

Small Group Study

Our Vision

To know God and enjoy Him forever.

Our Mission

To build a Christian community by making fully devoted disciples of non-religious and nominally religious people



Discussion

Power with Purpose: Veni, Vidi, Vici

Scripture

Have volunteers read the following scriptures:

Acts 28: 11-31

Introduction

As we read this passage of scripture from the end of the book of Acts, we see Paul preaching in every circumstance he finds himself in. What an amazing man that it did not matter what was going on in his life, his first thoughts are always to share the good news of Jesus Christ. Just days after arriving in Rome, Paul calls for the Jewish leaders of the city to begin teaching them. While under house arrest, he proclaims the Kingdom of God and teachings of Jesus to everyone who would visit him while he is under guard.

"And I want you to know, my dear brothers and sisters, that everything that has happened to me here has helped to spread the Good News. For everyone here, including the whole palace guard, knows that I am in chains because of Christ. And because of my imprisonment, most of the believers here have gained confidence and boldly speak God's message without fear." (Philippians 1:12-14). While Paul was under house arrest, he preached not only to the people who would come visit him, but even to the Roman guards to whom he was chained. Every soldier that was chained to him would hear about the Kingdom of God and the message of Jesus Christ. Finally, Paul had run through every guard so that he could say that his imprisonment had actually furthered the cause of the gospel and that the gospel had been spread through the whole imperial guard.

His preaching in these conditions had gone so far that he could end the letter to the Philippians with these words: "And all the rest of God's people send you greetings, too, especially those in Caesar's household." (Philippians 4:22) How did Caesar's household know about those great Christians in Philippi? Paul told that household all about those Christians and the great works that God had done for those people. Thus, Paul told Timothy in his final letter: "Preach the word of God. Be prepared, whether the time is favorable or not." (2 Timothy 4:2).

Paul was unafraid in all circumstances to persist in proclaiming the gospel message. Likewise we should do the same.

Paul had also become a great encourager. Barnabas was known as the son of encouragement, but Paul did a great work of encouraging the leaders of these early churches as well. It is from this house arrest that we believe Paul wrote

Ice Breaker

Use ONE of the questions to help people open up and to focus your meeting. It is very helpful to go around in a circle with the leader going first. (Remember if you have new members or guests you should take time to introduce everyone.)

1. What is one of the nicest things anyone ever said about you?
2. What is one way in which your parents used to discipline you as a child?
3. What is one thing that you were so excited about buying that you caused someone else to buy the same thing?

many letters, including Colossians, Philippians, and Ephesians. Listen to some of Paul's words that Paul gives while under arrest.

Paul does not complain about his circumstances nor suggest that people should be upset. Rather, he wanted the saints to take courage and only gives a small reminder of where he is at the time of the writing. "Therefore I, a prisoner for serving the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of your calling, for you have been called by God." (Ephesians 4:1). "When I think of all this, I, Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus for the benefit of you Gentiles . . ." (Ephesians 3:1). "...give thanks for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." (Ephesians 5:20).

"So it is right that I should feel as I do about all of you, for you have a special place in my heart. You share with me the special favor of God, both in my imprisonment and in defending and confirming the truth of the Good News. God knows how much I love you and long for you with the tender compassion of Christ Jesus. I pray that your love will overflow more and more, and that you will keep on growing in knowledge and understanding." (Philippians 1:7-9).

"How I praise the Lord that you are concerned about me again. I know you have always been concerned for me, but you didn't have the chance to help me. Not that I was ever in need, for I have learned how to be content with whatever I have. I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little. For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength. Even so, you have done well to share with me in my present difficulty." (Philippians 4:10-14).

Do tough times stop us from being an encouragement to others? Paul would acknowledge his condition but turn his attention to the needs of others, encouraging them to be strong in the Lord and never turn away from the truth. We, too, can do all things through Christ who strengthens us. In all circumstances, let us always trust Jesus, share Jesus, and encourage others in the faith.

Questions

1. What can we learn from Paul with regard to proclaiming the truth of the gospel in all circumstances?
2. Often times people are in our lives for only a season and then they move on. This is particularly true for those who live in college towns or military communities. And the reverse is true as well. Sometimes we are in someone's life for a season until WE move on. What can we learn from Paul about the importance of taking advantage of the limited time we may have with a person?
3. Is there anyone who was in your life for a season that you wished you would have invested your time more with? Is there anyone now who God may be leading you to share Christ with or help grow in their christian walk?
4. In this day and age, how can we effectively share the Gospel with those non-christians who come into our lives for a short period of time? What works? What doesn't?
5. How can we be an encouragement to our brothers and sisters in Christ (even in the midst of our own trials and sufferings)? How are *you* best encouraged?
6. God allowed Paul to go to prison to preach the gospel boldly and freely. Paul had over six years of food, shelter and relative freedom to interact with people of influence, write letters, teach people about Jesus, etc. When God allows "trials" in your life, what can you do to honor Him?

God bless,

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