

WORSHIP

SUGGESTED WORSHIP SONGS:

You are Good, Can't Stop Singing, Jesus Son of God, Whom Shall I Fear, Yet Not I but Through Christ in Me

WELCOME

Who is someone you know that you consider a faithful person? How has this person shown their faithfulness?

WORD

ACTS 28:11-15

¹¹ At the end of three months we set sail on an Alexandrian ship which had wintered at the island, and which had the Twin Brothers for its figurehead. ¹² After we put in at Syracuse, we stayed there for three days. ¹³ From there we sailed around and arrived at Rhegium, and a day later a south wind sprang up, and on the second day we came to Puteoli. ¹⁴ There we found some brethren, and were invited to stay with them for seven days; and thus we came to Rome. ¹⁵ And the brethren, when they heard about us, came from there as far as the Market of Appius and Three Inns to meet us; and when Paul saw them, he thanked God and took courage."

Continue reading until **verse 31**.

We all want to finish well. But walking with Christ today does not guarantee that we will walk with Him tomorrow. In the same way, if we're not walking with God today, we can still make the decision to walk with Him and continue to walk with Him until the very end. In a day and age where people are turning away from their belief in Jesus, where there is a blurring of what is right and wrong, God calls us to be faithful to the end.

TRUST GOD

If we want to be faithful to the end, we need to trust God. When Paul was bitten by a poisonous snake (**Acts 28:3-5**), he did not panic. He knew God called him to witness to Rome (**Acts 23:11** and **Acts 27:24**) and so he trusted that if God says something, He will do it.

A lot of times, we get rattled when we face difficulties. We tend to listen to all sorts of advices and make decisions based on our feelings. **Proverbs 3:5-6** reminds us to trust in the Lord with all our hearts, not to rely on our own understanding, and to acknowledge God in all our ways. Is Jesus part of every decision you make? **To trust God means if He tells you to do something, you obey Him.** To be faithful to the end means to be faithful today. Hold on to the promises of God in the Bible and get to know Him through His Word so you can trust Him more.

JOURNEY TOGETHER

When Paul arrived in Rome (**Acts 28:11-15**), some of the brethren walked a long way to meet him and God used this to encourage Paul after a long and hard journey. If we want to be faithful to the end, we need to **journey together**. **Hebrews 10:24-25** reminds us to not forsake meeting together and to encourage one another. There are two ways to live life today – One asks, "How do I use people and their resources to serve me and my interests?" but the other asks, "How do I give my life and my resources to serve you?" Let us be the latter one

and choose to be an encourager to the people around us, even in little ways. The more we encourage others, the more we will experience joy in our lives.

EXPECT TO STRUGGLE

Paul did nothing wrong nor was he living in sin, yet he encountered difficulties and was in prison (**Acts 28:17-20**). If we are to be faithful to the end, **we need to expect to struggle.**

A lot of our struggles in life may be because of our own doing and the bad choices we make, but there are struggles in life that are not the result of our sin. Following God does not mean we will not experience struggles. But these struggles can make us better – **we can find beauty in them when we respond in a way that honors God.** If we manage and control what is within our circle of control (i.e. our attitude and our response), God will make our influence grow. Our goal is to become more like Christ and we can be encouraged by the fact that we are not alone – Christ Himself has gone through extreme suffering and He is with us as we go through the struggles in life.

WITNESS FAITHFULLY

The Lord opened ministry opportunities to Paul. The Jews everywhere wanted to kill him but those in Rome were open to listen to him. Some were being persuaded but others would not believe (**Acts 28:21-27**).

All of us believe in something. There are so many false teachings around us and if we don't know why we believe what we believe, we can easily be persuaded. Paul was preaching from the book of Isaiah which was written 700 years before Christ walked on the earth. **Isaiah 53:4-7** shows us the accuracy of the description of the Messiah that would come – Jesus Christ. This is just one of the fulfilled prophecies! The Bible is not a fairy tale because it is true. And people need to know the truth.

WORD (cont'd)

If we look at Paul's life, we see his faithfulness and consistency in being a witness. This is because he encountered Jesus Christ. Truth matters and if we want to be faithful to the end, **we should witness faithfully whenever, wherever, in every opportunity we get.**

KEEP YOUR EYES ON JESUS

The last two verses of Acts tell us that Paul stayed two full years in his own rented quarters and was welcoming everyone who came to him, preaching the Gospel unhindered (**Acts 28:30-31**). In prison, he also wrote several epistles which still greatly encourage us today. His imprisonment furthered the cause of Christ (**Philippians 1:12-14**). Paul fought the good fight, he finished the course, he kept the faith, and he kept his eyes on Jesus (**2 Timothy 4:6-8**).

The Book of Acts ends abruptly because the story is not about Paul but about the continuing story of the work of Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit working through ordinary people like us. **Hebrews 12:1-3** says, *"Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ²fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart."*

Will you be faithful to the end?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. What struggles are you going through right now? How will you respond in a way that honors God?
2. Read **Hebrews 12:1-3** again. What do you need to lay aside so that you can finish well? What do you think will help you fix your eyes on Jesus more consistently?
3. What do you see is your part in the continuing story of the work of Jesus from the book of Acts?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Be an encourager! How can you give your life and resources to serve others? Think of ways you can encourage the people in your Pray-Care-Share list. Consider and remember what Christ has done for you and pray for opportunities to witness to them faithfully.

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of Public Servants
- A God-centered Philippines
- Repentance and Salvation

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples
- Elders, Pastors, Leaders, and Families
- Ministries and Churches worldwide

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living
- Salvation of family and friends