

Seize the Opportunities

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Do you know what tomorrow will bring? I do not. I know what I have planned for tomorrow, but as I have learned this year, you truly do not know what tomorrow may bring.
 - 1. Quite often, people have looked to yesterday saying, "If only I had known what was going to happen today, I would have done such and such yesterday."
 - 2. Quite often, people fail to seize certain opportunities and then they live to regret those missed opportunities.
- B. There is one area where Christians cannot afford to miss opportunities. I am talking about personal evangelism. I am talking about telling others about Jesus Christ.
- C. I came across a story about an evangelist who once ended a revival meeting in Chicago by advising the unbelievers who were present that night to go home and seriously consider the gospel's call to salvation, and then return on the following night prepared to make a decision to turn to Jesus Christ. Tragically, that same night, October 8, 1871, the Chicago fire broke out. Two hundred and fifty people lost their lives in that fire. As the story is told, the evangelist then vowed never to end a service without giving an invitation to accept Christ immediately.
- D. With this lesson, we will see what lessons we can learn about seizing the opportunities to teach the lost the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I. LESSONS FROM PHILIP. (Acts 8:26-39)

- A. When the angel of the Lord told Philip to go, Philip went. (v. 26)
- B. Philip saw a man reading from the prophet Isaiah. He seized the opportunity to ask the man if he understood what he was reading? Philip used that opportunity to teach the man about Jesus Christ. (v. 27-35)
- C. Because of Philip's quick response, the lost man found his way to Jesus Christ. (v. 36-39)
- D. The next time we see someone reading the Bible, let us not be afraid to strike up a conversation.

II. LESSONS FROM AQUILA AND PRISCILLA. (Acts 18:24-26)

- A. Apollos was a religious man teaching the way of the Lord, but he knew only the baptism of John. (v. 24-25)

- B. When Aquila and Priscilla heard Apollos, they seized the opportunity to teach Apollos the way of God more accurately. (v. 26)
- C. The next time we hear someone teaching error or teaching something that is not quite right, let us seize that moment to study with that person. We may be helping another Apollos to know the way more accurately.

III. LESSONS LEARNED FROM PAUL. (Acts 24:24-25; 26:1-29)

- A. In Acts 24, we find Paul being held in custody for his teachings regarding Christ and the Way.
 - 1. Felix and Drusilla heard Paul concerning the faith in Christ. Paul continued to reason with Felix about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come. Paul's teaching was apparently so direct that Felix sent Paul away. (v. 24-25)
 - 2. No matter with whom we are discussing the Bible, we must always teach the Truth. Even if the person may refuse to continue the study, we must teach the Truth.
- B. In Acts 26, Paul had an opportunity to speak with King Agrippa.
 - 1. Paul used his own life as a starting point in teaching King Agrippa about Jesus Christ. (v. 1-23)
 - a. Paul talked about his past persecution of the Church. (v. 9-11)
 - b. Paul told King Agrippa about how the Lord had appeared to him on the road to Damascus. (v. 12-18)
 - c. Paul then explained that his efforts to teach were out of obedience to Jesus Christ. (v. 19-23)
 - 2. Paul asked King Agrippa if he believed the prophets. King Agrippa told Paul that Paul almost persuaded him to be a Christian. (v. 24-29)
- C. Despite Paul's circumstances, he still chose to keep right on teaching the lost. Like Paul, we must persist in teaching the lost.
 - 1. Paul taught Felix about righteousness, self-control, and judgment. All three are great areas we need to be teaching to the lost.
 - 2. Paul used his own life as a starting point for teaching Agrippa about Jesus Christ. For those who are Christians, who better to tell the lost about the saving power of Jesus Christ than one who has been saved?

IV. LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE THESSALONIANS. (I Thessalonians 1:5-10)

- A. In Paul's first letter to the Church of Christ in Thessalonica, Paul commended the

Christians for their efforts in spreading the lost.

1. The Thessalonian Christians had become examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believed. (v. 6-7)
 2. Paul clarifies the area of examples. The Christians in Thessalonica had sounded forth the word. That is, they were engaging in the teaching of the lost, in personal evangelism. (v. 8-10)
- B. Just as the saints in Thessalonica, we too must be sounding forth the word. We must seize each and every opportunity to tell others about Jesus Christ.

CONCLUSION.

- A. Will you learn from the lessons of Philip, Aquila and Priscilla, Paul, and the church in Thessalonica? If you and I will simply follow the examples of faithful Christians, then we will spread the Gospel to the lost.
- B. Let us seize each and every opportunity. An opportunity lost could result in a lost soul. Let us not have that on our consciences. Let us work for the Lord. Let us work for the night is coming when we will be able to work no more.

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