Thanks** to everyone who **cared** for the **church** while I was **gone** - & to **Pastor Jeff** for a **Great Msg** last Sunday

**It's funny** - after **teaching** on **Paul's Storm** at Sea & **shipwreck** **My dad & I** got caught in a **serious storm** in the Gulf of Mexico in a very **small fishing boat**

& **as we prayed** to get **thru** the Storm - **I again realized** Just **how REAL** the Bible is to our **Lives** - Very Exciting

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**While** I was away last week, I **read a biography** of a man named **Louis Zamperini** - called **UNBROKEN**

it's is an **incredible story** of the **Phenomenal Resilience** of a man

who "**Stayed The Course**" thru **100 times more** than most of us could **ever imagine** Even **Occurring**, Much less **Enduring**

**at the end** of an almost **indescribable life** of **hardships** & **injustices**

**when it looked** like the **effects** of all he had **endured** would **finally be** the **end** of him

He was trying to **BULLY his way out** of a **large tent** in **Los Angeles** where a **young evangelist** named **Billy Graham** was preaching

& **MID-STEP - instead** of him **escaping** thru the tent door **God** consumed **Louis Zamperini** with His **Love and Grace**

& **in the end** - thru the **unimaginable nightmares** he lived thru **in the end** - it was the **Unconditional LOVE** of God that **saved** him

The **Power & Grace** of God - **Fully Released** into a life  
Brings **Guaranteed VICTORY**

& that's **what I think of** - when I think of **the Apostle Paul** -  
**The Power & Grace of God** - **fully released** into a life

**THAT** is what I Pray **we'll SEE** - as we **take one last look**  
in the **Book of ACTS** - at the **Life** of the **Apostle Paul**

## **Let's Pray**

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**It's impossible** in One Msg to **review ALL** of **WHO** Paul was  
& **ALL** that he **had done**

But **we know** for sure - **since** that **Bright Day** on the **Damascus Road**  
when he **met Jesus Christ face-to-face** . . .

**Since** that day - Paul lived a **Phenomenal, Faith Filled Life** - -  
**No circumstance** could **MOVE** him - **No Hardship** could **STOP** him

But **what I want** us to **hear** today is;

**The SECRET** to Paul's long list of **Victory after Victory**  
is a **Secret** that's **Just** as **Available to US** - as it was to **HIM**

It's the **Same God** - The **Same Power** of the **Holy Spirit**  
Who **lived in Paul** - Who Lives in **US** - **TODAY !!**

These **Spiritual Victories** in Acts **weren't PAUL'S Doing**

it was **the power of God in Paul** - that **made him**  
**"More than a Conqueror"** in every **circumstance** he **faced**

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We can't review Paul's faith in EVERY book he wrote  
So let's just take one - my personal favorite

Listen to the FAITH that drove Paul from VICTORY to VICTORY

Taken from just ONE book - written FROM Prison - IN Rome  
AFTER God had brought him thru SO MANY Hardships

In Phil 1:6 - Paul says (esv)

*6 And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.*

& then - speaking of his own hardships - he says in

Phil 1:12 (esv)

*12 I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel,*

& then - there's that battle cry - that is a Banner of Victory  
no matter what circumstance we face

Phil 1:20-21 (esv)

*20 as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death.*

*21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*

In Ch 2 - Paul explains how our HUMILITY leads to VICTORY

In Phil 2:5 he tells us - *we must have the "Mind of Christ"*

& then - in Phil 2:17 - he says (esv)

*17 Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all.*

Then - Looking back over his life lived for Christ

In Phil 3:8 Paul says

*8 Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.*

Then he clearly STATES - the Supreme Goal of his life

in Phil 3:10 (esv)

*10 that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death,*

Then - just 3 Vs's later - Paul spells out his DRIVING MOTIVATION

Phil 3:13-14 (esv)

*13 . . . But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead,*

*14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*

Then - In Ch 4 he tells us how to have  
the Peace of God that Passes all Understanding

& Finally - He WRAPS it ALL UP in Phil 4:11 & 13

Phil 4:11 (esv)

*11 . . . for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content.*

& finally - Paraphrasing Phil 4:13

*I can face all circumstances through him who strengthens me.*

That is an incredible Summary - of the VICTORY of FAITH in  
Paul's Life - from just ONE Book . . .

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But how **QUICKLY** do we say;

***Yeah but that's the Apostle PAUL - I'm not like that***

**Do you** have the **SAME LORD** ?

**Do you** have the **SAME POWER** living in you ?

**Do you** have the **SAME ADOPTION** by God ?

**If** you have Truly **Given Your Life** to **Jesus Christ** today  
**then** the answer is **YES - You Do**

& **You & I** **CAN** have the **SAME Spiritual VICTORY**  
**IN** the **MIDST** of our **Circumstances** that Paul had

**Because** the **SAME God** who **Empowered Paul** to **Victory**  
**WANTS** to **Empower US**

But **OUR PART** is to **WALK closer & closer** with Him  
**in order** to **Experience** that **Empowering**

**OUR PART** is to **KNOW** Him **more & more intimately**  
with **every passing circumstance & hardship**

**Our Victory** is **ALL from God** - **100%**  
But **WE** Definitely have a **ROLE** in it

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So - **as we look** at the **Final Recorded Ch of Acts** -  
**we see** kind of a "**Wrap-Up**" - of **Paul's Life** of **Spiritual VICTORIES**

We **left Paul** in the **storm tossed** waves  
**amidst** a **Shipwreck** - off the **island of Malta**

After God had used Paul mightily aboard the ship  
the boat had finally struck ground off the island

The waves had broken the ship apart - & the Last Vs of Ch 27  
says ALL 276 people on board made it safely to land

& so . . . we begin the Last Ch of the Book of ACTS

& we immediately see again  
God's Miraculous Hand on Paul's Life

### Acts 28:1-3 (esv)

*1 After we were brought safely through (the shipwreck), we then learned that the island (they landed on) was called Malta.*

*2 The native people showed us unusual kindness, for they kindled a fire and welcomed us all, because it had begun to rain and was cold. (the island people met them on the beach & built a fire for them)*

*3 When Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and put them on the fire, a viper came out because of the heat and fastened on his hand.*

After Too Many Trials to count - Paul survives the shipwreck

He swims ashore - grabs a bundle of sticks for the fire  
& is bitten by a venomous snake

I can just see Paul saying "*Really, Honestly, NOW a SNAKE is  
Hanging off my hand . . . you're kidding me, right?*"

But - JUST LIKE every other Situation - God was AT WORK  
to USE Paul in the Midst of his Hardships

Acts 28:4-6 (ESV) → →

### **Acts 28:4–6 (ESV)**

**4 When the native people saw the creature hanging from his hand, they said to one another, “No doubt this man is a murderer. Though he has escaped from the sea, Justice has not allowed him to live.”**

**5 He, however, shook off the creature into the fire and suffered no harm.**

**6 They were waiting for him to swell up or suddenly fall down dead. But when they had waited a long time and saw no misfortune come to him, they changed their minds and said that he was a god.**

This is **Classic Paul experience** -

He **finds himself** in a **Life-Threatening** situation . . .

**Only to have** People **FIRST Mistakenly think** he's **worthy of Death**  
**THEN Mistakenly think he's a god**

By **really** - **God** is just **setting the stage** - as always  
to use **Paul** as a **VESSEL** - a **CONDUIT**

This little “**snake-bite incident**” gave Paul a **quick reputation** with  
the **Islanders** - which **LED** to God **USING Paul** in their lives

### **Acts 28:7–9 (ESV)**

**7 Now in the neighborhood of that place were lands belonging to the chief man (chief official) of the island, named Publius, who received us and entertained us hospitably for three days.**

**8 It happened that the father of Publius lay sick with fever and dysentery. And Paul visited him and prayed, and putting his hands on him healed him.**

**9 And when this had taken place, the rest of the people on the island who had diseases also came and were cured.**

**This** was **NOT** by **chance** - **This** was by **God's Design**

**Paul** was simply **on his way** to Rome - as a **Prisoner** -  
**& God** wanted to **use him** - **every step** of the Way

& we've **seen** - at **EVERY TURN**  
**Paul** has made himself **AVAILABLE** to God

To be used as a **Witness** - & as a **Mouthpiece** -  
& now as **God's Healing Hand**

Paul is **NOT sitting in a corner** somewhere **Questioning** God

He's **NOT Demanding** God **FIX things** in his life  
**Or** even just **WAITING to GET** to **where** God said he was **going**

**Paul** is **walking** with God **OUTSIDE** of his **circumstances**

He's **VICTORIOUS** over every **difficulty**  
**because** he is **NOT LIVING** - **IN** his difficulties

**His life** is no longer **HIS** - **He** has been **CRUCIFIED** with **Christ**

& **The life** he now lives - **he lives by Faith** in the **Son** of God  
who **loved** him & **gave Himself** for him

**Paul** was walking **WITH** God - & being used **BY** God  
**NO MATTER** what **Circumstance** or **Situation** Arose

& that is a **MASSIVE PART** of what **MADE** Paul **Victorious**  
against **ALL ODDS**

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So the **Shipwreck** & **Snake bite** start a **3 month HEALING Ministry** on a **tiny island** in the Mediterranean

& **TODAY** - as I said last Msg - Malta is **98% Christian** **2,000 years** later

**God** was at work - **FOR** the Island of **MALTA**  
& Paul was **JOINING God** **Wherever** God was at work

& **because** of **THAT** Focus - Paul was **Victorious**  
by the **Power** of God - in **situation** after **situation**

**Do you see it ??**

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**& so - we read in Acts 28:10 (esv)**  
*10 They (the island people) also honored us greatly, and when we were about to sail, they put on board whatever we needed.*

**The NLT** says here - *“They showered us with honors, & supplied us with everything we needed for the trip”*

& so **again** - Paul **Surrenders** his **ENTIRE life** to **The Lord**  
in **EVERY circumstance** & **situation** . . .

& **the Lord** responds by - not **ONLY using** Paul -  
but by **continually providing** for his **every need**

**These** are **GREAT lessons** for **“Living in Victory”**  
for every **Man** or **Women** of God

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& **so now** - After more **twists & turns** than we can **count** -  
**Paul begins** the very **last leg** of his **journey** to **Rome**

## **Acts 28:11 (esv)**

**11 After three months we set sail in a ship that had wintered in the island, a ship of Alexandria, with the twin gods as a figurehead.**

These “**Twin gods**” were basically the **Astrological gods of good fortune** for sailors

& certainly **Paul & his friends** would’ve **Smiled** as they **boarded**

**Knowing full well** there is only **ONE True God** who can **actually protect you** in the **Storms** of your **life**

But - **in any case** - so begins the **finally trip** from **Malta** to **Italy**

## **Acts 28:12–13 (esv)**

**12 Putting in at Syracuse** (landing on the island of Sicily), ***we stayed there for three days.***

**13 And from there we made a circuit** (along the coast) ***and arrived at*** (Ray-Gium) ***Rhegium*** (Southern tip of Italy). ***And after one day a south wind sprang up*** (that’s good), ***and on the second day we came to*** (Pu-Teo-Loy) ***Puteoli.***

***Pu-Teo-Loy*** (Puteoli) was a **large bay south of Rome** - what is now called “**The Bay of Naples**”

They had sailed **220 miles in 2 days** **because** of the **fair winds** from the **South**

& now - **Paul** was **very close** to **ROME** - & we’re gonna **see God** **begin to roll out** the **Welcome Mat** for Paul

**Paul’s Reputation** had gone **before** him  
**His letter** to the **Romans** had gone **before** him

& now - he's going to receive a Dignitary's Welcome  
from the Christian Community in Rome

& Rightly So after all he'd gone thru to get there

So Paul's Ship Lands in Pu-Teo-Loy (Puteoli)  
But there is still about a 100 mi WALK to Rome

But here - with the landing in this large bay  
Paul's Sea Voyage finally comes to an end

& we read in Acts 28:14 (esv)

*14 There we found brothers and were invited to stay with them for seven days. And so we came to Rome.*

Paul lands on the coast of Italy - 100 mi's from ROME

& his Centurion allows him to find some believers -  
& he stays with them for 7 days

& then Luke says at the end of Vs 14 "And So . . . meaning  
IN THIS WAY - we came to Rome

What an Incredible Summary Statement from Luke  
After all that they'd been thru

IN THIS WAY - Exactly what God said would happen - DID HAPPEN

IN THIS WAY - Thru these Events - Thru Every Twist & Turn  
Thru every Difficulty & Danger - thru Hardships & Sorrows

IN THIS WAY - God brought us thru it ALL !!

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**Have you ever noticed - That OFTEN God will GIVE US  
an END GOAL for our lives . . .**

**But SELDOM will He reveal the PATH we must take - to GET there**

**Rom 8:28-30 is the perfect example of this**

The **ULTIMATE Good** that God is **at work for** in your life  
is you **being GLORIFIED** - in His **Presence** - for **Eternity**

But **the PATH** He's **laid out** to get you from **HERE** - to **THERE**  
is **seldom REVEALED** to us

But **IN THE END** (*if we'll follow*) **We'll** be able to say - **"IN THIS WAY"**  
we **GOT** to where God **PROMISED** He would **GET US**

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**Are you on a PATH in your life today ??**

Are **you going** to be able to say **"IN THIS WAY"**  
God **GOT ME** - where **He wanted me** to be

Are you **JOINING** God in **YOUR** - **"IN THIS WAY"** ??  
Or are you **FIGHTING** Him in every **step** - & every **situation**

Are you **kicking & screaming** - **digging** in your **heels** -  
& **demanding** your own **way**

**Fighting God** every step -  
**like a 3 year old** throwing **a temper-tantrum** in a **grocery store**

& **everyone around you** is saying - ***OH, in THIS way he's going to  
get where God is ultimately taking him . . .***

Listen pls - - - WHERE You are AT - is YOUR - “IN THIS WAY”

So JOIN God there !! - Be PART of what God is doing - THERE  
Don't make him drag you by the ear to where He wants you

JOINING God in what HE'S doing - RIGHT WHERE you're AT

is a Huge PART of the Spiritual Victory  
in the Life of a Man or Woman of God - - *Amen?*

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So - Luke has said “IN THIS WAY”, we came to Rome  
But they're still actually 100 miles from the City - so we continue

### Acts 28:15 (esv)

*15 And the brothers there (in Rome), when they heard about us, came as far as the Forum of Appius and Three Taverns to meet us. On seeing them, Paul thanked God and took courage.*

It was customary - when a Dignitary was coming into town

that the city would send out a delegation to meet him  
& escort him into the city - that is what's happening here

This is Paul travelling on the Famous APPIAN WAY  
- that you can still go to & travel on today -

& as he walked - the believers from Rome came toward him  
to meet him & walk into Rome with him

The “Forum of Appius” was 40 miles from Rome  
“Three Taverns” was 30 miles from Rome

& as Paul walked, with his Friends - & with his Centurion Guard

he began to see more & more believers coming to MEET him  
to walk with him those final miles into ROME

It must've been a Really Encouraging Sight for Paul

& he THANKED God - & TOOK COURAGE as he saw more & more  
brothers & sisters in the Lord coming out to meet him

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& Finally we read in Acts 28:16 (ESV)

*16 And when we came into Rome, Paul was allowed to stay by himself, with the soldier that guarded him.*

Paul had made it to Rome - JUST AS God said he would !!

Not IN THE WAY Paul would've CHOSEN - But never the less . . .  
"IN THIS WAY" - Paul came to Rome

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The Spiritual Victories in Paul's Life - are without Comparison  
in the N.T. - Except for Jesus Christ himself

But you & I CAN live in the SAME Spiritual Victories

Because we DO have the EXACT SAME GOD  
& we DO have the EXACT SAME POWER Residing in us

Paul wrote to these Same Christians in Rome . . .

Romans 8:11 (NLT) → →

## **Romans 8:11 (NLT)**

***11 The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as (in the same way as) **God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you.*****

**We have the SAME Holy Spirit living in us  
that Raised Jesus Christ from the Dead**

**& we CAN GROW to have the SAME level of  
FAITH - & TRUST - & VICTORY as Paul had**

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**In the Ongoing Work of the Gospel of Jesus Christ . . .**

There are Men & Women who will LEARN to WALK  
in the Spiritual Victory that we've seen thru-out ACTS

We CAN BE that Man or Woman  
We CAN WALK in SPIRITUAL VICTORY . . .

**No matter what the CIRCUMSTANCE  
No matter what the HARDSHIP**

We CAN JOIN God in what He is doing - RIGHT where we're AT

**AND - we CAN Truly Allow HIM to Determine the PATH  
that leads US - to OUR own ROME**

**& In SO DOING - we CAN WALK - in SPIRITUAL VICTORY**

**So Let's Make that Commitment right now - to WALK with Him  
IN VICTORY - DAY-BY-DAY- Right where we're AT**

**Let's Pray**