

# *Mt. Lebanon Church*

Adult Sunday School Lesson

8.29.2020

Please look up and read all verses in their entirety. I have only written partial verses.

Make your own notes, write down other scriptures that you run across while studying, write down questions that you may have or comments as well. Allow the Holy Spirit to reveal to you what he would have you to see through the study of Gods word.

Paul Faces His Accusers

## Acts 22: 17 – 29

The word of God teaches us that often times, God often must humble us before he extends his mercy toward us. This humble submission to God is our mark of the true conversion that has taken place within our lives. This submission proves that God has redeemed us for his purpose, and not for our own agenda. This will bring us to times in our lives when God, will command us to follow after his will, and we will protest, due to the fact that we want to do what we feel is our best effective witness. This will often cause an irrational, emotional reaction, not only in our lives, but in the lives of those around us. Pridefulness, blinds humanity from reacting calmly, which in turn, can draw believers into reacting with a worldly emotional response. As we mature in our Christian life, we will, come to the understanding that Gods will for us does not always happen in conjunction with our own will for ourselves. Gods eternal plan is on a larger scale than what most Christians can comprehend. God wants the message of his salvation to go to all nations of the earth, while often times, we are selfishly living for ourselves. So, this prompts us to ask ourself how does God want me to fit into his purpose of salvation.

**Jeremiah 29: 11,....**for I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an unexpected end....

As believers, when hardships arise in our lives, we can always find refuge in the word of God. God's word reminds us, that in the midst of our suffering, God has a plan for us to prosper, and hope for our future. If we seek God in our hearts, we will never be weary, even if we experience suffering in our lives. God plans for us are rooted in his never failing faithfulness towards us. If we are patient and obedient to his word, then we will thrive and prosper spiritually. God's plan of redemption is designed to give all who will believe a future filled with hope. The Lord desires the best for his children and gives unto us the assurance that whatever we have to face, he will see us through it.

**Acts 22: 17 – 21,....**and it came to pass....even while I prayed....I was in a trance....and saw him saying unto me, make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem, for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me....and he said, Lord, they know....and he said unto me, depart, for I will send thee far hence unto the gentiles....

As believers, we do not always understand the trials that we go through in life. What we do know, is that we can trust God even when we cannot trust people. God will always preserve us, and work on us and through us, by his grace, and for his glory. When things do not go as we had hoped, we must still trust in God to use us anyway. We have all had times in our lives when we have tried our own approach in witnessing, and it did not go as we had planned. At that point, all that we can do is to trust in God, that he will use our attempt at witnessing to glorify him. We must remember, that God needs perfect disciples to accomplish his sovereign plan, but he does use those who strive for their perfection in Christ. If we are obedient to God and to his word, the lord will, by his mercy and his grace, encourage us, and give unto us further opportunities to be a witness for him. God knows that we will become discouraged, so through his word he will encourage us, by the promise of his presence and the assurance that he will continue to use us in his work.

**1 Corinthians 9: 22 – 23,....**to the weak, because I am weak, I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you....

Some believers will suffer unnecessary restrictions, because their faith, confidence and obedience are not entirely upon God. This is due to our unwillingness to limit our personal worldly freedom, so that we may win more people to faith in the saving grace of Jesus Christ. In order, to save some, we must be willing to change our own behavior, setting aside our own personal ways, in order, to lead as many as possible to Christ.

**Acts 22: 22 – 28,....**they gave him audience unto his word....and said....away with such a fellow....for it is not fit that he should live....commanded him to be brought....that he should be examined by scourging....they bound him....Paul said....is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned....take heed....for this man is a Roman....art thou a Roman, and he said, yea....Paul said, but I was born free....

As Christians, we must be bold but remain humble in our response to those around us who question our testimony of salvation. It is our humbleness that will win over those who will accuse us according to our faith. We must ask ourselves how often, do we respond in anger and frustration when we feel that we have been wronged. As believers, through obedience to God's word, we will enjoy a wide range of privileges and protections from God. Through salvation, the death penalty has been removed, and we have received a new life in Christ. This means that our citizenship is in heaven, and the world has no power over us. Declaring this to those who claim to be Christians, but who are also still lovers of this world, brings about great hypocrisy and condemnation. So then, we too, must lay our claim to salvation, and began to share with them the gospel of the word of God. We must let them see that our life revolves around Christ and the cross and not from religious, worldly achievements. Remember, if God says it, it will happen.

**Philippians 3: 18 – 20,....**for many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are no enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is their shame, who mind earthly things. For our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the savior, the Lord Jesus Christ....

Many might think that only the sinner that rejects Christ offer of salvation is the enemy of the cross. Sadly, there are also those Christians, that are worldly minded, and choose to engage in a carnal lifestyle, that are living as enemies of the cross as well. As believers, we must be aware that when we go against the will of God and resist the leadership and guidance of the Holy Spirit, we become such enemies. We must not allow anything to hinder our walk of faith and be ready to die to our own desires, and to live for Christ alone, demonstrating a passionate desire to know Christ, and to be found in his mercy and grace, all for the glory of God.

**Acts 22: 29,....**then straightway they departed from him which should have examined him, and the chief captain also was afraid, after he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him....

As we become obedient to the word of God and mature spiritually in him, God will give unto us the power to resist the temptation of the world, and will also give us the courage to rebuke the deception of the wiles of the devil, then he will flee from us. As we display the boldness of our salvation, those around us will begin to become aware of their surroundings, and the destructiveness of the pathway that they are traveling on, realizing that, they themselves are headed toward eternal persecution. God has given unto us a portion of his power and authority for a purpose and a time. This allows us to see that it is more important to be faithful to Christ and the gospel of his word, than to the world, just so we might avoid suffering persecution. Even though our spiritual knowledge is limited, we need to pray for wisdom and understanding from God to help us with our reactions, as we cope with what occurs in the world around us.

**Romans 12: 12,....**and be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God....

Our lives are a reflection of Christ, and our bodies are a living sacrifice to the Lord. How important it is to keep our focus on Christ, and on the heavenly things that are true and honest, just and pure, lovely and wholesome, Godly and of good report. We have the tendency to become like that in which we spend most of our time, and that which has captured our heart. As we turn from the things of this world in willing submission to God, we will then begin to live in his spirit and truth, and in the light of his salvation as an example, to all that we may come in contact with.

Let us pray.

If anyone has any questions, comments or would just like to discuss any of the scriptures, feel free to call, text or email me. Keep praying for each other and all the God lays upon your heart. Hope to see everyone soon. God Bless.

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