

# 7 Day Devotional

## Connect City Church

### Day 1 - ENJOY

#### Acts 27:27-44 NIV

[27] On the fourteenth night we were still being driven across the Adriatic Sea, when about midnight the sailors sensed they were approaching land. [28] They took soundings and found that the water was a hundred and twenty feet deep. A short time later they took soundings again and found it was ninety feet deep. [29] Fearing that we would be dashed against the rocks, they dropped four anchors from the stern and prayed for daylight. [30] In an attempt to escape from the ship, the sailors let the lifeboat down into the sea, pretending they were going to lower some anchors from the bow. [31] Then Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, "Unless these men stay with the ship, you cannot be saved." [32] So the soldiers cut the ropes that held the lifeboat and let it drift away. [33] Just before dawn Paul urged them all to eat. "For the last fourteen days," he said, "you have been in constant suspense and have gone without food---you haven't eaten anything. [34] Now I urge you to take some food. You need it to survive. Not one of you will lose a single hair from his head." [35] After he said this, he took some bread and gave thanks to God in front of them all. Then he broke it and began to eat. [36] They were all encouraged and ate some food themselves. [37] Altogether there were 276 of us on board. [38] When they had eaten as much as they wanted, they lightened the ship by throwing the grain into the sea. [39] When daylight came, they did not recognize the land, but they saw a bay with a sandy beach, where they decided to run the ship aground if they could. [40] Cutting loose the anchors, they left them in the sea and at the same time untied the ropes that held the rudders. Then they hoisted the foresail to the wind and made for the beach. [41] But the ship struck a sandbar and ran aground. The bow stuck fast and would not move, and the stern was broken to pieces by the pounding of the surf. [42] The soldiers planned to kill the prisoners to prevent any of them from swimming away and escaping. [43] But the centurion wanted to spare Paul's life and kept them from carrying out their plan. He ordered those who could swim to jump overboard first and get to land. [44] The rest were to get there on planks or on other pieces of the ship. In this way everyone reached land safely.

#### Reflection:

1. As we follow the will of God in our life's journey we must expect His provisions to be ENJOYED not only us but even the people around us .

In today's passage God's message of protection has been released through the apostle Paul telling them that they need to stay on the boat to be saved( vs32) .

Because of God's Divine intervention there was a sudden change of heart of the centurion and his soldiers.

•they followed whatever Paul asked them to do ( vs31)

•they were very receptive to Paul's kindness (vs34)

•they allowed Paul to encourage them (vs36)

•they wanted to see that Paul is ok and let him carry out the plan (vs43)

Our obedience to God's plans will certainly bring good things to our families and even to our enemies .

2. Are you tired of doing good things to people who never acknowledge your faith in God ? What was the implication of this passage in your journey ?

## Day 2 - Prize

### 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 NIV

[24] Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. [25] Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. [26] Therefore I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a boxer beating the air. [27] No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.

#### Reflection:

1. As followers of Jesus we have a mission to preach His Word to this dying world. They can't understand and receive eternal life through faith in Christ unless somebody will declare and explain it to them. Paul shared his principles in this passage as to how to achieve it.

- KNOW your goal first (vs24)
- TRAIN yourself for the goal(vs25)
- FOCUS on the goal only (vs 26)
- COMMIT yourself to reach the goal ( vs27)

Don't ever stop preaching the good news to the people around us specifically to our love ones. We must redeem the time for the days are evil.

2. Are you still inside the race and running or you just stop ? Who are those people around you that you can share the blessings of Jesus ?

## Day 3 - Application

### 1 Corinthians 14:11-25 NIV

[11] If then I do not grasp the meaning of what someone is saying, I am a foreigner to the speaker, and the speaker is a foreigner to me. [12] So it is with you. Since you are eager for gifts of the Spirit, try to excel in those that build up the church. [13] For this reason the one who speaks in a tongue should pray that they may interpret what they say. [14] For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful. [15] So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my understanding; I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my understanding. [16] Otherwise when you are praising God in the Spirit, how can someone else, who is now put in the position of an inquirer, say "Amen" to your thanksgiving, since they do not know what you are saying? [17] You are giving thanks well enough, but no one else is edified. [18] I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you. [19] But in the church I would rather speak five intelligible words to instruct others than ten thousand words in a tongue. [20] Brothers and sisters, stop thinking like children. In regard to evil be infants, but in your thinking be adults. [21] In the Law it is written: "With other tongues and through the lips of foreigners I will speak to this people, but even then they will not listen to me, says the Lord." [22] Tongues, then, are a sign, not for believers but for unbelievers; prophecy, however, is not for unbelievers but for believers. [23] So if the whole church comes together and everyone speaks in tongues, and inquirers or unbelievers come in, will they not say that you are out of your mind? [24] But if an unbeliever or an inquirer comes in while everyone is prophesying, they are convicted of sin and are brought under judgment by all, [25] as the secrets of their hearts are laid bare. So they will fall down and worship God, exclaiming, "God is really among you!"

#### Reflection:

Paul is still explaining to the church at Corinth that having spiritual gifts is good for the Body of Christ but proper APPLICATION of this must be considered specially during the service. He challenged the church on the following :

- Excel in the gifts that build up the church specially to those people who are new and visitors ( vs12)
- Not to replace the preaching of the Word with speaking in tongues (vs19)
- Consider the spirituality of new believers and visitors every time there is a gathering ( vs22)
- How do you use your gift in relation to the church and the people who have not known Jesus yet ?

## Day 4 - Tongues

### 1 Corinthians 14:1-10 NIV

[1] Follow the way of love and eagerly desire gifts of the Spirit, especially prophecy. [2] For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to people but to God. Indeed, no one understands them; they utter mysteries by the Spirit. [3] But the one who prophesies speaks to people for their strengthening, encouraging and comfort. [4] Anyone who speaks in a tongue edifies themselves, but the one who prophesies edifies the church. [5] I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, but I would rather have you prophecy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be edified. [6] Now, brothers and sisters, if I come to you and speak in tongues, what good will I be to you, unless I bring you some revelation or knowledge or prophecy or word of instruction? [7] Even in the case of lifeless things that make sounds, such as the pipe or harp, how will anyone know what tune is being played unless there is a distinction in the notes? [8] Again, if the trumpet does not sound a clear call, who will get ready for battle? [9] So it is with you. Unless you speak intelligible words with your tongue, how will anyone know what you are saying? You will just be speaking into the air. [10] Undoubtedly there are all sorts of languages in the world, yet none of them is without meaning.

#### Reflection:

1. One of the most controversial gifts of the Holy Spirit is speaking in tongues. Some group of Christians believe in this but some doubted if we really need this in our services today . But let see what the Apostle Paul says about this . He said that to speak in tongue is :

- Speaking to God( vs.2)
- Edifies the person speaking it (w/out interpretation vs.4)
- Edifies the church (with interpretation vs5)

But Paul instructed the Corinthians church to prophecy rather than to speak in tongues because many members in the church that time just like to speak in tongues rather than preaching the word of God so that people can understand(vs6) . They regarded it as the "popular gift " and that's the reason why everybody is doing it in to the point of becoming out of order in the church service.

Yet Paul didn't forbid us to speak in tongues ( vs39) in fact he himself spoke in tongues ( vs 18) . What he wants for this gift in relation to church is to be put in order and not replacing the preaching of the Word of God.

2. Have you experienced this gift in your ministry ? What do you think is the significance of this blessing in our service to God ?

## Day 5 - Approaches

### Acts 18:1-8

1] After this, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. [2] There he met a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had ordered all Jews to leave Rome. Paul went to see them, [3] and because he was a tentmaker as they were, he stayed and worked with them. [4] Every Sabbath he reasoned in the synagogue, trying to persuade Jews and Greeks. [5] When Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia, Paul devoted himself exclusively to preaching, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah. [6] But when they opposed Paul and became abusive, he shook out his clothes in protest and said to them, "Your blood be on your own heads! I am innocent of it. From now on I will go to the Gentiles." [7] Then Paul left the synagogue and went next door to the house of Titius Justus, a worshiper of God. [8] Crispus, the synagogue leader, and his entire household believed in the Lord; and many of the Corinthians who heard Paul believed and were baptized.

#### Reflection :

1. Paul was a passionate preacher that in any given opportunities to share the gospel he would right away jump into it. His approaches in reaching out people are the ff

- he build relationship to other people to share the Word ( vs 2)
- he used his skills as tool to establish rapport ( tent making vs3 )
- he grabbed special occasions ( Sabbath ) to Preach about Jesus(vs4)

•he knows when to witness and very discerning when it you need to stop and go to the next group (vs.6)  
- Although sometimes he thought that nothing is happening but in reality the Word that he preached have already touched the lives of others like Crispus, a synagogue leader whose entire family believed and were baptised.

2. What particular group of people that you want to focus this week to share the good news ?

## Day 6 - Commitment

### Acts 21:1-16 NIV

[1] After we had torn ourselves away from them, we put out to sea and sailed straight to Kos. The next day we went to Rhodes and from there to Patara. [2] We found a ship crossing over to Phoenicia, went on board and set sail. [3] After sighting Cyprus and passing to the south of it, we sailed on to Syria. We landed at Tyre, where our ship was to unload its cargo. [4] We sought out the disciples there and stayed with them seven days. Through the Spirit they urged Paul not to go on to Jerusalem. [5] When it was time to leave, we left and continued on our way. All of them, including wives and children, accompanied us out of the city, and there on the beach we knelt to pray. [6] After saying goodbye to each other, we went aboard the ship, and they returned home. [7] We continued our voyage from Tyre and landed at Ptolemais, where we greeted the brothers and sisters and stayed with them for a day. [8] Leaving the next day, we reached Caesarea and stayed at the house of Philip the evangelist, one of the Seven. [9] He had four unmarried daughters who prophesied. [10] After we had been there a number of days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. [11] Coming over to us, he took Paul's belt, tied his own hands and feet with it and said, "The Holy Spirit says, 'In this way the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem will bind the owner of this belt and will hand him over to the Gentiles.' " [12] When we heard this, we and the people there pleaded with Paul not to go up to Jerusalem. [13] Then Paul answered, "Why are you weeping and breaking my heart? I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." [14] When he would not be dissuaded, we gave up and said, "The Lord's will be done." [15] After this, we started on our way up to Jerusalem. [16] Some of the disciples from Caesarea accompanied us and brought us to the home of Mnason, where we were to stay. He was a man from Cyprus and one of the early disciples.

### Reflections :

1. Paul's missionary journey was really very tiring and it takes a genuine COMMITMENT to fulfil the mandate .Imagine how he packed and unpacked his stuff everywhere he went . It's not only the preaching that requires his time and effort but the travel itself . He went to different cities & provinces (vs1-3). To top this all , Paul's commitment to serve manifested when he made a declaration that He was willing to die for Jesus even when there was a threat on his life in Jerusalem that time ( vs13).

- commitment of strength
- commitment of time
- commitment of wealth
- commitment of life

2. How's your commitment to bless the Lord and His church in these areas ? What do you think is the best contribution that you have offered to God?

## Day 7 - True God

### Acts 17:16-34 NIV

[16] While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols. [17] So he reasoned in the synagogue with both Jews and God-fearing Greeks, as well as in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there. [18] A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to debate with him. Some of them asked, "What is this babbler trying to say?" Others remarked, "He seems to be advocating foreign gods." They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection. [19] Then they took him and brought him to a meeting of the Areopagus, where they said to him, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? [20] You are bringing some strange ideas to our ears, and we would like to know what they mean." [21] (All the Athenians and the foreigners who

lived there spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas.) [22] Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: "People of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. [23] For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: to an unknown god. So you are ignorant of the very thing you worship---and this is what I am going to proclaim to you. [24] "The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. [25] And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else. [26] From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. [27] God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us. [28] 'For in him we live and move and have our being.' As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his offspring.' [29] "Therefore since we are God's offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone---an image made by human design and skill. [30] In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. [31] For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead." [32] When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some of them sneered, but others said, "We want to hear you again on this subject." [33] At that, Paul left the Council. [34] Some of the people became followers of Paul and believed. Among them was Dionysius, a member of the Areopagus, also a woman named Damaris, and a number of others.

### **Reflection:**

1. This another Excellent teaching of Paul on identifying the TRUE GOD in the eyes of the Athenians whose life was deeply rooted in worshipping idols (vs16) .

The True God is ...

- The Lord of Heaven and Earth( vs24)
- He does not live in the Temples built by human ( vs 24)
- He is not served by human hands (vs25)
- He gives life and breath and everything (vs25)
- He made all the nations (vs26)
- He appointed everybody's nationality and time of existence (vs26)
- He is not a gold or silver image made by human design and skill (vs29) .

2. Let us not be shy or afraid to share The True God everywhere we go because people have a little understanding about Him yet they are willing to know Him even more. When was the last time you share about the True God with your love ones ?