

Sunday Sermon Review: Week of November 27th, 2022

Sermon Series: The Book of Acts

Sermon: Power, Purpose, Pain, and God's Provision (Acts 21:37-22:24)

Guest Speaker: Pastor Mike Burnette

Icebreaker

- What was your favorite part about Thanksgiving, minus the good food?

Discussion Questions

Never Skip an Opportunity (Ch. 21:37-39)

- Whether it's financial struggles or personal issues, we've all gone through things that drained us and made us just want to take a break from church or from sharing Christ. What are you facing today that would make you want to take a break? Can you see how Paul must have felt the same way, yet he carried on with sharing the Gospel?
- What's your excuse? Have you ever been scared to share your faith with others because you were afraid, embarrassed, ashamed, or didn't want to offend? How could you be more like Paul and have no fear, no shame, and let none of that stop you?
- How conditional are you with grace towards others? Do you allow your anger to be an excuse not to share the Gospel?
- Have you skipped an opportunity to share Christ? Do you carry any guilt about that? Is he or she still no longer around to share?
- Is the Great Commission a suggestion to you? Why or why not?

Your Testimony Carries Power! (Ch. 21:40-Ch. 22:11)

- He spoke in Hebrew the language of the Jewish people, because Paul desperately wanted them to be saved and follow Jesus! There's something so powerful about speaking to people like they matter to you. How can you use this technique when reaching out to and sharing Christ with a non-believer?

- Paul begins his testimony with briefly sharing where he came from, how he can identify with those listening to him. So often, those we seek to share Christ with reject our faith because we come across as arrogant or above them. How are you sharing the gospel? Are you coming across as arrogant, or are you speaking the language of those you seek to reach and putting yourself on their level so they will hear you?
- Paul made it really clear that God changed him! Hasn't God changed you in the same way? What are some ways in which God has changed you, and how could you share that with someone you are witnessing to?
- What benefits could there be to relating to others when sharing your testimony?
- How can you use your past to help others? Do you seek out people that have lived the past that you lived?
- What do you think about people who don't believe in Christ? What do you say about them?
- How do you share your testimony with others now? What parts do you highlight and what do you omit?
- Sometimes, your testimony will change depending on who you share it with in order to relate to them. Do you allow the Holy Spirit to lead you in how you share your story?

Discover Your Purpose (Ch. 22:12-21)

- Paul let this Jewish audience know that one of their own, Ananias, a devout Jewish man, is also following Jesus! Have you ever tried sharing the Gospel with close friends, only to have them reject it because they know the "old" you? Who else do you know whose life has been changed, that can back you up?
- During a time of suffering, Paul is sharing his testimony with this Jewish audience, and he's showing how GOD GAVE HIM NEW PURPOSE!?? What is YOUR purpose? Based on where you're at now, what assignment do you think God has for you?

- God has a plan and a purpose for your WHOLE LIFE! No matter what! How can you let Him use you as He intended for THAT purpose?
- Just like God gives us assignments, He can also change our assignments. Has God recently changed the assignment in your life? Did you welcome the change or did you dread the change?

Sharing Christ Can Be Painful - Do It Anyway! (Ch. 22:22-24)

- Do you have any Christian friends and family who have, based on their own opinion, influenced whether you share the Gospel with a certain group of people or a certain person? Please share.
- Are there people in your life who don't understand why you serve Christ? What are some of the things that they say? How do you stay encouraged to stay the course?
- Some people may NEVER UNDERSTAND what God is doing with you. You may have to WALK ALONE to Follow Jesus, it may cost you friends, relationships, promotions, popularity, and more. How much are you willing to sacrifice in order to follow God's will and WALK WITH JESUS ANYWAY?
- This life as a Christ-Follower will test your resolve, it will reveal God's Power in you, and it will show you HIS PURPOSE in all circumstances! Are you willing to be like Paul GOD opportunity to provide for you, even in painful times? What would that look like?
- What if you Share your faith with others, never miss an opportunity, make MUCH of Jesus Christ, pursue Him MORE AND MORE, and LET GOD have His way in your life? What if you SOUGHT OUT GOD'S REAL PURPOSE in your life, and walked in it NO MATTER WHAT? How different would your life be? What do you have to lose?

Now What?

Encouragement: Paul was imprisoned, falsely accused by the Jews, falsely mistaken, beaten, and still wasn't discouraged from sharing the Gospel. Paul had every reason to stop talking, but he didn't let the opportunity to lead people to Christ pass him by. Paul didn't let his circumstances take him off of the assignment of telling others about Jesus, but how easily do

we come up with excuses to not talk about Christ. Let Paul lead you as your example of sharing Jesus, even when it's uncomfortable and painful. Never stop talking about the way God is changing you. If God is working in your life, you have a testimony, and your story is so powerful. Things that would discourage us can be encouragement for the people around us. Let God use you through sharing your story with others because your life has purpose.

Ask: Do you believe that there's purpose in what God allows us to go through? What do you think God's purpose for your life is? What's your assignment? How can God use your pain to grow you? Do you think He can use it? Where do you see God's provision in your life?

Challenge:

There is great power in your testimony. Write a paragraph about your journey from non-believer to Christian. Remember, when sharing your testimony:

1. Make it about Jesus - NOT just about you!
2. Share your past briefly (Don't boast)
3. Share how God draws you to Himself
4. Tell how Jesus changed your life and is still changing you
5. Be honest that it's a journey
6. Invite them to follow Jesus

Share this paragraph with someone who needs to hear it this week.

Closing Prayer

Lord, we thank you for all that You have done. Thank you that we get to use the things we encounter in life to bring glory to Your name. Thank you for giving us Paul's story as an example of how to keep going for Christ, even when it gets hard. As we navigate our way through life's challenges, help us to see Your power and purpose, to see Your goodness in times of pain, and to recognize Your provision. Help us stay strong and to keep walking with

Jesus in times of adversity. We understand that some people may never understand why we do what we do and live the way that we live, but help us to stay the course with Christ anyway. Help us trust that you have a plan and purpose for our lives. Show us the assignment you have on our lives so we can bring You glory. Continue to lead us and use us how You need us. Amen.

Sunday Sermon Review: Week of November 20th, 2022

Sermon Series: The Book of Acts

Sermon: The Good, the Bad, the Ugly (Acts 21:27-36)

Guest Speaker: Pastor Mike Burnette

Icebreaker

- Who's your favorite movie hero?

Discussion Questions

Following Jesus is Hard and Humbling Sometimes (v. 26-27)

- How are you doing with submitting to the leadership (regular and spiritual) in your life? Does it come easy or is it a struggle?
- Share a time where you experienced true humility. What made this experience stick with you?

Following Jesus Doesn't Guarantee Bliss (v. 27-30)

- What's some pain that you've experienced so far in your faith journey? How do you stay the course?
- Why does God let bad things happen? How would you explain the concept of, "Just because you're living for God doesn't mean you won't have pain" to someone?

God is With You, Even in Hard Times (v. 31-36)

- God sent a soldier to protect Paul from the religious mob. He was literally getting beaten for obeying God. In what unusual way has God shown up for you? How has God protected you in difficult times?

Now What?

Encouragement: When life is PAINFUL, RUN TO JESUS, not from him! Lean into your church, don't run away from it! Press into God, to press into more pain or sin. RUN TO GOD! Do NOT GIVE UP ON HIM or HIS CHURCH! God is FOR YOU, more than the pain is against you! We are FOR YOU as His

Church, and even though we aren't perfect, we LOVE YOU and we are FOR YOU! Do NOT ABANDON God or His Church! Do NOT give up on The LORD! Turn to Him! Lean in! Press In!

Ask: Ask the Holy Spirit to help you trust God in the good, the bad, and the ugly. If you're struggling with authority, is it a problem with the leadership or is it your humility? Ask the Holy Spirit to help you walk in humility today.

Challenge:

- Practice humility and being present for people this week by being quick to listen and slow to speak. Don't be tempted to look at your phone while talking to someone or to look off in the distance.
- Pray for God to show up in unusual ways in your life this week.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, life is hard at times—really hard. Help me to remember that whether things are good, bad, or ugly, you are a very present help in times of trouble. Holy Spirit, help me to resist the urge to run from you, and your people, when life gets hard. Grace me instead, to lean into you, and into life-giving community. I surrender my past hurts and authority issues, and ask that you help me to walk in humility, that I may be empowered your grace to live in a way that honors you. These things I ask in Jesus' name, amen!!

Sunday Sermon Review: Week of November 13th, 2022

Sermon Series: The Book of Acts

Sermon: We Win with a Big God! (Acts 21:17-26)

Guest Speaker: Pastor Mike Burnette

Icebreaker

- Who is your sports team? Why do you support them?

Discussion Questions

Celebrate that God is Doing Great Things! (v. 17-20)

- Think of the last time you celebrated something. Who did you tell and why? How did you describe it?
- People love displaying their winning teams with swag, bumper stickers, etc., but how are you displaying your winning God? How do people know you're on Team Jesus?
- It's fun to celebrate a win! Paul had traveled 10,000 miles... by FOOT for these three trips), and his FIRST MOVE was to REPORT HOW BIG OUR GOD IS, to CELEBRATE JESUS and the BIG THINGS God is doing! What do you do first when you return from a journey – celebrate Jesus or turn in receipts?
- We often spend more time spreading negativity instead of positivity. Why do you suppose this is? What do you think we could do to put the focus on celebrating Jesus and the good news of what God is doing instead?
- When was the last time you celebrated something good that God is doing in your life? When was the last time you testified something Jesus did?
- Do you consider yourself a good news person? Does your social media and conversations reflect that?
- When Paul returned, the first thing he did was go to the church and share the good news with the leaders of the church. Is that your first response? Who are the first people you share good news with? Are

you sharing good things or complaining?

- We're coming up on the holidays and many of us haven't seen family or friends since last year. How have the teachings from the sermon or the past year helped prepare you to be more like Paul?

Don't Let the Drama Hold You Back (v. 20-22)

- What is the difference between venting and drama? What are the signs of drama?
- Do you have someone in your life that attracts/engages in drama? What does a conversation with them sound like? How do you feel when the conversation is done? Why do you keep engaging?
- Why is it important to safeguard yourself against drama? What guardrails do you have in place, or need to get into place?
- The zealots for the law were spreading FALSE ACCUSATIONS about Paul's teachings. He never taught ALL THE JEWS to FORSAKE or Reject Moses, or FORSAKE or Abandon the Laws given by Moses. What he said was to keep the laws, but FOLLOW JESUS! Have you ever had someone say something about you that was not true? How did you keep (or could you have kept) the focus on Jesus and avoid the drama?
- People don't like change, and people hear what they want to hear and believe what they want to believe. Dramatic people will twist your words when you challenge their way of life. Describe a time when you experienced this and how you dealt with it. Did you manage to avoid the drama and honor God through it?
- Are you more zealous for the law or a relationship with Jesus?
- What does what you share say about your faith? Do you always give your opinion when others share?

We Can Accommodate, but We Don't Compromise (v. 23-26)

- Have you ever found yourself compromising in your faith, thinking you were accommodating others? Was it for their benefit or was it really for yours? What would it have looked like to accommodate them at that moment?

- Sometimes we must accommodate or OBLIGE people who are in need of extra care or help. Paul was willing to ACCOMMODATE the four men and even walk the journey with them. Describe a situation in your life where a non-believer you know is resisting Jesus. How could you do the same for one of your own lost family members or friends without compromising yourself?
- How can you celebrate the wins of Jesus in your life without giving into the drama, when you share with those around you?
- Who is the spiritual authority in your life outside of church service and marriage that keeps you accountable in that you're not compromising your faith in the midst of accommodating others?
- Paul made himself a servant to win others to Christ (1Cor. 9:19-23) When was the last time you humbled yourself to be a servant to Christ?
- In what ways are you willing to accommodate in order to win people to Christ?
- Who in your life was willing to meet you where you were? Who are you willing to meet where they are?
- Do you think Paul could do all that he did based on knowledge of Christianity or do you think he needed a strong relationship with Christ and a love of God? Where are you on your walk? Are you like the elders where you have knowledge, but get caught up in the drama or are you like Paul where his passion for God gives him the strength to do the right thing?

Now What?

Encourage: God is and will always work through you. Don't lose hope and know that you can see God's glory and goodness in any situation, no matter how hard it is. Continue to share the good news with others, despite the drama. Meet people where they're at, but stay firm where you are in your faith and devotion to God. If you face opposition, be patient even if someone doesn't get it yet. Pray for them. Be kind. Show them God's love. Walk with them.

Ask: We live in the light, we lead in truth, we stay on mission with Jesus. Think about a drama issue in your life. How can you react in a way that honors God and doesn't feed into the drama?

Challenge:

- Figure out a way to keep up with all of the good things God does for you or around you this week and find moments to interrupt and share them with others. Pick one good thing to share with your small group at the next meeting.
- For the rest of this week, look for and find situations where Jesus has had a victory in your life. Take the opportunity to share these victories and celebrate Jesus with others in your circle of family and friends. Then, encourage them to do the same.

Closing Prayer

God, thank you for always working through us. Help us and lead us to lead others to you through the good news of the Gospel and the things that you are doing in our lives. We pray that our lives would be a testimony of your goodness and love. Give us the wisdom and discernment to avoid drama. Speak into any conversations or interactions we have that don't glorify the Gospel. Give us the courage to meet people where they are at and stay firm in our faith. We love you, we thank you! In Jesus name, Amen.

Sunday Sermon Review: Week of November 6th, 2022

Sermon Series: The Book of Acts

Sermon: Choose To Follow Holy Spirit When It Is Hard (Acts 21:1-16)

Guest Speaker: Pastor Beau Jensen

Icebreaker

- Tell a joke: Why do they pick the weekend for Daylight Saving Time changes? Because the other days are *weakdays*.

Discussion Questions

God Preps Us for Whatever is Next (v. 1-6)

- Has there been a time where God was preparing you for a certain situation, but you didn't know it at the time? Please share.
- Paul interpreted the Spirit's prophecy of imprisonment and affliction as preparation for where he was being led, not prohibition from the journey he began. Think of something hard you're facing right now. What do you think God is preparing you for? Will you choose to follow His directive, even when it's hard?
- Why do you think it's so hard for us to see obstacles as hindrances instead of God preparing us for what is to come in the next season of our lives?
- Ministry isn't always secular. What is the ministry God has called you to?
- Have you ever worked toward a goal that you really wanted to achieve, only to find midway along the way that it was harder than it seemed at first? Did you press on with your own stubborn will, turn back, or did you pray and ask God what He was preparing you for?
- Sometimes we think we know God's will, only to find Him leading us through a particular path in order to give us training and experience to go a completely different direction. Describe a time when God led you one way, only to turn you around the opposite direction.

Value Input, but Follow the Holy Spirit (v. 7-14)

- Why is it in our nature to avoid what is hard and difficult?
- Who do you seek out when you are thinking about making a major change in your life? Do you get Godly advice or worldly advice? Are you seeking out people who have your best interest in mind?
- Wise people can give bad counsel with the best of intentions. Describe a time in your life when wise counsel was offered but turned out to not be what God had in mind for you.
- When is a time that you followed the Holy Spirit, even though it was the opposite of what friends and family were telling you?
- Wherever you are, the people there are your assignment. How are you adding to their lives?
- Have you ever made the wrong decision and had God turn you back the right way? How can you see now that the outcome, while maybe different, still accomplished the same mission for God?
- What kind of input do you give to others? Do you talk people out of things when they say they are being called to do something outside of their comfort zone? Do you back them up, pray for them, and encourage them?

We Are In This Together (v. 15-16)

- Why is community important? Why is it important when you “choose to follow Holy Spirit when it is hard?”
- Do you have someone with you for encouragement and accountability when things are hard and want to give up? Who in your life do you go to when you want to follow Jesus and it’s hard? How did you find this person or these people?
- Who are your “ride or die” friends? Are they the same friends as your following Jesus friends? Why or why not?
- Paul was fueled by his desire to affect eternity and add value to other people’s lives through Jesus and His Gospel. What are you doing now that affects eternity?

- Have you found community through serving on a Dream Team, hosting a Small Group, or going on a Mission Trip? Describe how that was hard/challenging, yet rewarding at the same time.

Now What?

Encourage: Choosing to follow Jesus can be hard. Deciding to be Spirit-led gets difficult. Paul was warned about the hard times that were ahead, and he was begged to not to go to Jerusalem, but he continued. Because of his trust in the Spirit over his life, he was resolved and determined to continue the journey. The warning didn't fall on deaf ears. Paul listened to the church members telling him not to go and he valued their counsel, but he was unpersuaded. He knew and trusted the assignment, which was to reach the people of Jerusalem. If you trust God with your eternal salvation, trust Him with every part of your life. Make a move, take a leap of faith, and trust The Spirit to lead and empower you.

Ask: Are you trusting the Lord with all of your life or just some of your life? What do you think God is preparing you for right now? Are you stuck in spiritual limbo right now because you're scared or you don't want to be uncomfortable? What kind of input are you receiving from the people in your life: Does it encourage you to move forward in Christ or stay in old ways? Are you adding value to other people's lives? Are you clearly hearing from God, and if you're not, what can you do to change that?

Challenge:

- Paul knew the people are the assignment, not the location. It may be hard for you to share, but let the Holy Spirit guide you. Your mountain may be talking to your neighbor about Jesus, your co-worker, family member, the stranger. Who is God telling you to go talk to today?
- What is the Holy Spirit leading you to do even though it's hard? Is it to pray? Is it to make a commitment to follow Jesus? What is one thing you can do today to start working toward the path God would have for you?

- Take your next step in finding community: Attend church in-person, invite someone to church with you, get baptized, serve on a Dream Team, host your own small group, go on a mission trip, etc. Take a leap of faith and try something new.
- Add value to the people around this week. Give a compliment, write a thank you note, send a friendly text, etc.

Closing Prayer

Lord, thank you for this passage and Paul's example of choosing to be Spirit-led, even when things get tough. Thank you that we don't have to succumb to the pressures of this world, but through the Power that only comes from You, we can keep moving forward. Lord, help us resist the temptation to give up when things get hard. Open our eyes, ears, and hearts to what You're preparing us for next. Help us to be Spirit-led, not people-led. Surround us with people who will give us sincere input, encouragement, and prayer as we choose to follow Your will. Thank you for the power and blessing of community, that we don't have to take things on head first alone. Use us to add value to each other's lives and to support one another as we pursue our individual assignments from You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Sunday Sermon Review: Week of October 30th, 2022

Sermon Series: The Book of Acts

Sermon: We Carry On, Maturing As We Go (Acts 20:17-38)

Guest Speaker: Pastor Mike Burnette

Icebreaker

- What's the weirdest thing you've received or seen in a Halloween basket?

Discussion Questions

Be Invested, Be All In! (v. 17-21)

- If you gave a farewell speech to your family and friends like Paul did, how would you show the audience that you are FULLY INVESTED in your walk with Jesus, in your devotion to Jesus Christ?
- Why do you think Paul mentioned being in tears in his speech? Do you think this is an encouragement?
- What areas are there that you would say you're NOT ALL IN with the Lord? What needs to change for you?
- If Paul was here today what would you want to ask him about being all in?
- Is it more important to share your opinion or be helpful like Paul?
- Do you change the way you share your faith depending on where you are? (at home vs. at work vs. church)

Be Faithful, No Matter What (v. 22-27)

- Paul was so devoted to God and Jesus, he saw the purpose of his life in ministry to be far more important than his own comfort. Imagine being as dedicated to Jesus as Paul was. How would your focus in life change to be more on God and not your self?
- Paul had this attitude in his farewell speech that nothing mattered more than making sure everyone benefits from the Gospel he

preaches! How much more could we all do for Jesus on serve day if we had this attitude? How much more could we do for Jesus EVERY day?

- What would it cost you to put your faith fully on display?
- Are you more focused on the cost of full devotion to God rather than the reward of sharing the gospel and your faith? Do you feel that the cost is heavier than the reward or a burden?
- How are we led by the holy spirit? Can you share a time that you were led by the holy spirit?
- What causes you to shrink back from sharing your faith with others?
- When you share your faith and the gospel with others, do you tell about the fullness of grace and gentleness of Christ?
- Share a time where you knew you were signing up to be uncomfortable, but you knew the holy spirit wanted you to do it.
- What makes Christians not finish the course for Jesus? What are you doing to keep from being fatigued?

Be Carefully Guarded (v. 28-31)

- The pastor's job is to CARE FOR GOD'S PEOPLE, to watch over us, to "oversee" the church, to care for Church as if it's GOD'S HOLY FAMILY! How can you pray for our pastors to care for us well, to look out for us, to pastor us well!
- Think about the influences you allow to speak into your life. How do they affect you in your walk with God?
- Do the people that you allow to speak into your life, meet the litmus test of being a spiritual influence? Do they contend for the gospel or their own agenda?
- How can you help your pastor and other godly leaders care for the flock?
- How are you guarding your heart, guarding your eyes, and being watchful for your home and your family?

- Do you as a Christian leader or spiritual person **CONTEND** for the GOSPEL, for YOUR HEART towards Jesus, for YOUR FAMILY to Know God, Find Freedom, Discover Your Purpose, and to help you Make a Difference? Or, are you pushing your own agenda, shades of truth, seeking more power and control of your life?

Be Mature in Your Faith (v.32-38)

- What if we become the kind of BLESSED GENEROUS person God is calling us to? Part of maturing as followers of Jesus is becoming a GENEROUS PERSON! How are you giving? Are you serving? Are you tithing? Are you just sharing what you have with your neighbor?
- What does it mean to build people up and how do we do that?
- Read Acts 20:32-35. How does Paul instruct us to grow in our faith?
- People wept and grieved that they would not see Paul again. How is this an example for us? What would you need to change so that people would have that response when you depart?
- Why is generosity a sign of maturity in Christ? Based on your own generosity, where is your maturity?

Now What?

Encourage:

We have a model of Christianity that includes big services, and house to house small groups that can help us grow in our faith. Even if it's painful and uncomfortable, we can continue to push forward knowing that the holy spirit will lead us and that God is always with us.

Ask: Are you walking with the Lord the way you want to? Where do you need to go all in? What are some gray areas in your life that are hurting your walk with Christ? What is making your faith shaky?

Challenge:

- Share God with someone this week.

- Look into some women/men devotionals that could help you grow in your devotion with Christ. Consider leading a group with it.
- Show generosity to a stranger.

Closing Prayer

God thank you for your word. Would you give us the discernment to recognize areas in our lives where the wolves are roaming. Help us to mature in our faith and show us how to do that through your word and holy spirit. Help us guard our hearts against unhealthy influences and relationships and to help us say no to those who pull us away from Jesus. Help us to share more boldly with everyone that we interact with day to day and to be known for being a generous and loving people. Thank you Lord for being a good Father. We love you. We thank you. In Jesus name, Amen!

Sunday Sermon Review: Week of October 23rd, 2022

Sermon Series: The Book of Acts

Sermon: STAY AWAKE!! (Acts 20:7-16)

Guest Speaker: Pastor Stephanie Burnette

Icebreaker

- Do you get up as soon as your alarm goes off, or do you hit “Snooze”?

Discussion Questions

Passionate People!! (v. 7)

- What’s one thing you’re truly passionate about? Does your passion to see people match (or even exceed) that?
- Pastor Stephanie challenged us to do five things to grow our hunger for God:
 - Commit to regularly going to church, and to small group
 - Commit to daily spend time reading and studying God’s Word
 - Be passionate about hearing God’s voice
 - Be passionate for worship
 - Be passionate for serving
- Which one of those commitments do you need to grow in?
- Share a time when God used your passion for Him to point someone to Jesus.

Expect the POWER OF GOD! (v. 8-12)

- Share a time when you experienced (or witnessed) God do a miracle. What was the result?
- *“I’d rather have **sleepy people** than **sleepy hearts.**”* – Pastor Skip Heitzig
 - What does this quote mean to you? Do you feel your heart is “sleepy” towards God and His mission?
- Paul had a confident expectation that God would raise Eutychus from the dead. Where do you think this confidence came from? Do you have the same confident expectation that God can do miraculous things?

- How has God used you to comfort someone who experienced a profound tragedy?

Stay Focused! (v. 13-16)

- What's the biggest distraction in your life, and how does it keep you from remaining focused on what God needs you to do?
- What has God already spoken to you, about what He wants you to do? Have you been hitting the "snooze" button, or leaning into obedience?

Now What?

Encourage:

God still does miracles today!! Some are great, and some are small, but He is always at work, in you, and through you. Your passion for God will ignite passion in others, to see Him do miracles today, the greatest of which is seeing people gloriously saved by Jesus!

Ask: Ask the Holy Spirit to re-ignite your passion for God Himself, and His mission. Ask God to fill you with a fresh desire for the things of God, that we STAY AWAKE spiritually, to discern what God is leading us to do.

Challenge: As Pastor Stephanie challenged us in the message:

1. Commit that you are going to attend church and go to small group. Go all in with CHURCH. Let NOTHING get in the way of going to church!
2. Commit that you will spend daily time reading and studying God's Word.
3. Be passionate about hearing God's voice. - to hear from Him and to talk to him in prayer!
4. Be passionate for Worship!

5. Be passionate about Serving! We have **Serve Day** coming up on NOV 5th! Find a way to bless someone in our city and register your project on our website under Next Steps, Events and Serve day!

Closing Prayer

God, you are an awesome God! You still do miracles today; I've seen them for myself! Holy Spirit, re-ignite my passion for you, and for your mission—to see people saved, set free, and walking in the purpose you have for them. Forgive me for hitting the “snooze” when you've asked me to step out in faith. Stir up my passion for you as I recommit to being consistent in gathering with other believers, reading your word, spending time with you in prayer, communing with you in worship, and serving others for your glory. All these things we ask in Jesus' name, Amen!!

Sunday Sermon Review: Week of October 16th, 2022

Sermon Series: The Book of Acts

Sermon: A Growing Church in Times of Opposition (Acts 19:21-20:6)

Guest Speaker: Pastor Mike Burnette

Icebreaker

- What was your reaction when you heard the Vols beat Alabama this weekend? Be nice. Remember, small groups are NOT a place of division.

Discussion Questions

God Changes Lives, and Not Everyone is Excited about It (v. 19:21-29)

- What did your friends and family say when you were saved? Were they happy, or were they upset that you had chosen this way of life?
- What did you have to walk away from in order to follow Jesus? What was it that being honest before the Lord cost you? How is following Christ more important than the losses you experienced?
- In what ways are you letting go of how you used to do things and are now letting God control what happens in your life? Are you struggling to give up control?
- How do you handle the pushback for being a Christian?
- How have you been focusing on the opposition instead of the good of Jesus?
- Can you identify with Paul when he wanted to jump into the protest? Can you think of a time when a situation would have been handled better if you stayed calm “during the protest”? Please share.
- What are your idols? Idols are anything that gets between you and God? People will fight for their idols. What are you fighting for?
- What the world would be like if those in power (politicians, industry leaders, etc.) were to submit to Jesus and abandon their current path of pursuing the things (idols) that are not of God? What would those

people do in order to keep their lives that are financed by these powerful people from changing?

Don't Chase the Drama (v. 19:28-41)

- In Acts 19:30, Paul was cautioned not to engage and not to jump in the middle of the drama of the city. How can you be like Paul and keep from being sucked into the drama of our world? What do you gain by not being a part of the drama?
- Have you noticed the lack of clarity in everything around us today? Did you know you can't fix this drama? So, how do you stay away from this confusion and stay focused on Jesus?
- What are you confused about? Is there anything in your life or happening around you that you need God to bring clarity to?
- How is the crowd described in Acts 19:33-34 any different from the "mob mentality" we've all seen on the news for the last several years?
- Think about a current situation in your life that you're handling. Are you chasing drama or Jesus to fix it? How do you know?
- Notice, a city official was able to come forward in Acts 19:39-41 and use wisdom and calm persuasion to calm down the drama. How are you praying for those who lead in our own local government?
- Are you praying for ALL people, even those you don't agree with, as Paul directed in 1 Timothy 2:1-3? How could you pray for someone in leadership that you don't like or agree with today?
- What is the value of praying for our city officials and other government leaders?

Belong, Be Encouraged & Stay Committed (v. 20:1-6)

- Paul had a crew that gave him wise caution and counsel during the uproar in the city. How does your "crew" advise you to deal with drama? Do they tell you to stand down or get involved? Is this the best advice?
- How do you stay encouraged while dealing with opposition?
- Staying focused on Jesus and out of the drama is easier when done

with other Christians. How can you set aside more time in your personal life to spend with fellow believers and Jesus in your life?

- What can YOU do to change the minds of those who disagree with you? This is a trick question, because you can do nothing. Only Jesus can change them. So, how can you pray for them, so that they might find and follow Jesus?
- How do you feel about the reality that there are groups of people who absolutely resist the Gospel and will resist you because you're Christian?
- What would it look like for you to hit "pause" and pray about how God can work in a situation, instead of running to social media, gossip, or confrontation? Do you already do this? If so, share how it's changed the way you deal with opposition.
- What do you need to do to make sure that you "don't lose your soul trying to chase the drama of our broken world?" Do you need a break from watching the news or from social media? Switch the music you listen to?
- Despite the growing opposition, Paul continued to let the Spirit lead him to new cities to gather and encourage other believers. How are you being an encouragement to others? How are you helping other believers stay focused on Jesus? Or, how can you start?

Now What?

Encourage: Pastor Mike shared the quote, "Anytime your change costs someone else their comfort, that becomes a problem." As Christians, we love hearing about life change, and we celebrate growth in the church; however, we have to remember that not everyone gets excited about the Gospel. As the Church continues to grow, expect opposition from those who don't yet get it. Opposition will try to sway you from faith and make you conform to the ways of the world, but we have to stand firm in following Jesus, no matter the cost. Don't let drama and confusion shake your focus on Christ. If there's confusion, then do as Paul's friends told him - Don't go there. We all need friends like Paul's - people that keep us safe and give us

wise advice and encouragement in times of chaos. Commit to belonging to the Body of Christ, stay encouraged, and keep sharing the truth.

Ask: What can you start doing this week to handle opposition better? What idols do you need to let fall, in your life, so that you can follow Jesus with your whole life? Is there an area in your life where you've been giving into confusion and drama? Is there something that God's put on your heart to do, but you've ignored it because you're not yet ready for that change?

Challenge: As Pastor Mike challenged us in the message:

1. Have you steered away from something God asked you to do because you worried about what the world might think? Remember, not everyone cares about what God is doing in your life. Follow Jesus anyway!
2. Do not get sucked into the drama of our culture and our crazy world. Clean up your social media. Stay focused on Jesus, and pray for those who lead in our messed up world. Keep sharing the Gospel! Colossians 3:15 says, "And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as a members of one body you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful."
3. Belong to the Church. Belong to other believers. Be an encourager and encourage others. Hebrews 10:24 says, "Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works." When we come to Jesus Christ, we don't only become connected to Him, we are also connected to each other. We are connected to other Christians who have put their faith and trust in Him, and we need each other and the accountability this brings. Recommit to small group if you've been missing, or ask Him to lead you to a group where Christ is preached and taught, and where people are seeking to live for Him. Not only can you find peace and friendship, but small groups will provide you with the spiritual nourishment for your soul we ALL need.

Closing Prayer

Lord, we thank you for this passage and the guidance it provides us on how to live in a world that opposes the growth of the Church. Lord, we know and see that You're working, but we also know that not everyone celebrates the life change that You bring. Help us stay strong, bold, and wise in the face of opposition. Give us the power to walk away from any idols that stand in the way of pursuing Jesus. Help us resist the world's drama and confusion by staying focused and centered on the Gospel. You bring peace, clarity, and truth, and help us see that anything outside of that is the enemy's strategy to get us off track. And in this world of craziness and confusion, we pray for our leadership. Thank you for their willingness to step into these positions, their hard work, and for the sacrifices they've made to be leaders. Bring them wisdom, guidance, and truth as they continue to lead and be the peace they need to bring order to the chaos. Amen.

Sunday Sermon Review: Week of October 9th, 2022

Sermon Series: The Book of Acts

Sermon: Our God is an Awesome God! (Acts 19:11-20)

Guest Speaker: Pastor Mike Burnette

Icebreaker

- What would a Nashville traffic jam be like if all our horns sounded like the horn on a toddler's tricycle?

Discussion Questions

God Can Do Anything (v. 11-12)

- Do you truly believe that God still does miracles? Do you downplay the existence of miracles?
- Have you ever experienced a miracle in which God used you? How did you feel after it?
- If you haven't experienced God using you to do a miracle, do you still have faith that He will use you?
- Have you ever been disappointed when God healed someone, but didn't restore you in the same way? Why did you think he would do it the same way twice, when He didn't always do the same thing twice when He walked the Earth?
- Would you follow and subscribe to God on social media?
- Sometimes God speaks through means that are completely unexpected. Describe a time when God answered your prayer with a miracle that was completely unexpected.

You Can't Fake the Funk! (v.13-16)

- Which do you seek more, the miracle itself or God?
- Are you truly devoted to Jesus and is He the Lord of your life?
- Describe a time when you tried to fake something. How did it turn out?
- Faking it until you make it does not grant you salvation. Are you simply name dropping God to others to fake your relationship with God?

- How can you grow in your authenticity and devotion to God?

God's Power Prevails, and the Gospel Will Win! (v. 17-20)

- What's the cost of following God? Is it worth it to you?
- Read Acts 19: 17-20. The Jews brought their old ways and physical possessions that caused them to sin and threw them in the fire. What physical things do you need to toss in the fire and give up? (i.e. books, movies, video games, etc.)
- They came forward in AWE and REVERENCE for God! They came forward to confess JESUS as Lord, and repent from EVIL WAYS! What would our city be like if everyone in it responded like this? How would they report it in the newspaper, on Fox News, or on CNN?
- If you are begging God for a miracle, make sure it's for HIS kingdom, not for yours. Have you ever asked God for something for selfish reasons? How did He answer you? How did it serve His kingdom?
- Think of something you've been asking God about – something you've earnestly prayed for. What if God is answering you, but you're not listening?

Now What?

Encourage: Remember, God does the miracles and uses us as vessels to carry those miracles through. We are not God, but have access to His throne as His children. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you, ALWAYS. Know and believe that there is power in His name! God does miracles and moves to make His name known. You have access to the power to make His name known! Seek those opportunities every day!

Ask: What is a miracle that you have been wanting to ask God for? Ponder over that question this week and seek God for His view on the topic and listen to what He has to say about it.

Challenge: As Pastor Mike challenged us in the message:

1. Ask for Miracles, but SEEK GOD more!

2. Be HONEST and AUTHENTIC in your devotion to Jesus!

3. Trust God that HIS GOSPEL Still Changes People!

From the Small Groups Team: Listen and worship to the song, Our God is an Awesome God by Rich Mullins

Closing Prayer

God, you are an awesome God! Thank you that you still do miracles and that you are still moving, even when things seem hopeless. Lead us this week as we grow in our devotion with you and that we may seek more opportunities to be vessels for your miracles. May we seek you whole-heartedly and without doubt that you are moving always. If there is any way that we are faking our faith, please reveal it to us this week. Lord we love you, we praise! In Jesus's name, AMEN!

Sunday Sermon Review: Week of October 2nd, 2022

Sermon Series: The Book of Acts

Sermon: The Gospel Changes People, For Real! So Stay Focused on It!
(Acts 19:1-10)

Guest Speaker: Pastor Mike Burnette

Icebreaker

- Salty, sweet, or sour? Why?

Discussion Questions

Clarity in Christ is Very Important! (v. 1-4)

- We all know good people who think the way to Jesus is wanting to DO RIGHT and LIVE RIGHT, but that ISN'T enough to ensure our salvation. Being a fan of Jesus is not the same as following Jesus. How would you show them the way to Jesus?
- What is the difference between believing in God and following God? What about knowing of God versus knowing God?
- Do you crave the Gospel? Why or why not?
- Have you ever had a time when something EXCITED YOU so much, you couldn't help but tell others about it? When was the last time you got really excited about your faith in Jesus? What holds you back?
- Is the Holy Spirit telling you to tell people about God? If not, why not? Are you REALLY listening?
- What's the role of the Holy Spirit in your life? How would you bring clarity to this?
- Do you think that you can have clarity without repentance? Why or why not?

God Really Changes Lives! (v. 5-7)

- Why is it not enough to just know what the Bible says? Why do we need to keep reading it?

- What does it mean for God to change lives? Is it a one-time deal or a process? What do you need to really be transformed?
- Think of a time when you may have hesitated to tell someone about Jesus and the Gospel because you thought it might offend them. What would the Holy Spirit want you to do?
- Do you feel qualified enough to tell people about Jesus? Why or why not?
- These twelve new followers mentioned in Acts IMMEDIATELY responded when the TRUTH of the Gospel was made CLEAR and PLAIN! How can you tell someone today about the Gospel, tell them about JESUS, tell them that GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT wants to LIVE ON THE INSIDE OF THEM so GOD CAN CHANGE THEIR LIVES?
- How does it make you feel knowing that the Holy Spirit desires to dwell in us? What does that tell you about your importance to Him?

Stay Focused, and Don't Waste Time! (v. 8-10)

- Sometimes it's OK to withdraw like Paul did. You will never be able to change some people, so you just have to walk away and leave that to God. Who do you know who "became stubborn and continued in unbelief" and couldn't be convinced of the Gospel? Did God ever change them, or is He still working on them?
- In this passage, we're told not to waste time on stubborn unbelievers? Is that any different from a believer who refuses to repent?
- When do you know when to move on from stubborn people? Even if it's a stubborn person, do you have a willingness to pray and the obedience to move if God calls you to?
- When you're faced with opposition, how do you stay focused and encouraged to keep sharing the truth?
- What would it look like for you to be reasonable and persuasive in leading others to Christ? What's the danger of being offensive or antagonistic about the Gospel?

Now What?

Encourage: As Christ followers, we have the best news, the most powerful story to tell! We get to tell others about the gospel, a story that holds the power to change lives. This is such a great gift, which is why it's so important that we get it right. Our friends, family, coworkers, neighbors need clarity about Christ, and God wants to use us to bring it to them. When we can clearly communicate the importance of truth, God can start working in their hearts. When people understand what God wants to do for them, they will respond, go all in with Christ, and allow God to transform their hearts. And remember, we don't seek clarity to change lives because that's God's job. We seek clarity to share the truth of the gospel, so that when people choose to follow Christ, they have the right story. Not everyone will understand our passion for this, and that's okay. Our job is to plant seeds, help water them as we're called, and God brings their growth.

Ask: When was the last time I got excited about what God's doing around me? How is my passion for Jesus right at this moment? What would reignite my passion for sharing The Word? Is there anything I'm lacking clarity about when it comes to sharing Jesus with others? How can I get better at talking about the Gospel with people?

Challenge: As Pastor Mike challenged us in the message:

Do what you can to stoke the flames of passion for Jesus? What will it take for you to be excited about Jesus again?

Ask God, "Who can I tell about Jesus this week?" Pray for them and pray for your opportunity.

Believe God to show up in a major way and change someone's life!

Refuse to get discouraged and keep telling people about Jesus!

Closing Prayer

Lord, thank you for giving us the best news to share with others. Thank you for the gift of a life giving message in this world. Lord, we're ready to reignite passion for You again. Holy Spirit, come into our hearts and burn inside of us like never before. Give us clarity of the clarity of the Gospel that we need to confidently and boldly speak about Christ to those around us. We don't want to be people that know of You, we want to be people that know You. Use us to speak Your truth so that others can come to know you as well. Help us remember that as long as we just help plant seeds, You'll come and make them grow. Open our eyes and hearts to the person in our lives that desires You and how we can help. Not everyone will understand our passion and what we speak, and we ask that You keep us encouraged to keep going.