



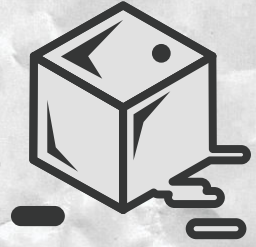
**THE BOOK OF**  
**ACTS**

WEEK OF MARCH 19TH, 2023

# WALKING WITH GOD THROUGH THE VERY END: ACTS 28:17-31

Speaker: Pastor Mike Burnette

## ICEBREAKER



If there was a way to know you're in the good ole days before you've actually left them, what would you do differently today?

### Introduction

- Have you ever been treated unfairly? Paul was persecuted and held prisoner for nearly three years and never stopped preaching salvation and Jesus. How would you have handled being treated as unfairly as Paul?

### Faithful When It's Not Fair (v.17-24)

- Imagine if you were wrongly accused and convicted of a terrible crime you did not commit. What would you do?
- If we have the same Holy Spirit living in us that Paul had, why do we seem to feel sorry for ourselves when unfair things happen to us? What would it look like to follow God and be faithful in our unfair situations?
- In Acts 28:20, Paul said, "For this reason, therefore, I have asked to see you and speak with you, since it is because of the hope of Israel that I am wearing this chain." Paul found a reason for his imprisonment. What's your "for this reason"? Can your current difficulty be a way to witness to someone? How could you use it with someone in your life who needs to hear about Jesus?
- Do you think that just because you do what God wants you to do, you won't be faced with any challenges? Why or why not?
- When life isn't fair, are you willing to put in the work to get to the other side (i.e. prayer, reading the Bible, etc.), or are you going to be defeated and not trust God's timing? Why?

### God's Word Still Speaks, Even Today (v. 24-28)

- How can you be bold with God's Word and continue to witness, even when it falls on deaf ears?
- How do you study the Word now? How could you become a better student?
- How many times have you sat through a sermon and not perceived it and how it applies to YOU? What would it look like to open your heart to the message and take rebuke from the Holy Spirit? How do we HEAR HIM, actively LISTEN TO HIM, and purposefully FOLLOW HIS WORD?
  - What are some things that keep you from actively listening to God and choosing to follow his Word after speaking to you?
- How have you let distractions dull your heart, eyes and ears to God's Word in your life?

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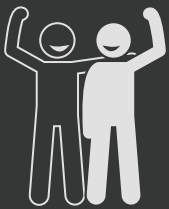
## WALKING WITH GOD THROUGH THE VERY END: ACTS 28:17-31

Speaker: Pastor Mike Burnette

Finishing Well Takes Commitment to Something Bigger Than You (v.30-31)

- Paul came to Rome as a prisoner, but he stayed in Rome for something bigger than himself: To lay a huge foundation for the Church that would become the seat of the Global Church Movement known as the Holy Roman Church. What opportunities has God given you that you could use to build something bigger than yourself and proclaim the kingdom of Jesus? How can you do more for God's kingdom?
- Think of a time where you faced something difficult and you stuck it out until the end. Can you see how it was bigger than you?
- How have you been blessed by someone else's faithfulness to the Lord?
- Pastor Mike shared an old Greek Proverb that says, "A Society grows when old men plant trees whose shade they know they will never sit in." How are you planting seeds that will harvest in the next generation? How are you helping to build new churches, give to our church, serve on our dream teams, and pray for our future?

## ACT ON IT



### ENCOURAGE

Paul shouldn't have endured all that he did. Who would have blamed him for giving up? But Paul was living with the end in mind. He wanted to finish well with the Lord. He stayed faithful to God, even when the world wasn't faithful to him. His faithfulness led him to where God wanted him to be, and when he got his chance to speak, he spoke in the boldness of God's Word. Why? Because Paul knew that all of the pain and unfairness was for something bigger than him. By submitting to the hard things of God, Paul was able to preach in Rome, the most influential city in the world, which ultimately led to the spread of the Church to the ends of the earth. Serving God's Kingdom is way bigger than building our own lives. If we're going to be faithful to God to the end, we have to realize we're a part of something bigger than ourselves. Build your life around God. Let God use you and don't let anything get in the way of making a difference for the next generation.



## Ask

How are you dealing with the unfair things in your life? What do you need to do differently? How is God speaking to you? Are you letting the Words of Christ transform you or are you just filling up with information? What are you doing now to build your life now so that you'll be able to last until the end with Jesus?



## Challenge

Start building your life today around the Lord so you can ensure you are constantly living in the good old days, not waiting for those days to come.

1. Be faithful to God, even when life seems unfair.
2. Let God's Word speak **POWERFULLY** to you and through you everyday!
3. Be a part of something **BIGGER THAN YOURSELF!**
4. Give your **WHOLE LIFE** to the **LORD JESUS**, and don't let anything come in the way of **YOU MAKING A DIFFERENCE** for the Lord!

What's a way that you can plant a seed for the next generation this week? Observe how God still speaks to you this week and share it with someone in your life.

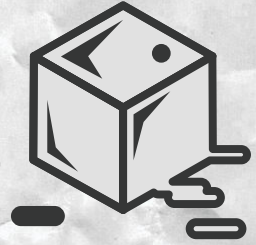
## PRAYER

God, we thank you for showing us how to deal with unfair situations. Kingdom living is not easy, and we know there will be pain and unfairness, but we don't have to fall victim to that. Thank you for giving us the power and strength to stand strong, in both easy and hard times. As we continue to walk with you all the way to the very end, help us stay faithful, even when it hurts. Help us find our "For this reason." Remove the distractions, thoughts, people, or whatever it is blocking us from hearing your Word. Help us see, hear and feel Your Word so it can both inform and transform our lives. God, we want to end well in every part of our lives, but especially with you. Show us how we can plant seeds for those coming after us. Thank you for reminding us that our lives and what we go through is so much bigger than us. We belong to something greater than ourselves and for that, we thank you. Amen.

WEEK OF MARCH 12TH, 2023

**GOD ON DISPLAY: ACTS 28:1-16**

Speaker: Pastor Mike Campbell

**ICEBREAKER**

The final point in last week's study was on not focusing on what you have lost, but on the pieces that are left. How are the pieces that are left in your life moving you to where God needs you to be?

**Introduction**

- How do you put limitations on what God can do in your life?
- Paul was moved by God from a ship that was about to go under, to an island whereby deliverance of his life would lead to lives being changed. We want people to Know God, Find Freedom, Discover Purpose, and then Make a Difference. Where is God using you to help people change lives?

**God's Purpose on Display (v.1)**

- The sailors on Paul's ship found Malta after being lost at sea in a storm. The people on the island were kind and hospitable. They were kind and went out of their way to help them. When have you had an opportunity to be kind and hospitable to someone who was lost?
- Paul's journey to Rome was detoured, but the purpose did not change. Sometimes, we think detours are out of God's plan, when in reality our detour can actually be God's plan for our lives. Describe a detour in your life that ended up being just another part of God's plan to work mightily in and through you. How did it differ from your plan?
- What does "God being on display" mean to you? What does it look like? How do you seek it?
- How do you handle when things go wrong? Are you still able to see God's hand in the circumstances? Why or why not?
- Paul stood firm on the word given to him by the angel in Acts 27:24. What was the last thing God spoke to you, and are you still standing on it? How?

**God's Protection on Display (v. 2-6)**

- When have you been shown unusual kindness?
- What are the "vipers" or "snakes" in your life that try to bite you? Are you able to shake them off or do you fall to the bite?
- The natives were quick to pass judgment on Paul when he was bitten by the viper. When is a time where you've been quick to judge someone's life based on their circumstances?
- What was the source of Paul's protection? What kept him on mission?
- Up to this point, Paul has been imprisoned, shipwrecked, and bit by a snake, even though he was on purpose for God! But he kept going. So, what does God's protection look like in your life?

WEEK OF MARCH 12TH, 2023

**GOD ON DISPLAY: ACTS 28:1-16**

Speaker: Pastor Mike Campbell

- Isaiah 41:10 is a great reminder that we're being escorted through this life by the best escort ever! How does standing on this word make you look at difficult situations now? How will you change the way you react under pressure moving forward?

**God's Power on Display (v.7-9)**

- When have you witnessed a miraculous healing? Did you give God the credit? How?
- Describe a time when someone prayed for you in the moment. How did you feel? Does that encourage you to do the same?
- What keeps you from praying for others in the moment? What would help you move past that fear?
- Do you believe that God still moves powerfully today? If you don't, what keeps you from believing that He still works miracles?
- Do you believe that God can use your hands to bring healing to others? Why or why not?

**God's Favor on Display (v. 10-16)**

- What does having God's favor mean to you? Where have you seen it in your life?
- What do you think: Do you still experience trials even if you have God's favor? Why?
- Describe a way in which God met your needs through others showing their appreciation for you working for God's will.
- Everywhere Paul went, God's favor spilled over and blessed those around him. How have you and your life been blessed by God's favor, whether directly or as a result in His favor on those around you?
- When you share your trials and tribulations with others, what are you trying to achieve? How can you use your stories to bring glory to God?

**ACT ON IT****ENCOURAGE**

Paul's voyage has been anything but easy up to this point. There were storms, shipwrecks, and snakes! It would have been easy to give up on the purpose, but Paul kept going. He knew that God had a purpose, he knew he would be protected, he knew that God would work through him, and he knew the favor God had for him. Paul also knew that giving up wouldn't just affect him. When God has a purpose for you, He will help you see it through. It may not look how you expect, but it will be exactly what is needed. Will you make yourself available for God's plan?



## Ask

How can God use your current circumstance for His purpose? Are you willing to stay the course? Have you mistaken God's protection for something else? Do you see what He was protecting you from? How does God want to put His power on display through you? How can you use God's favor in your life to help others?



## Challenge

The next time something "grinds your gears," find a way to give thanks to God as Paul did instead of giving into negative thoughts and feelings. Be a blessing to someone this week. Ask someone how you can pray for them this week and do it, in the moment. Sign up for Serve Day on March 25th! The next time you share a story, pause and ask how you can tell it in a way that shows God's purpose, protection, power and favor to others.

## PRAYER

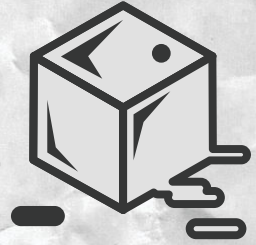
Lord, thank you for this message on your purpose, protection, power, and favor. Thank you for reminding how you see us and what we go through and you escort us through it all. Thank you for never leaving us to fight by ourselves. Help us remember that you can use everything we do and go through for your purpose. You're never caught off guard or surprised. Help us to stand on your Word for protection. Thank you for surrounding us, going before us, behind us, beside us, and for watching over us. As long as we stay connected to you, we'll be protected by you. Let your power be on display through us. Use us as you need us. We make ourselves available to you. God, help us see your favor in our lives. Help us to see where you're working so we can give you thanks, and show us how we can use it for those around us. We're blessed to be a blessing to others. In Jesus' name, Amen.

WEEK OF MARCH 5TH, 2023

# SURVIVING THE STORM OF LIFE: ACTS 27

Speaker: Mike Burnette

## ICEBREAKER



Have you ever lost or misplaced something that was super important to you?  
How did you react? When you found it, how did you feel?

- Which character in the story do you relate to more:
  - Are you like the younger brother - spoiled, taking for granted the blessings of God?
  - Are you like the older brother - envious of others getting blessed, and feeling like you have to earn God's grace?
  - Do you have the heart of the loving father - compassionate, kind, and quick to forgive - seeking those who are far from the family?
- Describe a time when you asked for something before you "deserved" it and later regretted it.
- If you were the prodigal son at a point in your life, how did you return back to God?
- Have you ever gotten jealous because someone got something that you wanted or was treated better than you? How do we turn our thoughts and feelings around so that we can celebrate instead of being jealous?
- What mistakes in your life do you believe are unforgivable? What makes you believe that God would not forgive you for this?
- What was your life like living without God compared to living with God?
- How have you tried to earn your way to God? How have you tried to earn your way to a comfortable life?
- What does true repentance look like to you? What is keeping you from truly repenting and running back to God?

## ACT ON IT



### ENCOURAGE

Despite what's happened in our past, God is willing to forgive and restore us. When we're ready to come back home, He's ready to welcome us with open arms and a party. If God can forgive like that, why can't we? As followers of Christ, the same heart our Loving Father has for us - a heart of forgiveness, grace, and compassion - we get to extend to others. And we don't have to work for it! God loves us so much, we don't have to be perfect and we don't have to figure it all out before we receive



His gift of eternal living. Be encouraged to move out of the mindset that we have to earn our gifts from God and move into building a relationship with Him. The ultimate sacrifice has been made on our behalf. Celebrate the blessings you have received by sharing it with others. Let's be willing to yearn for those far from Christ just like God yearns for us when we're away.



## Ask

Ask God to show you which character in the story that you're resembling right now. Pray and repent for the things from God that you have taken for granted. Pray to be released from religious routines so you can experience the freedom in living a life with God instead of feeling like you have to earn your way. Pray for peace and comfort in knowing God loves you no matter what, and ask God to give you that same heart so you can extend that same grace and forgiveness to others. Finally, pray for eyes to see those who are far from Christ and for God to use you to pursue them and welcome them home.



## Challenge

Think of people in your life who need to know that God loves them and is waiting to welcome them into His presence with open arms and a celebration! Connect with them for coffee or a meal this week so you can give them this good news!

## PRAYER

Lord, we're so thankful that you have no limits. There is no distance that we could go where your love can't reach us. Through your love and by taking our place on the cross, you came and set us free from the things that separate us from you. Thank you for waiting, with open arms, for those who are lost to welcome them home. Lord, we repent and ask your forgiveness for the times where we were blind to your love and sought ways outside of what you desire for us. We repent for the times where we thought that we had to work to be in your presence and completely missed your heart to be in relationship with us. Thank you for never giving up on us. Remind us of your love, grace, and forgiveness so we can share it with others who are far from you. Give us a heart that yearns for the lost. Remove any obstacles currently in our lives that keeps us from sharing your good news with others. Place us where you can use us to help bring others home to you. Thank you for your goodness and your love. Amen.