

A Spiritual Evaluation

Part III

Through It All

Last Few Weeks....

Before Going Into A New Year... Take Time For A Spiritual Evaluation

*Evaluate My **Priorities***
*Evaluate My **Partnerships***
*Evaluate My **Prayer Life***
*Evaluate My **Plans***
*Evaluate My **Practices***

*After a Proper Evaluation, You Should have **A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE...***
*After a Proper Evaluation, You Should see **YOUR LIFE BEGIN TO PROSPER...***
*After a Proper Evaluation, You should feel **YOUR LIFE HAS PURPOSE...***

Introduction

Andre Crouch had a famous song... In that song he said...
Through it all, through it all,
*I've **LEARNED** to **TRUST** in Jesus, I've **LEARNED** to **TRUST** IN GOD.*
Through it all, through it all,
*I've **LEARNED** to **DEPEND** UPON HIS WORD.*

Then he said....

*I thank God for the mountains, and I thank Him for the valleys,
I thank Him for the storms He brought me through.
For if I'd never had a problem, I wouldn't **KNOW** God could solve them,
I'd never **KNOW** what faith in God could do.*

*Those words remind us that in our walk with God we must **LEARN** to **TRUST** in God
We must **LEARN** to Depend upon HIS WORD...
I love this song because it gives us 3 keywords that highlight our sermon principles for today...*

*“**LEARNED**” ~ {Learned to Trust, Learned to Depend} ~ suggests there is a PROCESS
“**THANK GOD**” ~ when you've been delivered you can **LOOK BACK** with a thankful/grateful heart
“**KNOW**” ~ {**Know** what Faith in His Word Can Do} ~ suggests that on the other side of the trial, **I KNOW***

Lessons From The Journey

Acts 27:1-3 (NIV)

¹ When it was decided that we would sail for Italy, **Paul and some other prisoners were handed over to a centurion named Julius**, who belonged to the Imperial Regiment. ² We boarded a ship from Adramyttium about to sail for ports along the coast of the province of Asia, and we put out to sea.

Aristarchus, a Macedonian from Thessalonica, was with us.

³ The next day we landed at Sidon; and **Julius, in kindness to Paul, allowed him to go to his friends SO THEY MIGHT PROVIDE FOR HIS NEEDS.**

Paul Is A Prisoner ~ But God Still Shows Him Favor

Similar to Joseph ~ In Prison but the Lord Was With Him...

Paul Is A Prisoner ~ But Still Receives God's Promise

And My God Shall Supply All Your Needs....

In Your Evaluation ~ Don't Just Focus on Your Predicament... Did God Keep His Promise!!!

Lessons From The Journey

Acts 27:4-12 (NIV)

- ⁴ From there we put out to sea again and passed to the lee of Cyprus because **the winds were against us**.
- ⁵ When we had sailed across the open sea off the coast of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we landed at Myra in Lycia.
- ⁶ There the centurion found an Alexandrian ship sailing for Italy and put us on board.
- ⁷ **We made slow headway for many days and had difficulty arriving off Cnidus. When the wind did not allow us to hold our course**, we sailed to the lee of Crete, opposite Salmone.
- ⁸ **We moved along the coast with difficulty** and came to a place called Fair Havens, near the town of Lasea.
- ⁹ Much time had been lost, and **sailing had already become dangerous** because by now it was after the Fast.

SO PAUL WARNED THEM,

- ¹⁰ "Men, **I CAN SEE** that **our voyage is going to be disastrous and bring great loss to ship and cargo, and to our own lives also.**" ¹¹ **But the centurion, instead of listening to what Paul said, followed the advice of the pilot and of the owner of the ship.**
- ¹² Since the harbor was unsuitable to winter in, **THE MAJORITY DECIDED THAT WE SHOULD SAIL ON, hoping to reach Phoenix** and winter there. This was a harbor in Crete, facing both southwest and northwest.

God Sends **WARNINGS** {Winds and Words}

Did you **SEE** the warnings...

Did you **HEAR** the warnings...

Did you **HEED** the warnings...

Lessons From The Journey

Acts 27:13-20 (NIV)

13 When a gentle south wind began to blow, **they thought they had obtained what they wanted**; so, they weighed anchor and sailed along the shore of Crete. 14 Before very long, a wind of hurricane force, called the "northeaster," swept down from the island. 15 The ship was caught by the storm and could not head into the wind; **so we gave way to it and were driven along.**

16 As we passed to the lee of a small island called Cauda, **we were hardly able to make the lifeboat secure.**

17 When the men had hoisted it aboard, **they passed ropes under the ship itself to hold it together.** Fearing that they would run aground on the sandbars of Syrtis, **they lowered the sea anchor and let the ship be driven along.**

18 We took such a violent battering from the storm that the next day **they began to throw the cargo overboard.**

19 On the third day, **they threw the ship's tackle overboard with their own hands.**

20 When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days and the storm continued raging, **WE FINALLY GAVE UP ALL HOPE OF BEING SAVED.**

Notice The Effort, The Energy, The Losses Experienced Because of One Decision

Make Wise Decisions... Don't Take Any Decisions For Granted

Lessons From The Journey

Acts 27:21-26 (NIV)

21 After the men had gone *a long time without food*, Paul stood up before them and said: "Men, you should have taken my advice not to sail from Crete; then you would have spared yourselves this damage and loss. 22 *BUT NOW I urge you to keep up your courage because not one of you will be lost; only the ship will be destroyed.*

23 Last night an angel of the God whose I am and whom I serve stood beside me 24 and said, '*DO NOT BE AFRAID, PAUL. YOU MUST STAND TRIAL BEFORE CAESAR; AND GOD HAS GRACIOUSLY GIVEN YOU THE LIVES OF ALL WHO SAIL WITH YOU.*'

25 So keep up your courage, men, for *I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me.* 26 Nevertheless, we must run aground on some island."

The Value of Partnership/Leadership

He did not give them more cargo...

He did not give them another ship...

He did not give them false hope...

ENCOURAGED THEM With What He Received From God

Lessons From The Journey

Acts 27:27-32 (NIV)

27 On the fourteenth night we were still being driven across the Adriatic Sea, when about midnight the sailors sensed they were approaching land. 28 They took soundings and found that the water was a hundred and twenty feet deep. A short time later they took soundings again and found it was ninety feet deep. 29 Fearing that we would be dashed against the rocks, they dropped four anchors from the stern and prayed for daylight. 30 In an attempt to escape from the ship, the sailors let the lifeboat down into the sea, **PRETENDING** they were going to lower some anchors from the bow.

31 **THEN PAUL SAID** to the centurion and the soldiers, "Unless these men stay with the ship, you cannot be saved." 32 So the soldiers cut the ropes that held the lifeboat and let it fall away.

Time and Trust Factor

Although Paul gave them **ENCOURAGEMENT**...

That was two weeks ago!!! ~ ~ We are still in this same situation...

NOTHING IS CHANGING

Let's Try Plan B!!!

Paul's Responsibility was to encourage them to **STAY WITH IT...**
THE WORD WORKS Even When There Seems To Be **NO EVIDENCE**

Lessons From The Journey

Acts 27:33-41 (NIV)

*33 Just before dawn Paul urged them all to eat. "For the last fourteen days," he said, "you have been in constant suspense and have gone without food--you haven't eaten anything. 34 Now I urge you to take some food. You need it to survive. Not one of you will lose a single hair from his head." 35 After he said this, he took some bread and gave thanks to God **IN FRONT OF THEM ALL**. Then he broke it and began to eat.*

*36 **THEY WERE ALL ENCOURAGED AND ATE SOME FOOD THEMSELVES.***

*37 Altogether there were 276 of us on board. 38 **When they had eaten as much as they wanted, they lightened the ship by throwing the grain into the sea.** 39 **When daylight came, they did not recognize the land, but they saw a bay with a sandy beach, where they decided to run the ship aground if they could.***

40 Cutting loose the anchors, they left them in the sea and at the same time untied the ropes that held the rudders. Then they hoisted the foresail to the wind and made for the beach.

41 But the ship struck a sandbar and ran aground. The bow stuck fast and would not move, and the stern was broken to pieces by the pounding of the surf.

Paul Was Not Only A Vocal Leader... But A Visible Leader

He Encouraged Them with a Visible Demonstration

Although They Had Lost Some Cargo... God Left Them With Enough To Survive!!!!

Lessons From The Journey

Acts 27:42-44 (NIV)

42 The soldiers PLANNED TO KILL the prisoners to prevent any of them from swimming away and escaping.

43 But the centurion wanted to spare Paul's life and kept them from carrying out their plan.

He ordered those who could swim to jump overboard first and get to land.

44 The rest were to get there on planks or on pieces of the ship. In this way, everyone reached land in safety.

Value of Partnerships ~ You Were Saved Because Of Your Connection

You were the Beneficiary of Someone's Favor

Our Testimonies Are Different

But We All Made It Through It!!!

25th DECEMBER

MT. OLIVE BAPTIST CHURCH OF
GREENWOOD

Christmas SERVICE

8AM

MT. OLIVE BAPTIST
CHURCH OF GREENWOOD

9500 Greenwood Springridge Rd.
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Marcus L. Ellison, Pastor
Cortney McCall, Youth Pastor
Charles Carey, Sr., Associate Minister
Demond Holmes, Associate Minister