

What a Normal Christian Life Looks Like From the Book of Acts

by Gisela Yohannan

A normal Christian life is one that walks worthy of our calling, speaking like Jesus, acting like Jesus, having power and authority like Jesus, explaining scripture like Jesus, and loving like Jesus.

Duration: 58:37

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, John 13:35, Acts 2:42, Acts 3:1-10, Acts 4:18-20, Ephesians 1:15-16, 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12

Topics: "Book Of Acts"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the incredible love of God for humanity. He highlights the sacrifice of Jesus, who willingly suffered and died on the cross to save mankind. The preacher urges the audience to reflect on the magnitude of their calling as believers, considering the privilege of hearing the gospel while many others have not. He also shares a powerful story of a pastor who carried sick believers on treacherous mountain trails to the hospital, demonstrating the love of Jesus to the whole village. The sermon encourages Christians to live worthy of their calling by being faithful to death and forgiving their enemies, just as Jesus did.

Transcript

I want to read again the Bible verse that we have for this retreat. It's in 2 Thessalonians 1, 11 through 12. Apostle Paul is writing, To this end also we pray for you always, that our God may count you worthy of your calling and fulfill every desire for goodness and the work of faith with power, in order that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now when Paul was writing this, he was away for quite a while already from the Thessalonian church. Paul had founded this church on his second missionary journey. You can read that in Acts 17.

He had to run away from Thessalonica, from the believers in the middle of persecution. He had been preaching three times at the Sabbath and some believed and a lot of the Gentiles believed. And then the Jews that were against him got so jealous, they formed a mob and they got the city in uproar and they were looking for Paul and Silas.

And they couldn't find him, so they dragged Jason who was one of the leaders and they brought him before the city council and Paul and Silas were sent away in the middle of the night to leave that city because it got so dangerous for them. So they escaped with their life and they went on to Berea and Corinth and then to Athens. But now Paul is there in Athens and he is wondering, how are these believers doing there that just got saved and I left them? And he wanted to return but he was not able to return to Thessalonica.

And it was for him like he just had a few newborn children there and they lost their only parent. Now Paul didn't have enough time to teach them everything, he taught them basic things during these few weeks he was there. But he was afraid they may not have been established enough in their faith to stand on their own and to face especially the persecution.

So he was wondering day and night, are the believers still alive there? Or did some of them or all of them abandon their faith? What suffering are they going through right now? Do they have enough of the word of God in their heart that they can grow? Who is leading the church? And then how is the testimony of the church? You know, Paul did not live in a high-tech world like us. You know, he was living in a time when you traveled by ox wagon express. Not pony express but ox wagon express.

Or maybe camels or you had to go by ship which takes weeks to get anywhere or months. Or by walking and communication was word of mouth. Or you send a message with a traveling trader or someone goes on horseback or maybe you had some marathon runner somewhere.

Or you send a letter with someone and you will wait weeks and months for a reply. You know, if he lived in our century, Paul could have instantly checked on these believers. He could have made a cell phone call or had a conference call with all the leaders of the church.

He could have emailed them. He could have gotten on Twitter. Or he could have even disciplined them from afar.

You know, he could have put his messages on CDs and DVDs and sent them there. And he could have helped them to grow. Or he could have hooked up himself to live streaming.

But Paul did have no options like that at all. Now, I got four grandchildren and they are four years old, two of them. And one is three and one is five months old.

They are right now in India, you know, all of them. And I, ten times a day, I look at my phone and I check for pictures and emails and all. And this morning I called my daughter and my little grandson was there and he told me, I miss you.

I said, I miss you too, but I come for Christmas. And he said, I want for Christmas a fishing pole and a butterfly net. I said, Oma will look for one and bring it.

See, I can call and I can Skype and I can send them pictures of myself, which I have done. And from the teddy bears I have in the house and all these things I can do. But Paul could not do any of it.

And so finally, in 1 Thessalonians 3, verse 1, 2 and 5, he talks about when I could endure it no longer. Paul, I imagine day and night, he just couldn't stop thinking about them. So he sends Timothy to go and check how they are doing.

So Timothy goes and then Paul is waiting and waiting and waiting. And after weeks, probably months, Timothy comes back and he comes back with a wonderful report that they are doing well, that they are growing in their faith, that they stand strong. And then Paul is saying in his letter, the second letter that we are reading here, or his first letter, 1 Thessalonians 3, 6 through 8, he was saying when Timothy gave us the report, now we really live.

Now my heart is satisfied that you are doing well. So Paul is sending, after Timothy comes, he sends the first letter out of thankfulness for the good report that Timothy brought. And then he wrote shortly afterwards from Corinth a second letter.

And we are having this prayer, actually, it's a prayer that he's telling the people in Thessalonica what he's praying for them. And this is our scripture verse. He was saying, to this end we pray for you always.

Now I was thinking, these Thessalonian Christians are so blessed, the great apostle Paul is praying for them. And he says, we pray continually for you. I would like for the apostle Paul to pray for me because I know God is hearing him.

You know, he has all these revelations and miracles happens in his ministry, and God answers him. I would like that kind of person to pray for me. But then I thought it's also scary if Paul is praying for you, he may not pray for you what you wish him to pray for you.

He may take a good look at you and then pray for you what you need. So what is Paul praying for them? The first thing he's praying for them that our God may count you worthy of your calling. Have you ever thought about the awesomeness of your calling, of your calling to be a follower of Christ? Consider this.

The God of the universe loved you to that extent that he gave his only son to die in your place. And then that Jesus was willing to suffer the most cruel scorching and crucifixion and death and separation from his father. Think about the awesomeness of your calling.

Perhaps you need to watch the Passion of the Christ, that movie from Mel Gibson, and then look at every detail and tell yourself, he did this for me. He did this for me. Think about the awesomeness of your calling.

We have now over six billion people on earth, and God allowed you to hear the gospel. While half of the world has yet to hear the name of Jesus for the first time. In Asia alone, 80,000 people die every day without ever hearing the gospel.

And then he saved you when you called upon his name. He forgave your sin. He freed you from all bondage.

He made you a new creation. He filled you with his spirit. And he gave you eternal life.

And he made you a child of God. He adopted you into his family. You inherited all of heaven and all of his promises.

He loves you. He cares for you. He answers your prayers.

He protects you. He heals you. He fills you with hope while the rest of the world is falling apart.

If you think about this, out of six billion people, he called you to serve him, to be his witness, and to represent him in this world. How awesome is that? You know, even if you think about all the Christians in

the world, or all the Christians in America, there are probably 10,000 others that are more qualified than I am and you are. Yet he chose you.

And he laid his hand upon your life. Now, he would want us to walk worthy of this awesome calling that he gave us. Now, what does it mean to be counted worthy of his calling? What does God look for? Philippians 1.27 says, Conduct yourself in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ.

Ephesians 4.1 Walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called. And then 1 Thessalonians 2.12 So that you may walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into his kingdom and glory. What he's looking for is that our conduct and our walk in this world will identify us as true followers of Christ.

That is, walking worthy of the gospel and walking worthy of the God that called us. But when we look at the Thessalonians, why did Paul still need to pray for the Thessalonians' worthy walk? They were doing incredibly good. You know, we read about them.

1 Thessalonians 1.3 We read, Constantly bearing in mind your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. And then 1 Thessalonians 6-8 You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit, so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith toward God has gone forth.

They were doing so incredibly good. Why is Paul still praying that they walk worthy of their calling? The reason is this. The average conduct and commitment of a normal Christian in the first century was far above anything we would consider normal today.

Imagine if Paul would walk into our church, into watching our lives and Christianity in North America or in the world today. What would he pray for us? What would he see? He would see that we know so much about God. We can go on Google.

Anything you want to know about God, we know. But we know so very little of him and him alone. We know God so little.

And then we can explain scriptures and teach. Most of you would be having a PhD in knowing about God compared to the rest of the world. But we have so much trouble to become what God's word says.

And then Paul would see that our testimony in the church does not match our private conduct, what we do in our life when we are gone out the church door. And then that suffering, self-denial and picking up the cross is missing from many of our pulpits and from our lives. And then the statistics of Christian marriage, Christian family, all the break up is same or even higher than the numbers in the world out there.

And then the world no longer can identify us as Christians by our life and our lifestyle. That's what the apostle Paul would say and see. And I think he also would pray for us that our God may count us worthy of our calling and that we may walk worthy of our calling.

But, you know, we hardly know how a normal Christian life supposed to look like. We are so used to each other that whatever we do has become so normal. God knew that the 21st century would come.

And so he took some pictures, like with a photograph, and put them in the book of Acts about the Christians, how they lived, how they walked, what they did, what they said. And he did that for us. So we have a picture of how followers of Christ lived worthy of their calling.

So we could learn from them and measure our life by what is normal according to God's word, not what is normal of looking around what everybody else is doing. So this morning we will look what a normal Christian, according to the book of Acts, supposed to look like, how they lived worthy of their calling. Now some of these things or many of these things in the book of Acts we see on the mission field.

Yesterday I told you most of our believers are first-generation Christians. When they come to the Lord, it's almost like you read the book of Acts over again. They don't know what the rest of Christianity is doing, but they have come to know the Jesus of the New Testament.

So when we look in the book of Acts, we find that these followers of Christ that were living worthy of their calling, they received the Lord Jesus as their Savior. They experienced to be forgiven, become a new creation, being filled with the Holy Spirit. And then we see that people recognized that they had been with Jesus.

Let me tell you the story. Peter and John went to the temple and they healed a lame man in the name of Jesus. Afterwards, they preached Jesus and were put in jail.

We read that in Acts 3. And then the rulers and the elders of the Jews, they questioned them. And this is what happened. We read it in Acts 4, 13 and 14.

Now as they observed the confidence of Peter and John and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were marveling and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus. In seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they had nothing to say in reply. What did people observe in these Christians, Peter and John? What did they observe in these Christians that was worthy of their calling? We read there, they spoke like Jesus, they acted like Jesus, they had power like Jesus and authority to heal like Jesus, and they explained scripture like Jesus.

When we first opened our Bible college, our first Bible college in the country of Bangladesh, we needed a cook for our Bible school students. And so a young man applied. He was illiterate, but he knew how to cook.

And so we got him. But he had come to know Jesus, but he didn't know nothing of the Bible. But he was interested to learn more about Jesus.

And so he cooked. And after cooking, he would sit in the back of the class and listen to all the teaching. And then he would cook again, and then he would run and sit back, and he was just listening.

And after one month, he asked the teachers, can I go to a nearby village to share the gospel? And they told him, no, you don't know enough. You need to listen some more. And so every week he would ask, can I go now? Can I go now? Can I go now? And finally, they said, okay, you can go.

So he went to this nearby village. And the villagers were eager to listen to him. He prayed for the sick, and the Lord healed them.

And actually, our illiterate cook planted the first of our churches in the country of Bangladesh. It was not the principal of the Bible school. It was not the teachers that knew everything.

It was this illiterate cook. Why? He spoke like Jesus. He acted like Jesus.

He had the power and authority to heal like Jesus, just like these first Christians. He planted three more churches, and then he attended Bible school. The other students taught him how to read the Bible.

And he's serving the Lord today. And then these Christians, in the book of Acts, they had one distinctive mark, which the whole world could identify them as followers of Christ. Something that people that was standing out in their world.

What was this identifying mark? Jesus was telling us what it is. By this, all men will know that you are my disciples if you have love for one another. John 13, 35.

The mark is the love they had for one another. Paul was writing to the Ephesians 1, 15 and 16. For this reason, I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus, which exists among you, and your love for all the saints, I do not cease giving thanks for you.

Love was absolutely outstanding in these first-generation Christians, the love they had for one another. So what did these people observe in these Christians from the book of Acts? They spoke like Jesus. They acted like Jesus.

They had power and authority like Jesus to heal. They explained scripture like Jesus. And they loved like the Lord Jesus.

One of our students from Nepal, he was working after he graduated in some very remote mountain region. And there were a lot of Buddhist monks that lived there, which severely opposed our believers. And the community didn't accept them either.

So our pastor, Pastor Bahadur, he was praying to God for an opportunity to show God's love to his enemies there. And God answered. He answered in a different way than he thought.

You know, in one year, nine of his believers in the church got severely sick and they needed treatment. But the nearest clinic, the nearest little hospital was four days walk up and down the mountain. So normally what will happen when someone gets sick in these mountains, their relatives, the family will take care of them.

And carry them to the hospital. But these villagers, they're unwilling to help their Christian relatives to get to the hospital. No one in the village wanted to help them.

So this young pastor, what he did, he carried each of his nine believers to the nearest hospital. Now the way they carry, you have to imagine you climb paths and treacherous slopes and trails and there are cliffs, one wrong step and you are dead. And there are no rails.

There is nothing. There are landslides. It's very dangerous.

They take a basket and put the sick person in the basket. And then they have a broad, kind of like a belt like thing that holds the basket. So he would take one believer in a basket and then for four days he will climb over this, climb these mountain trails and it was so dangerous.

During the previous rainy season many people got killed by walking the same path. One wrong step and you are down the cliff and it's over. So when he delivered one, he will go back and get the next one.

Nine times he made that trip. It was very hard on him. No one to help him.

And he was saying, you know, while crossing these dangerous trails with the sick people on my back, I remembered the Lord's pain when he carried the cross for me. Now the whole village was watching. The Buddhist monks were watching.

They saw a live demonstration of the love of Jesus. The whole village was talking about it, how much this pastor loved his people, how much these Christians love each other. Now we look again in the Book of Acts.

What was another thing that we can see from these Christians in the Book of Acts that was worthy of their calling? How did they respond when they were ordered not to speak about Jesus any longer? We read the apostles were arrested while they were preaching in the temple. In Acts 5, 27, 28, we read the high priest questioned them saying, we gave you strict orders not to continue teaching in this name and behold, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching. Now the response, but Peter and the apostles answered and said, we must obey God rather than men, Acts 5, 29.

So what did people observe in these Christians that was worthy of their calling? They spoke like Jesus, they acted like Jesus, they had power to heal like Jesus, they explained scripture like Jesus, they loved like Jesus and they were obedient to God just like Jesus. One of our churches in Myanmar faced severe persecution a few years ago. The villagers had threatened them and they had demolished their church building and finally the village leader gave them an ultimatum, you have to forsake Christ or leave the village forever, you cannot live here anymore.

They were so sure that they would deny Christ if they gave them that option and they told them, we want to be sure that you are serious, you have to sign an agreement of paying homage or worship to the Buddhist monks. Now the villagers suspected that if each Christian, if they are together, maybe they get some strength in numbers or something, so each Christian had to come separate to sign this agreement and they told them, all the others have denied, they have gone back, why you don't do it too? They lied to them but each Christian decided on their own, I will be obedient to the Lord even if all others didn't and after they signed, they found out, after they didn't sign this agreement, they found out all the other Christians didn't either, they were so happy. One among these villagers was a young woman who had already paid a very high price for receiving the Lord and for her obedience to Christ.

After her salvation, her husband gave her the choice, you return to your old faith or you cannot stay my wife, you have to leave. She decided not to give up Jesus and her husband divorced her and chased her out along with her tiny little baby girl. Now, the day of the ultimatum came, all 16 Christians in that village joyfully walked away from their village with just a few belongings on their back.

They left behind their homes, their land, their farm animals, all the possessions they had in order to be obedient to Jesus and among them was this young sister with her little baby girl. For the sake of Jesus, she had now lost everything she had in this world. I will tell you what she said.

She said, my only hope and prayer is that one day my daughter will go to Bible school and graduate and go back as a missionary to her own village where I got chased out and share God's love and his wonderful

grace. And she said, I'm eagerly looking for that day. The marks of a Christian that lives worthy of their calling is obedience to God just like Jesus.

What else can we find? How a normal Christian lived in the first century that was worthy of their calling. We need to look how did they react when they were persecuted, beaten and imprisoned. The apostles, they were flogged before they were released in Acts 540, their reaction.

So they went on their way from the presence of the council rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for his name, Acts 541. Then Paul and Silas, they preached in Philippi. They were also severely beaten with rods and thrown in prison and their feet put in stocks.

You read it in Acts 16, their reaction. But about midnight, Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God and the prisoners were listening to them, Acts 16, 25. So what did people observe in these Christians that was worthy of their calling? They spoke like Jesus.

They acted like Jesus. They had power and authority to hear like Jesus. They explained scripture like Jesus.

They loved like Jesus. They were obedient to God like Jesus and they were willing to suffer like Jesus. One of the little 80-year-old Sunday school girls in one of the villages in India, she gave her life to the Lord and she faithfully attended her Sunday school class every Sunday and she fervently prayed for her grandmother's salvation.

The teachers didn't know each time this little girl returned from Sunday school, her grandmother would beat her up very severely for going to church. But in spite of knowing that she would be punished every Sunday like this, this little girl did not miss one Sunday school class for her to learn about Jesus was worth the suffering she had to endure at home. And because of her prayers and faithfulness, her grandmother received Jesus later on as well.

Now they go together to church. Another mark of a normal Christian that is worthy of their calling. What happened? What did they do? How did they react when they were faced with a death sentence for their faith? We read about Stephen.

He was a deacon in the Jerusalem church. The Bible says he was a man full of faith in the Holy Spirit. He had an enormous, amazing ministry with a lot of miracles.

He was falsely accused and arrested. During the defense, he could have denied Christ and saved his life, but he didn't do it. Stephen became the first martyr of the church.

You read that in Acts 7. Remember how Jesus died when they nailed him to the cross? He prayed, Father, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing. You read that in Luke 23, verse 33, 34. And then he cried, Jesus cried out with a loud voice and said, Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit.

So let's see how Stephen died. It says in Acts 7, 59 and 60, and they went on stoning Stephen as he called upon the Lord and said, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And falling on his knees, he cried out with a loud voice, Lord, do not hold this sin against them.

And having said this, he fell asleep. Like him, there were thousands of Christians who died for their faith. Since the first century, Christians in many countries faced persecution and martyrdom, and they had

choices to either deny Christ or be cruelly tortured to death.

And they rather chose to be stoned to death, to be crucified, to be beheaded, to be burned alive at the stake or torn apart by wild animals in the circus than to give up their faith for Christ. And church history records how many of them prayed and forgave those who sentenced them to death. If you want to read their stories, read the book, the Fox's Book of Martyrs or some of our GFA publications.

Every year we have martyrs. Every year, some of our brothers and sisters die for the Lord. So what did people observe in these Christians that was worthy of their calling? They spoke like Jesus.

They acted like Jesus. They had power and authority to heal like Jesus. They explained scripture like Jesus.

They loved like Jesus. They were obedient like Jesus. They were willing to suffer like Jesus.

And they were faithful till death like Jesus. And they forgave their enemies like Jesus. In 1999, an Australian missionary, Graham Staines, he worked in a leprosy colony in Orissa, state of India.

And one day, some religious extremists burned them alive. He and his two little sons, they trapped them in a car, set the car aflame. And Graham Staines and his two little boys burned to death.

The news of this martyrdom went around the world. I don't know, some of you may remember it. It was all over TV.

Now at the funeral, there was, world media was there. All the newspapers were there to cover that funeral. After all, it was an Australian missionary.

And his widow, Clarice Staines, was addressing the crowd and the media. And she expressed her sadness for what happened. And then she told them of her love for Jesus.

Who forgave those who crucified him. And then she told the media and everybody that because of Jesus, she forgave those who killed her husband and her two sons. Every newspaper, every TV channel around the globe carried her message.

People were astounded, especially all over India. They were astonished about her willingness to forgive and about her Christian faith. And actually, her forgiveness to her enemies did more for the cause of Christ than decades of preaching.

I remember I was flying in an airplane and there was a non-Christian lady sitting beside me. And she wanted to know something. And I tried to explain the love of Christ to her and Christ's forgiveness.

And then I said, did you see that on the TV? She said, yeah, I saw that. It was easy for me to explain to her because of what Clarice Staines did forgiving her enemies that burned her little babies, her little children and her husband. And then at the funeral, she and her daughter were singing a song together because he lives, I can face tomorrow.

Imagine living worthy of our calling. One of the mark is that we are faithful till death and that we forgive our enemies just like Jesus. So we looked at a list of things that the Bible points out for us to see what a normal Christian that lives worthy of her calling supposed to look like.

So what was the result of those first century Christians living worthy of their calling? We need to remember that the events that are recorded in the book of Acts took place over a period of about 30 years right after Christ's death. The majority of the people that lived during the time of the book of Acts knew Jesus personally or heard about him while he was still alive. Jesus had been so well known everywhere and people remembered very well how he lived, how he conducted his ministry and it was actually very easy for them to compare the life of Jesus with the life of his followers and that's what they did.

They compared how Jesus lived and how his followers lived and you know what they found out? They found out it was identical. Therefore, they could recognize followers of Christ by these things and we will repeat it one more time. They spoke like Jesus.

They acted like Jesus. They had power and authority to hear like Jesus. You can help me.

They explained scriptures like Jesus. They loved like Jesus. They were obedient to God just like Jesus.

They were willing to suffer like Jesus. They were faithful till death like Jesus. They forgave their enemies like Jesus and because of these reasons, they gave these followers of Christ a new name.

Acts 11 26 says, and disciples were first called Christians in Antioch. The name Christian is actually the greatest honor and testimony a follower of Christ can ever have because it speaks of their Christlike character and for living worthy of their calling. Now think about us.

We have a great responsibility to live worthy of this name. We bear this name as well. Paul wrote, only conduct yourself in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ and walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called.

Who we are, how we live, what we do, what we say will either bring honor or dishonor to the name of the Lord. We can say, well, we live in a different century. We live in a fast-paced world.

We live in a century that has very little in common with the first century lifestyle. Our economy, our problems, our temptations, our stress and pressures and expectations, all are so different. But dear sisters, God's word never changed and God's expectation of us to live worthy to his calling never changed.

God still wants us to be followers of Christ in such a way that our conduct and our walk in this world is identical to Jesus. This is what God calls being worthy of our calling. The Thessalonians, they had to live worthy of their calling in their generation and we need to live worthy of our calling in our generation.

Now, when people, now what do you do with this for yourself? Come to the application part. I don't want you to go home and just say, oh, these first century Christians were so great. God is looking at us.

What do we do now is what we learned. So when people observe your life, what will they say? Could they say, by her behavior, I can recognize her as a Christian? Or do they say, if she's a Christian, I don't want to be one. Where does our life fall short? You need to evaluate your Christian life in the light of what you learned from the book of Acts.

You need to find time alone to pray and reflect on the lesson we had this morning. We listed these identifying marks as a follower of Christ. Go through them and look if you can find any of them in your life and kind of cross on where you fall short.

And there may be some that are totally missing. So what do we do to develop the marks of a true Christian that is living worthy of her calling? I would think you need to start out by spending some time in the presence of God and ask him with a very sincere heart to help you to become like the Lord Jesus. This is God's purpose that we take on the image of Christ.

And then you need to invite and permit the Holy Spirit to work in your heart and in your life to accomplish what you ask him, what you pray for. And then you have to be willing for God to train you. How does God train you to be faithful? He will give you opportunities to practice faithfulness.

How does he train you to be obedient to God? He will give you opportunities where you can say no or yes. He will give you opportunities to practice each of these things you fall short in. He's not just dropping it in your heart and say now you are all this.

He gives you opportunities to learn and to practice and to practice some more. So the main thing is that you don't walk off when you find it hard to practice, to be like the Lord Jesus, to speak like him, to act like him, to be faithful like him, to be willing to suffer like him. Don't walk off when God gives you something to practice.

And then think about it. So many times when we see adverse things coming at us, when people maybe talk bad about us, we think the devil is attacking me. It may be so, but you also need to see the hand of God and his purpose behind these circumstances you encounter.

He gives you opportunity to practice. He gives you opportunity to be strong in faith. He gives you opportunity to learn to be obedient.

You know, we have this keep strong and carry on. We need to become strong. We were not falling from heaven strong.

We need to become strong. You know, when you first go to the gym and you want to do 50 pull-ups, you may be able to do 10 and some of us may be able to do five and some of us may be able to do one and some of us can't do even one. How do we get stronger? How do we get stronger? By going every day to the gym and practice and train and do it some more.

How do we become faithful? How do we become obedient like the Lord Jesus? By practicing. So next time you encounter these difficult situations you are in, look at it from a different perspective. Not, oh me, I'm so poor so people are against me.

Say, oh God is giving me an opportunity to become stronger, to become more like the Lord Jesus. See it was different. I see the hand of God.

That wants giving you an opportunity to become more like the Lord Jesus. And dear sisters, don't forget often to think about the awesomeness of your calling. Don't take it lightly and desire in your heart to walk worthy of your calling.

Shall we pray together? Lord Jesus, we want to thank you that you have given us such a clear picture in the book of Acts what it means to walk worthy of our calling as a Christian. Lord, these believers live truly like you live in their generation. Lord, our generation need to see the same picture.

Otherwise, they cannot recognize you in our lives. Lord, we pray that each of us will begin walk worthy of her calling. Lord, that the bold may see you lifted up and you honored through our lives.

We pray this in Jesus' name, amen.

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