

*Preparation for the Unexpected*  
First Baptist Church and The Lakefront Church, Venice, Florida  
One Church - Two Locations  
February 9, 2025

When your walk with God is consistent and frequent, you are better prepared to avoid situations where you have a choice and to stand strong in situations where you have no choice.

Set aside time in the morning, the evening, or both to read your Bible and pray.

*Our Father, who is in Heaven, hallowed be your name -*

- Praise God for who He is, what He does, and what He has done.

*Your Kingdom come, your will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven. -*

- Commit to live by God's standards defined in the Bible.

*Give us this day, our daily bread -*

- Thank God for all His blessings. Name as many as you can.

*And forgive us our sins, as we also have forgiven those who sinned against us.*

- Confess your sins to God and forgive those who sinned against you.

*Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one -*

- Thank God for giving you the discernment to see satan's trap and the Spiritual courage to resist.

*For Yours is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever -*

- God, You are above all things, and You love me!

The Apostle Paul's life is an example of preparation for the unexpected.

2 Timothy 4:7-8 (CSB) *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. <sup>8</sup>There is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me, but to all those who have loved his appearing.*

A major problem: Christians becoming LIKE their environment  
rather than CHANGING it.

2 Corinthians 4:7-9 (CSB) *Now we have this treasure in clay jars, so that this extraordinary power may be from God and not from us. <sup>8</sup>We are afflicted in every way but not crushed; we are perplexed but not in despair; <sup>9</sup>we are persecuted but not abandoned; we are struck down but not destroyed.*

Grace is where God meets you. No matter if you are in a situation you chose or a situation that chose you.

Faith is where you meet God, no matter your situation.

*God, I do not enjoy where I am. But God, use me to reach someone in my situation.*

### BEATEN

Acts 16:23-25 (CSB) *After they had severely flogged them, they threw them in jail, ordering the jailer to guard them carefully. <sup>24</sup>Receiving such an order, he put them into the inner prison and secured their feet in the stocks. <sup>25</sup>About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them.*

- You have great value. Others in the same situation you are in or were in need your support, encouragement, and presence.

### BITTEN

Acts 28:3-6 (CSB) *As Paul gathered a bundle of brushwood and put it on the fire, a viper came out because of the heat and fastened itself on his hand. <sup>4</sup>When the local people saw the snake hanging from his hand, they said to one another, "This man, no doubt, is a murderer. Even though he has escaped the sea, Justice has not allowed him to live." <sup>5</sup>But he shook the snake off into the fire and suffered no harm. <sup>6</sup>They expected that he would begin to swell up or suddenly drop dead. After they waited a long time and saw nothing unusual happen to him, they changed their minds and said he was a god. <sup>7</sup>Now in the area around that place was an estate belonging to the leading man of the island, named Publius... <sup>8</sup>Publius's father was in bed suffering from fever and dysentery. Paul went to him, and praying and laying his hands on him, he healed him. <sup>9</sup>After this, the rest of those on the island who had diseases also came and were healed. <sup>10</sup>So they heaped many honors on us, and when we sailed, they gave us what we needed.*

- You have great value.
- You standing strong is a powerful witness!
- When others run out, you stand out!

Investments are not working like you thought.

Marriage not working like you thought.

Kids not working like you thought.

Two steps forward and one step backward.

You feel snake-bitten!

Do your best to shake it off.

**Face it, and you do not have to fake it!**

**Grace is where God meets you.**

**You standing strong is a powerful witness!**

**When others run out, you stand out!**

*<sup>7</sup> Now in the area around that place was an estate belonging to the leading man of the island, named Publius, who welcomed us and entertained us hospitably for three days. <sup>8</sup> Publius's father was in bed suffering from fever and dysentery. Paul went to him, and praying and laying his hands on him, he healed him. <sup>9</sup> After this, the rest of those on the island who had diseases also came and were healed.*

*...<sup>10</sup> So they heaped many honors on us, and when we sailed, they gave us what we needed.*