

NEVER MIND THE GRIND!
Acts 21:7-14

Woodland Park Church of Christ

25 August 2019

READY FACTS FOR CHRISTIANS

- **Acts 11:26** – *The disciples were first called Christians at _____.*
 - **Antioch**
- **Acts 20:7** – When the disciples came together to break bread?
 - **Upon the first day of the week**
- **Acts 5:28-29** – After being threatened and commanded not to teach in the name of Jesus, Peter and the other apostles answered, “*We ought to _____*”
 - **Obey God rather than man**

- **Acts 20:28** – After Paul called the Ephesian elders to Miletus, he exhorted them to take heed to themselves and to all the flock, among which _____.
- **The Holy Spirit has made you overseers**
- **Acts 17:30** – Truly these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now _____.
- **Commands man everywhere to repent**

PRELIMINARY THOUGHTS

- We have dreams and aspirations (at least we should) of rising higher, being and doing more, **making a difference**. *Getting in by Standing Out* (Deborah Bedor)
- But between where we stand and where we want to be are times of struggle, discomfort, and difficulty.
- Many times we find ourselves in difficult circumstances and crucibles while moving toward goals.
- **THE GRIND** lies between us and success!
- I've learned that the **the prize is secured during the GRIND and claimed on the day of the event.**

GRIND (defined)

- Dreary, monotonous, or difficult labor, study, or routine. (n.)

Merriam-Webster

- When an individual pushes him/herself to attain a goal. (v.)

Urban Dictionary

After being stoned and left for dead at Lystra, Paul and company traveled 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.”** Acts 14:21-22*

All noble pursuits come with a GRIND and are secured after successfully enduring the GRIND.

Every mission has its GRIND!

- Securing a fulfilling marriage
- Raising well-adjusted, God-fearing children
- Realizing a successful career
- Experiencing good health (wellness and quality of life)
- Enjoying financial security
- Living a Spirit-filled, glorious life (the daily crucible of the cross)

TODAY'S LESSON

- Paul understood his mission and what he was up against.
- Preaching the “Way,” which entailed a hope of salvation to the Gentiles, was not palatable to the Jews.
- From day one following his conversion, he was confronted and opposed by the Jews:
 - Threatened
 - Run out of towns
 - Falsely accused
 - Beaten nearly to death
- **He understood he had to endure THE GRIND to achieve his mission.**

A number of things or occurrences can make our pursuits more arduous and difficult than they would ordinarily be. In other words, there are a number of circumstances that intensify THE GRIND . We will look at three –

- 1. TURBULENCE FROM TEMPESTS OF LIFE**
- 2. LOSS OF EXPECTED SUPPORT**
- 3. OPPOSITION FROM NAYSAYERS AND HATERS**

1. TURBULENCE FROM THE TEMPEST(S)

*When the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained their desire, putting out to sea, they sailed close by Crete. ¹⁴ But not long after, **a tempestuous head wind arose, called Euroclydon.** ¹⁵ So when the ship was caught, and could not head into the wind, we let her drive . . . ²⁰ **Now when neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small tempest beat on us, all hope that we would be saved was finally given up.** Acts 27:13-15, 20*

- Sometimes things get dicey, the going gets tough, and things do not run as smoothly as we want them to.
- The means and mechanisms we are depending on are not working like they are supposed to (experiences with technology).
- Stay the course and don't bail.
- Continue to bear, and don't drop, the cross!

*And as the sailors were seeking to escape from the ship, when they had let down the skiff into the sea, under pretense of putting out anchors from the prow, ³¹ Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, “Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved.”³² Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the skiff and let it fall off. **Acts 27:30-32***

2. Loss of Support

*Now when Paul and his party set sail from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia; and **John, departing from them, returned to Jerusalem.** Acts 13:13*

Sometimes you are depending on someone, or a group of individuals, and yourself having to expend more energy to pick up the slack.

You find yourself having to put more on an already overflowing plate.

But you realize that the mission has to be accomplished.

But notice the PROVIDENCE OF GOD!

*Then he came to Derbe and Lystra. And behold, **a certain disciple was there, named Timothy**, the son of a certain Jewish woman who believed, but his father was Greek. ² **He was well spoken of by the brethren who were at Lystra and Iconium.** ³ **Paul wanted to have him go on with him.** And he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in that region, for they all knew that his father was Greek. ⁴ And as they went through the cities, they delivered to them the decrees to keep, which were determined by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem. ⁵ **So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily.** Acts 16:1-5*

3. OPPOSITION

For we have found this man a plague, a creator of dissension among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes. ⁶ He even tried to profane the temple, and we seized him, and wanted to judge him according to our law. ⁷ But the commander Lysias came by and with great violence took him out of our hands, ⁸ commanding his accusers to come to you. By examining him yourself you may ascertain all these things of which we accuse him.”⁹ And the Jews also assented, maintaining that these things were so. Acts 24:5-9

- You will have your detractors and naysayers any time you are trying to do what's right or improve your circumstances.
- The remaking of you for the better can and often send people into a frenzy.
- **Envy and selfishness** are usual suspects fueling this type reaction.

On the next Sabbath almost the whole city (Pisidia) came together to hear the word of God. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy; and contradicting and blaspheming, they opposed the the things spoken by Paul. Acts 13:41-42

Paul addressing the Jerusalem mob --

*So I said, 'Lord, they know that in every synagogue I imprisoned and beat those who believe on You. ²⁰ And when the blood of Your martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by consenting to his death, and guarding the clothes of those who were killing him.' ²¹ Then He said to me, 'Depart, for **I will send you far from here to the Gentiles.**' "* ²² *And **they listened to him until this word, and then they raised their voices and said, "Away with such a fellow from the earth, for he is not fit to live!"*** Acts 22:19-22

**THE GRIND forces us beyond our
Comfort Zones & moves us closer to
success!**

**The Comfort Zone can be a beautiful
place, but nothing ever grows there.**

Fearlessness

90% of the population

Confidence

Wealth

Just like everyone

Dreams

Certainty

Mediocre Life

Surviving

Excitement

Comfort Zone

Fulfillment

“Getting by”

Fear

Depression

Lifestyle

Prosperity

Settling for less

What if I fail?

Security

The Sky Is The
Limit

Average

Financial Freedom

Avoid the “THE GOLDBLOCKS SYNDROME”

Unless things are ideal and just to our liking, we cannot experience contentment and joy or fully appreciate God’s blessings!



ENDURANCE IS ULTIMATELY REWARDED

- Nothing like finishing a winding, challenging, and arduous course successfully!
- **THE GRIND** is real, but so are rewards --
 - Children carrying out legacies and taking the baton to new heights and distances.
 - Making a difference in and investing in the lives of others who carry out and fulfill dreams.
 - Hearing the Master say, **“WELL DONE!”**

Lord's Invitation Extended to All

- **Be added to the Lord's body**

Hear the gospel (Acts 15:7)

Believe the gospel (Acts 8:37,15:7)

Repent of sins (Acts 2:38)

Confess Christ (Acts 8:37)

Be baptized for the remission of sin (Acts 2:38).

Lord's Invitation (cont'd)

- Be reconciled unto the Lord (**I John 1:8-9**); or
- Desire prayer. (**James 5:16**).