

Acts # 86 "Saying Yes When Everyone Else Is Saying No!"

Acts 21:1-16; Acts 9:1-16; Philippians 4:10-13; 2nd Corinthians 11:16-28

And the overarching principle shines through any and all attempts of the kingdom of darkness to hinder the plan of God; That while Paul is in chains behind bars, the Word of God is never shackled.

Although Paul is an inmate, there'll be no restrictions on the Word of God and to the contrary, Paul's writings will increase dramatically with his four prison epistles.

The early church faced an onslaught of persecution which caused it to experience a lot of growth and we don't experience the same degree of persecution today in this country as they did in Paul's day, consequently, we don't see the same rate of growth.

Self-preservation is defined as the instinct to act in your own best interest to protect yourself and ensure your survival.

Instinct is an inherited tendency of an organism to behave in a certain way; usually in reaction to its environment and for the purpose of fulfilling a specific need.

Our Lord never pronounces a judgement without first offering His grace which always precedes His judgement.

Paul, just like his Savior Jesus Christ, would not be dissuaded to visit to such a city as Jerusalem.

Not all believers will suffer for their faith to the extent the apostle Paul did.

But it's obvious that suffering is more likely a normal expectation rather than an exception.

Our joy is not derived from the absence of suffering, it's the result of recognizing that we are in union with Jesus Christ and that is what makes us pleasing in God's sight.

So, we all have a natural desire in our thinking which we saw displayed by the disciples of Jesus Christ in Acts who were helping Paul.

This often-overwhelming desire is for self-preservation at all cost and this inherent inclination causes uninitiated believers, ignorant of biblical truth and therefore lacking God's power, to rationalize that it's impossible for God to want us to suffer.

If there's one thing we learned today; It's that suffering and God's will for us often go hand in hand and we now know that God's will allows us to go through deserved as well as underserved suffering to teach us to trust Him and watch Him work while we relax.

Just like with Jesus, there was no power on earth that would be able to keep Paul from going to Jerusalem to fulfill God's plan.

Only as mature believers can we consistently glorify God by receiving the highest and best that He has prepared for us.

The quality and impact of our lives on earth and our rewards to follow in Heaven depend on our execution of the plan of God today.

We advance spiritually by consistently learning, thinking and applying biblical truth; so, our persistent spiritual growth from biblical truth in our souls expands our capacity for life, for love, for service, for blessings and therefore, for ultimate happiness.

Every Church Age believer is a believer-priest and every believer-priest must be guided by the Word of

God; It must be what the Word says, therefore, the more we know of the Word, the greater our understanding of divine guidance and the greater our chances of doing the will of God.