

Acts (Quality: Good, Quiet)

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[0 : 00] The End The End The End

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God bless you.

God bless you.

God bless you.

[3 : 35] God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you.

God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[6 : 04] And at midnight, Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises unto God.

And the prisoners heard them. And at midnight, Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises unto God.

And the prisoners heard them. Amen.

And they gave the Holy Ghost into the ministry. Truly, they are but men. Men of flesh and blood.

And yet the Lord has the full control. He governs them. Directs them in all their goings. Forbids that which is working in their own minds.

[7 : 36] And maketh known his own divine purpose concerning it. Ah, yes. Paul and Silas, when they went forth.

They might indeed at times desire to go to certain places. That the Lord, the Spirit, so turned their desire away.

For he had another purpose concerning them. And his purpose was directed unto one or two characters.

Who he would indeed bring unto their ministry to the knowledge of himself. Strange, mysterious, and extraordinary are the ways that God so useth unto the fulfillment of that wherein his name shall alone have all the glory.

But as we read the context. We are likewise reminded of what a blessing it is if we have a real religion.

[9 : 03] And that that religion which is within us is the very power and the very strength of our life. Yes.

Yes. It isn't theory. It isn't simply carnal reasoning. It is that wherein they had been called to preach the gospel.

And that which was relative to the gospel was indeed to be made known by them as they were found in the Lord's way and in the Lord's will.

If they turned aside unto other things. Or sought after other ways. Then all that would have been found fruitless.

And would have come to nothing. How we may see this. In that wherein there may be set before certain servants of the Lord.

[10 : 07] Places and opportunities. Whereby they might serve him. Or think they might serve him. In that wherein there is a goodly number.

So gathering together within his name. They think that they can accomplish so much. If they might only labor amongst them.

How different is our thinking. To the Lord's fault. In this matter. True. There were the opportunities open to them.

That the Holy Ghost. Forbid them. And they had to go. In that way. Whereby there would not be found a goodly number.

But in that wherein there is one. And another one. Whom the Lord has fought upon. And whom the Lord has so organized in his infinite wisdom.

[11 : 14] The way. Whereby the gospel. And the circumstances. In which that gospel shall be received. By them.

Mark. When the Lord worketh with one of his servants. Then he worketh in the hearts of the hearers. Even as he so calls them to proclaim the gospel.

He is the one. Who opens the heart unto the reception of it. Yes. How we have to learn these humbling lessons.

That all the glory. May be given unto him. But all the blessing. Of a real religion. Not something that we conjure up.

Not something that we simply profess. But that wherein we are directly under. The control. And the government. And the direction.

[12 : 19] Of God. In all these matters. What applies unto the servants of the Lord. Likewise applies unto every member of his church.

That they may indeed under his sovereignty. Have their feet ordered aright. That they may be enabled so to do those things.

Which he serve wills and purposes concerning them. For mark you. If you are a member of the church of God.

Mark when I say it's the church of God. Then you will assuredly not be unfruitful. God has a purpose to work through.

Every member of his church. And he will bring it to pass in his own way. And in his own time. You may feel at times. As though you are utterly useless.

[13 : 20] As though that which is relative unto yourself. Is accomplishing nothing. That the Lord may verily be so working. In a way which you cannot see nor understand.

And yet you are peculiarly realizing. The promptings of the Holy Spirit. Within your heart. Unto certain ends. And you find how the Lord in his wisdom.

So take it that which is relative to the member of his body. His one church. And bring it to pass. That wherein. There shall be.

The flowing out unto those. Who are likewise members of this church. Of those good things. Of which Christ is the head.

The supplier. And the fullness. Yes. Let us seek after the reality of these things. That we may not be slow. That we may not turn around and say.

[14 : 23] Well the Lord has topped up the way. He won't allow me to do this. That or the other. Oh then I'm going to give it all up. And I'm not going to seek. Art. Anymore.

But rather. Let us seek to know the will of God. Let us submit. Unto his authority. For it is not in you.

To accomplish anything. Save as it is. Wrought in you. By the Holy Ghost. Oh I've often thought of that.

How that when they were separating Paul. Barnabas for the ministry. God gave the directive. He sent them.

They went under his authority. They were sent forth by the Holy Ghost. And therefore. Such a ministry.

[15 : 24] Cannot be fruitless. But God shall indeed. Make known through the reality. Of that grace.

And that ability. Which he so giveth unto them. That he is through them and by them. Accomplishing. His own will.

I say that it all conveyed. Within this chapter. If we have eyes to see. And hearts to understand. But it is not only in that wherein.

We may have the reality. Of our true religion. We want it to be. We want it to be intensely practical. If God has wrought anything in us.

It will most suddenly manifest itself. I was going to say. It will manifest itself. In spite of ourselves. It will reveal.

[16 : 25] We are not as it were. Impotent. In that which relates. To what he would so have us to do.

You see. Paul has heard that voice. To go into Macedonia. He assuredly gathered thereby. That this was the will of God.

That he was to preach the word of. Of God unto them. At Philippi. Yes. And may we not have the same assurance.

If the Lord has laid down in his word. That which is well pleasing in his sight. If that has a place within our hearts. Shall we not make it manifest?

Shall we not evidence it. Before our fellow men. Shall they not see. That it is not of us. But that it is by some peculiar.

[17 : 29] And gracious power. That God is so evidencing. These things in and through us. Practical. Yes.

To reduce. And to practice. That which God has taught us. And instructed us in. And for a purpose. That it may be made fruitful.

Unto his church. That his name may be praised. To thereby. And that they may indeed. So bring forth.

To his honor. And to his glory. That wearing their works. Shall indeed profess. And confess. That they are the Lord's.

That they belong. Unto him. And so. Unto our text. We read. Of how. That inconsequence. Of the Lord's leadings.

[18 : 26] Although. For a moment. I cannot. Let it were. Go before myself. In this matter. For I could not help. But meditate.

Upon the fact. Of the wonder of it. Why has he gone. Into Macedonia. Why has he gone.

Into Philippi. Simply. To be confined. To a prison. No. There is something else. That has got to be brought. To pass. Before that.

There is a woman. A woman. Upon whom. The favor of the Lord. Is resting. One in whom. God is going to operate. The great glory.

Of his grace. She is found there. Amongst others. We are not told. That any others. Were affected. But we are told.

[19 : 21] The singling out. The separating. Of this character. And that it was. That having her heart. Opened by God. She might receive.

That which was. Declared unto her. Through the gospel. And put it. Into practice. And here again. We have another character.

All these characters. In what strange places. Are they oft times found. Not in the mass. Not in the crowd. But singly.

And here is one. In the prison house. Upon whom. Upon whom. God's favor. Doth likewise rest. An unlikely character.

And yet one. Who was found. In the covenant. Of grace. And the Lord. Was pleased. To visit him. By sending.

[20 : 20] His servants. Through a scene. Of suffering. And persecution. That they. Under God. Might reach.

Unto that position. Wherein. This character. Might indeed. Be brought. To the knowledge. Of the Lord. Jesus Christ. Well here are these two.

Paul and Silas. I want to note first. What they did not do. Were told. What they did. At midnight.

Paul and Silas. Prayed. And sang praises. Unto God. And the prisoners. Heard them. But what did they. Not do. Do you hear.

Any complaint. Coming from their lips. Do you hear. Any complaint. Of the ill treatment. They have received. Of the magistrates. And of the rough treatment.

[21 : 18] That they have received. Of the jailers. And how. That they have been thrust. Into the inner prison. Deprived of all comforts. You don't find.

Any language like that. Coming out of their lips. What a mercy it is. When you can dwell. In the will. And the purpose of God.

And know. That in and through. These things. God is working. His purpose out. Through you. And unto others. No.

They have no room. To complain. Of their suffering.

Their bleeding backs. That wherein. They have been smitten. With many strikes. The soreness. the acute agony that resulted from it.

[22 : 17] You don't hear anything arising in the way of complaint from them about it, do you? What an example they are unto us. How ready we are to complain when we feel that we have been the subjects of wrong treatment.

Or we rise up against it in a moment. We are ready to make our protest. Yes, but here are they in the prison house and they have not in their hearts or in their mouths any words of complaint to make.

The sufferings may be great. Still, there is no word of regret by reason of the way that they have been led under the Lord's sovereignty in this matter.

When there is the recognition of the Lord at work, when there is the understanding of that wherein God is governing and directing all things, then there is a certain looking for of that wherein God is going to bring good out of it and going to bring a blessing.

Is not this that which so possesses their hearts as they are found in the prison house? You don't find them complaining of the conditions.

[23 : 45] Oh, stark and frugal is all that which is relative unto their surroundings. The darkness encompasses them.

Yes, and doubtless they were, as it was the custom of the Romans, when there were others so in prison, so to have nigh unto them another one to whom they were manacled.

Yes, they have them. Do they complain because of the restrictions that is placed upon them?

Do they complain because of that wherein the condition seems so utterly uncongenial and incompatible with that which is relative to the mission upon which they know that the Lord has sent them?

There is no complaint. You do not find that they adopted a solemn and a morose attitude in the face of them that so surrounded them.

[25 : 00] You don't find a trace of it in that wherein they so dealt eventually with the jailer when he came to them. You certainly don't find it in that wherein they are praying and praising God in the hearing of others.

There is nothing sullen about that, Homer Rose. And yet, when you are tried, when you are brought into that place wherein it is more than flesh and blood seemingly can bear, how apt it is for your old nature to rebel and so to adopt, as it were, that solemn and morose attitude.

Ah, well, you say, it's got to be born, it's got to be put up with, it's got to be endured. It's got to be done.

It's got to be done. But I will say anything. I'll keep my mouth shut. Did they? They prayed aloud, and they praised God aloud in the prison.

No, they did not adopt that attitude. And neither do you find the murmuring of God's leadings and dealings with them. I was going to say how easily they might have given vent in that matter.

[26 : 24] If they had only been allowed to go to that place that otherwise their minds had been set on, then all this would have been avoided. They would have not to have so endured this persecution and imprisonment.

Yes, but you don't find any of that. You only find praises. No, they do not complain of God's dealings with them.

And there's one other thing that I would have you to notice. That they did not cease in their testimony. Do what you like. Where the reality within the heart exists.

There is no quieting it. There is no gagging it. No, there it is, and it must come out.

And there, there are no longer in those conditions and circumstances and sufferings. They still continued in their ministry relative to the work to which the Lord had called them.

[27 : 35] And you might have said, well, how useless. How utterly useless that they should show in this place a prison place with all those, the felons, that are all in their own and in similar circumstances and no, not for the same cause, but all around them are what is the good of bearing testimony unto them.

Well, now we find what they did do. It was at midnight when things are seemingly at the blackest and the darkest.

When the time comes when they seem to be so utterly left alone, maybe all those that are around them are asleep.

The jailer certainly was. But it was only on the earth that he awoke out of his sleep. Yes, but what did they do?

They prayed aloud. They opened their mouths and they made their requests unto God. Ah, it would do some of us good sometimes to hear others pray aloud.

- [29 : 08] Oh, yes, it is not in that wherein they may be fearful of it. We have enough fearfulness in ourselves regarding that solemn act.
- But oh, what a blessed thing when there is the opening of the mouth and that correspondence with God that is not only as it were secret unto the prayer but is also to be heard.
- What did their prayer consist of? I think I am going beyond the mark when I mentioned two things that I am certain that they prayed for.
- The one was that they might be made submissive unto the will of God. Submissive to his will.
- they look back. They mark the footsteps that they have had to tread. They know that this has been all the outcome of God's ordering, of God's directive.
- [30 : 22] And now they are brought here by what is the best thing that they can do. Submit to his will. And in submission to his will they find peace of heart and comfort of soul.
- And secondly, I have no doubt but what they committed themselves wholly and utterly unto the Lord. To do with them as he sought it, they would be compliant unto his gracious will in all its directives, in that purpose for which he had brought them even into this prison house.
- What can we do better? Shall we strive? Shall we agitate? Shall we try, as it were, to the best of our powers to get out of the position in which we have placed?
- Or shall we, as we see and mock that wherein God has been leading, God has directed us to be there in content?
- Let your conversation be without covetousness. Be content with what things ye have, for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.
- [31 : 50] What did they do? We said they prayed alone. Yes. They were not ashamed before others.
- How the very feeling of a fellow man may sometimes stop his mouth when he should be bearing testimony unto the Lord. The fear of man, what a snare it can bring.
- Beware of men is what the word commands us. but oh, to be in a position wherein I can lift up my voice, and lift up my voice that it may be heard, that I'm not as it were keeping this thing to myself, that in my very prayer I may be declaring unto those that are above me, that wherein the Lord has led and directed and has now placed me where I am.
- Yes, it is the voice of testimony. And they prayed for the sake of others, that they might hear what they were so declaring.
- In other words, they were praying as liberated men. They might be fettered with their bonds. They might indeed know that wherein the man of course did indeed eat into their flesh.
- [33 : 32] But after all, what did all this matter? In Christ, in the one who has so directed them, they are freed men in Christ, freed in their souls, freed in their minds, freed in their hearts.
- They are liberated. It seems almost by the language of the text as though there is a joy and a delight in their hearts which nothing could suppress.
- It was there, notwithstanding all that related unto earthly circumstances. Yes, and they would have others so to know it.
- Praying as liberated men, they prayed according to the word of God. Men ought always to pray and not to faint.
- How does that truth go down with you? dost thou receive it as a command from thy Lord and Master? You may have your fainting seasons, but do you not know those times of reviving wherein thy mouth is opened unto the Lord?

[34 : 58] Yes. Continue in prayer. God don't leave it even when the night is darkest, when the gloom is all around you, when the circumstances are all against you, then let thy heart be lifted up in prayer unto thy God.

Yes, and not only praying according to the word of God, but praying in the consciousness of the light that was within them.

God was with them. His presence was there. He was enjoying them. He was sanctifying this to their good and to their own soul's profit, heart, and he intended thereby so to make them to be fruitful in his service.

Oh, there are hard lessons that he teaches his children sometimes. They have to go through much if they are indeed going to abound in the work of the Lord.

And these disciples knew some of that, but all the comfort of his presence the reality of the strength that he was giving them enabled them to open their mouths aloud, not to complain, but to pray unto the Lord.

[36 : 32] Did they pray for the salvation of those that were around them? I know not. And yet in one case, it may have indeed proved very fruitful.

And so we find that which is relative unto the second fact. They sang praises unto God. It was a cause for singing, for singing praises to God, that he had brought them there, that they were in the position that they were.

Was it not that his power and his grace might be made manifest in them? Yes, they lifted up their voices in song, in thanksgiving, for you know, wrote that word, in everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

God was it that Paul and Silas were realizing that wherein they were having a fellowship in his sufferings, that wherein they were knowing more and more of the love of God in that wherein he had brought them and saved them, and now they can lift up their voice and praise him for all that he has done for them.

Yes, they can lift up their voices exultantly, they can rise above all the hardships, everything that is so hurtful unto flesh and blood, they rise above it, their eye is fixed, their heart is fixed, their mind is fixed, it is upon God, and they sang praises unto God, and thereby they glorified God, and in one way in which they glorified God, let us note this, that in glorifying him in this way, in causing the voice of his praise to be heard, they were indeed shedding abroad, speaking abroad, yes, declaring abroad, what, the knowledge of the

[39 : 12] Lord, can you see the picture, see all these other prisoners lying around, they heard them, we're told that, they heard them, they heard their prayers, and they heard their praises, and in that wherein they heard these things, the knowledge of God was being bottled unto them in those prison wars, yes, there is no complaining to any space, there is no limit to that wherein God will so make known his love and his grace, as we see it in one character, given to us, praise, but why did they pray and praise, because the circumstances demanded it, demanded it, here they were, are they faithful servants of the Lord

God, then it shall be seen in their action, in the practical outcome, as they are found, praying and praising God, when I first went to Blackheath, on the occasion of the baptism, they had a sudden, certain words that they sang at the time of the immersion, rendering praise unto God, I told them that I wanted it ordered, I didn't want it to be sung anymore, because of I felt that the direct immersion had an application unto them who were passing through that solemn way, so I told them this, I said in future, we will sing at the time of the immersion, be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life, many came and spake to me, and said how blessed they had been, by reason of the singing at the time of the immersion, faithfulness, whatever may come, whatever may have to be endured, with an eye unto the glorious reward that awaiteth all them that serve the

Lord in faithfulness, well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord, but now let us just briefly notice one or two things in the remaining clause, and the prisoners heard them, so they weren't without an audience, or they might have thought, as I said previously, they could only have gone to this place or that place, they might have had many to attend upon the ministry, but that didn't mean that they were going to have the audience, that doesn't mean that they were going to hear, that doesn't mean that it was going to be effective in their cases, and the Lord has taken them into a prison house, and here, yes, there shall be those testimonies concerning himself, which the prisoners shall hear, the audience, why, what else have they got to listen to, them, there is nothing to distract them, nothing to take their attention off, they're all as it were in the same position and circumstances, yes, they gave audience, unto what was contained in the prayer and the praises of Paul and Silas, the prisoners heard them, them, was it not a preparation for that wherein God was going to bring the earthquake, was it not in that wherein the greatness of God, even as they had heard in the praises which had been rendered, was now evidenced and manifested unto them, yes, the prisoners heard them, and not only, but God was pleased to have witness unto them, unto the truth, of those things which they had heard, of Paul and Silas.

let me show you one very remarkable fact that is put before us in this chapter. The earthquake came, the fetters, they fall off the prisoners.

Every prisoner is free to go as he will, to make his escape, to depart, and yet not one of them did.

[44 : 54] Oh, said Paul, do thyself no harm, for we are all here. How wonderfully the Lord works.

It was a miracle, but marvelous in the eyes of those that were so in the midst of it all. Yes, God witnessed unto them the truth of those things which they had heard and seen.

Is there any fruit coming out of all this? There is one. There is one who under the command of the authorities has seen fit so to put Paul into the inner prison to make sure that he is safe and sound.

And yet the time has come when he is awakened. He too has heard. You may say, but it seems that he was asleep.

He was not asleep all the time, you can warrant that. He had heard much. but when the earth came, when he witnessed the power of God, then he had to call for the light and to come trembling to Paul and Silas asking, what must we do to be saved?

[46 : 34] can you imagine Paul and Silas what they must have felt when this one so came to them with that question?

Has it all been in vain that they have had to suffer these things, that they have had to pass through these waves? no, the Lord has put his seal upon it.

Here it is in the jailer. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. And he believed.

And not only him, but all his house. Wonderful isn't it how the Lord works? Am I useless?

Or is it that I am bound as it were? Is it that there seems to be no opportunity whereby I can witness and testify unto him?

[47 : 42] Let this be an example unto you. Yes, in the darkest times, in the most trying circumstances, God's love, it is found in that wherein you have communion and fellowship with your God, where you can lift up your voice in praise and declare his greatness and his power.

You little know what the effect of that is going to be when others hear you? No, not in the likely characters, but in the most unlikely ones.

And the prisoners, the prisoners heard them. Blessed be God, for that which he has so recorded for a restriction in his word, heart, and may he make us fruitful in all things to do his will, not seeking their own, wherever it may lead us, but in doing his will to realize that wherein he maintains and supports our soul by communion with himself, hence bring forth praise unto his great and glorious name.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

[50 : 47] Thou would go by we at congregate number 735. 735. All our happiness arising, all the life of grace within, when the soul is realizing, conquest over heaven is, Happy moments, having the joy on earth again.

Every morning, Josephine. Happy moments, having the joy on earth again.

Happy moments, having the joy on earth again.

Happy moments, having the joy on earth again.

Happy moments, having the joy on earth again. Happy moments, having the joy on earth again.

[52 : 59] Happy moments, having the joy on earth again. Happy moments, having the joy on earth again. Happy moments, having the joy on earth again.

Happy moments, having the joy on earth again. Happy moments, having the joy on earth again. Happy moments, having the joy on earth again.

Happy moments, having the joy on earth again. All my children, so be free, and be free, and be free, and be free, and be free, and be free.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, the communion and fellowship of God, the Holy Ghost, be with us each, now and evermore.

Amen. Amen.