



Dedication / Embracing God's Will

"And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done" (Acts 21:14).

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"And it came to pass, that after we were gotten from them, and had launched, we came with a straight course unto Coos, and the day following unto Rhodes, and from thence unto Patara: 2 And finding a ship sailing over unto Phenicia, we went aboard, and set forth. 3 Now when we had discovered Cyprus, we left it on the left hand, and sailed into Syria, and landed at Tyre: for there the ship was to unlade her burden. 4 And finding disciples, we tarried there seven days: who said to Paul through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem. 5 And when we had accomplished those days, we departed and went our way; and they all brought us on our way, with wives and children, till we were out of the city: and we kneeled down on the shore, and prayed. 6 And when we had taken our leave one of another, we took ship; and they returned home again. 7 And when we had finished our course from Tyre, we came to Ptolemais, and saluted the brethren, and abode with them one day. 8 And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Caesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him. 9 And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy. 10 And as we tarried there many days, there came down from Judaea a certain prophet, named Agabus. 11 And when he was come unto us, he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles. 12 And when we heard these things, both we, and they of that place, besought him not to go up to Jerusalem. 13 Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart?

"Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." (Acts 21:13).

for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. 14 And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done" (Acts 21:1-14).

Summarised below are some key lessons from Paul's life in this text that provide a strong foundation for contemporary Christians seeking to live out effective and successful ministry life:

1. Dedication to God's Call: Paul exhibited unwavering commitment to the mission God assigned to him. Despite numerous warnings about the impending dangers, he remained resolute in his journey to Jerusalem. This underscores the importance of dedication and resilience in ministry, which culminated in his declaration - "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith" (2 Timothy 4:7).

2. Listening to the Holy Spirit: The passage highlights the importance of being attuned to the Holy Spirit's guidance. Both Paul and the disciples received warnings through the Spirit, indicating the necessity of spiritual sensitivity and discernment in ministry. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Romans 8:14).

3. Community and Fellowship:

Throughout his journey, Paul was supported by fellow believers. They provided not just companionship, but also prayers and encouragement. This illustrates the power of Christian fellowship and the need to build strong, supportive communities within the ministry. We will do well today to heed these scriptural admonitions:

- ♦ "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Hebrews 10:24-25).
- ♦ "Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do" (1 Thessalonians 5:11).

4. Courage in the Face of Opposition:

Paul demonstrated immense courage, even when faced with the prospect of suffering and imprisonment. He was willing to endure hardships for the sake of Christ, teaching modern-day believers the importance of bravery and steadfastness in the face of adversity. Note these scriptural admonitions for our benefit:

- ♦ "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Timothy 1:7).
- ♦ "Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest" (Joshua 1:9).

5. Willingness to Sacrifice: Paul's readiness to sacrifice his own safety and well-

being for the gospel's cause serves as a powerful reminder that effective ministry often requires personal sacrifices. Christians are called to put God's work above their own comfort and security as exemplified in these scriptures:

- ♦ "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Romans 12:1)
- ♦ "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Philippians 3:8)

6. Embracing God's Will: In verse 14, the disciples ultimately accepted Paul's decision to go to Jerusalem, saying, **"The will of the Lord be done."** This teaches the importance of submitting to God's will, even when it leads to challenging circumstances. Trusting in God's plan is fundamental to a fruitful ministry. Jesus taught / exemplified it:

- ♦ "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10).
- ♦ "Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done" (Luke 22:42).

By emulating these principles from Paul's life, contemporary Christians can enhance their ministry efforts and remain faithful to their calling.