

Walking Through the New Testament with Paul the Apostle by His Life and Pen

LESSON NO. 10 - Please read Acts 14:19-28.

- Acts 14:19-22 Then Jews from Antioch and Iconium came there; and having persuaded the multitudes, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing him to be dead.
- However, when the disciples gathered around him, he rose up and went into the city. And the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe.
- And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they **returned to Lystra**, Iconium, and Antioch, **strengthening the souls of the disciples**, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God."

Question: What would compel a man "stoned, thought to be dead" to return to the city and the people who attempted to kill him and, with love in his heart, declare: "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God."

Answer: Paul's eternal worldview and perspective which is the foundation upon which each of us builds all of our decisions.

Theme: Sometimes it is better to start at the **end and work back to the beginning** to get the clearest understanding of why a wise man does the things he does. Paul's end to his earthly race was the reason why he was able to "throw his entire life" into the Lord's work and in the declaration of Jesus' love for mankind.

This was the end of Paul's life:

- 2 Timothy 4:8 **Finally**, there is laid up for me **the crown of righteousness**, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, **will give to me on that Day**, and not to me only but also to **all who have loved His appearing**.

Paul's eternal perspective through which he viewed all circumstances:

- Colossians 3:1-4 If then you were raised with Christ, **seek those things which are above**, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.
- Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ; **it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me**; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, **who loved me and gave Himself for me**.

Question: How does this type of love, which produces this clear eternal perspective, come into the hearts of men and women?

- John 3:3 Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Truth: This new birth which produces a new heart [Ezekiel 36:26] which carries the power to forgive and love those who hate and persecute us.

Walking Through the New Testament with Paul the Apostle by His Life and Pen

- Matthew 5:43-45 “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, **love your enemies, bless those who curse you**, do good to those who hate you, and **pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you**, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

Truth: What actions does our new birth compel us toward? Prayer, praise and the desire that none would die without the love of Jesus Christ in their hearts.

- 1 Timothy 2:1-6 Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.

What does this prayer, praise, intercessions and thanksgiving look like?

- Matthew 6:9(b)14 “. . . pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts [sins], As we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. “For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

How does this power and spirit come to us? By receiving the birth of the Spirit of Christ within us. The same power in Him to love his enemies [Romans 5:10], is now alive in His followers,

- Hebrews 12:1-2 Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the **author and finisher of our faith**, who for **the joy that was set before Him endured the cross**, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.
- Luke 23:33-47 And when they had come to the place called Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left. Then Jesus said, **“Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.”**
- And they divided His garments and cast lots. And the people stood looking on. But even the rulers with them sneered, saying, “He saved others; let Him save Himself if He is the Christ, the chosen of God.”
- The soldiers also mocked Him, coming and offering Him sour wine, and saying, “If You are the King of the Jews, save Yourself.”
- And an inscription also was written over Him in letters of Greek, Latin, and Hebrew:

THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

- Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, “If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us.”

Walking Through the New Testament with Paul the Apostle by His Life and Pen

- But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, “Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong.” Then he said to Jesus, “Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.”
- And Jesus said to him, “Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.”
- Now it was about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. Then the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was torn in two. And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, “**Father, ‘into Your hands I commit My spirit.’**” Having said this, He breathed His last.
- So when the centurion saw what had happened, he glorified God, saying, “**Certainly this was a righteous Man!**”

As we finish this lesson, let’s tie back into our opening theme: **The importance of knowing the end at the beginning.**

Jesus knew the end:

- John 19:28-30 After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, “I thirst!” Now a vessel full of sour wine was sitting there; and they filled a sponge with sour wine, put *it* on hyssop, and put *it* to His mouth. So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “**It is finished!**” And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.
- Hebrews 2:9-10 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone. For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

Paul knew the end:

- Romans 8:18 For I consider that the **sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory** which shall be revealed in us.
- Romans 8:34-39 Who is he who condemns? **It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.** Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: “For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.” Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, **shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

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- 2 Timothy 4:8 **Finally**, there is laid up for me **the crown of righteousness**, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, **will give to me on that Day**, and not to me only but also to **all who have loved His appearing**.

Also like Paul, we can know the end from the beginning of our following Christ:

John clearly explains the **end** for all those who **begin** to trust in Jesus Christ so we also, like Paul, can cast all of our past, present and future upon Jesus Christ.

- 1 John 3:2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be **like Him**, for we shall **see Him** as He is.

May it be said of us when we have ended our earthly race: “He / she loved people as Jesus and Paul loved them and gave their lives for them.”

- John 13:1 Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, **having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.**

May we not be “Sunday only Christians”. May we believe and trust fully in God and His words as we make every attempt to declare the truth about Jesus Christ to a lost and dying world.

May we show Christ-like love in all places and in all circumstances, all of our days **to the end**.

Despite the knowledge that persecution will also come with our faith and proclamation of our love for Jesus Christ, are we so overwhelmed by the love of Jesus Christ, who died for us, that we cannot help but Tell Somebody today about Him?

One way we can tell others the incredible sure hope we have in Jesus Christ is to write down the day and events that led to our salvation just as Paul recorded his own “new-birth” in Acts 9. Please send your Story to us so we may rejoice with you and glorify God’s great work!

We love to receive your questions. Your questions can be sent to write2stm@gmail.com or WasItForMeRom832@gmail.com.

All our love to you in Christ - Jon + Philis