

## FBC Sebring Wednesday Prayer Meeting – Pastor Matt Crawford

May 11, 2016

### Prayer in the Book of Acts (Part 16)

Acts 26:19-29 [Background: Paul's defense and testimony before Festus, Agrippa, Bernice]

19 *"Therefore, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, 20 but declared first to those in Damascus, then in Jerusalem and throughout all the region of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds in keeping with their repentance.*

21 *For this reason the Jews seized me in the temple and tried to kill me.*

22 *To this day I have had the help that comes from God, and so I stand here testifying both to small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would come to pass:*

23 *that the Christ must suffer and that, by being the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to our people and to the Gentiles."*

24 *And as he was saying these things in his defense, Festus said with a loud voice, "Paul, you are out of your mind; your great learning is driving you out of your mind."*

25 *But Paul said, "I am not out of my mind, most excellent Festus, but I am speaking true and rational words.*

26 *For the king knows about these things, and to him I speak boldly. For I am persuaded that none of these things has escaped his notice, for this has not been done in a corner.*

27 *King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you believe."*

28 *And Agrippa said to Paul, "In a short time would you persuade me to be a Christian?"*

29 *And Paul said, "Whether short or long, I would to God that not only you but also all who hear me this day might become such as I am—except for these chains."*

Prayer points:

- 1) Pray that we would be obedient to God's call to speak the gospel (as Paul was in verses 19-20), regardless of the earthly risk or cost.
- 2) Praise God that the "light" of the gospel has come to Jews *and* Gentiles through Jesus' resurrection (verse 23)!
- 3) Pray for boldness in speaking the gospel and lovingly pressing for people to repent and believe in Jesus (verse 27).
- 4) Pray that unbelievers would *know* that we love them as we express the gospel to them (verse 29), rather than resisting it or seeing it as something bad.

Acts 27:21–38 [Background: Paul's journey by ship to Rome]

21 *Since they had been without food for a long time, Paul stood up among them and said, "Men, you should have listened to me and not have set sail from Crete and incurred this injury and loss.*

22 *Yet now I urge you to take heart, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship.*

23 For this very night there stood before me an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I worship,  
24 and he said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must stand before Caesar. And behold, God has granted you all those who sail with you.'  
25 So take heart, men, for I have faith in God that it will be exactly as I have been told.  
26 But we must run aground on some island."  
27 When the fourteenth night had come, as we were being driven across the Adriatic Sea, about midnight the sailors suspected that they were nearing land.  
28 So they took a sounding and found twenty fathoms. A little farther on they took a sounding again and found fifteen fathoms.  
29 And fearing that we might run on the rocks, they let down four anchors from the stern and prayed for day to come.  
30 And as the sailors were seeking to escape from the ship, and had lowered the ship's boat into the sea under pretense of laying out anchors from the bow,  
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 ship's boat and let it go.  
33 As day was about to dawn, Paul urged them all to take some food, saying, "Today is the fourteenth day that you have continued in suspense and without food, having taken nothing.  
34 Therefore I urge you to take some food. For it will give you strength, for not a hair is to perish from the head of any of you."  
35 And when he had said these things, he took bread, and giving thanks to God in the presence of all he broke it and began to eat.  
36 Then they all were encouraged and ate some food themselves.  
37 (We were in all 276 persons in the ship.)  
38 And when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship, throwing out the wheat into the sea.

Prayer points:

- 1) Pray that our community would genuinely be blessed by our church, as these soldiers and sailors were blessed and encouraged by Paul.
- 2) Pray that we would have faith like Paul did, even as we are still in the midst of our own storms of life. And pray that God would use this faith as a witness to unbelievers around us, as happened in this passage.
- 3) Thank God that He even uses the prayers of unbelievers (ex: Cornelius in Acts 10:2; Lydia in Acts 16:13-14) to draw them to Himself (verse 29). Pray that He would do so in the lives of unbelievers you know.
- 4) Thank God for His daily provision for you (verse 35; Matthew 6:11).