

Book of Acts Series - Part 44 | Reactions to the Gospel

by Jim Cymbala

The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding the story of the Bible and its lessons, and how people react to the gospel message.

Duration: 38:56

Scripture: Exodus 3:1-4, 1 Kings 19:4-8, Matthew 20:28, Luke 22:39-46, Acts 1:8, Galatians 3:28, Hebrews 4:12

Topics: "Book Of Acts"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of staying with the story when preaching and understanding the lessons behind the events described in the Bible. The speaker focuses on the message of Paul, the apostle, which is the good news about Jesus. The message highlights that God, the creator of the universe, loved the world and gave his Son, Jesus Christ, because humanity had turned away from God and rebelled against his rules. The speaker encourages the audience to surrender to God and live for Jesus, trusting that God's plans are for their good.

Transcript

Before we look at our passage from the Book of Acts, which we've been doing a study together for months now, let me just say two things about reading the Bible and about preaching from the Bible, which is different for me now because I'm doing a series. What we have here, when you read the Bible and you're in a historical narrative part, not Psalms, not Ephesians, but you're reading like 1st and 2nd Kings, or you're reading Exodus, or you're reading the Gospels, or you're reading Acts, you say to yourself, Jesus lived 33 years. He was in ministry for three years.

All those days, all those hours, why did God inspire the writers to pick out those events? Because imagine just in one day, as busy as he was, all the things that happened to him, all the people he met, all the sermons he preached. We have a minute fragment of it, of Moses, 40 years in the wilderness. What do we have? A couple days what happened.

So when we're reading the Book of Acts, we want to know why did God inspire the writer Luke to put this past, this story, why is it focused on Paul? Why are we hearing about his trials? What's the lesson for us? Just don't read it to say, well, I read my Bible and I know what that says. Now you've got to extrapolate. What does it say to us? Now, when you're preaching and you're not doing a series and you're a pastor,

you are studying, hopefully, and praying and reading in the Bible, outside the Bible, and then you get a sermon one week from the Book of Psalms, and the next week it's from the Book of Hebrews, and then you go all around as God, hopefully, directs you.

But once you commit yourself to a series, and you're going to do this, you don't have to do every verse, but what you have to do is stay with the story, lead the people through the story, and then do what I was just telling you, like, por que, why? Why is this in here? All scripture is inspired and is profitable for us, but what we want to know is, why this stuff about Paul's trials, for example, what's the lesson for us? It must be more than just, this is what happened to the guy. It must be, the Holy Spirit put it in there so that we can learn. What can we learn? We can be encouraged, we can be warned, we can be taught, we can be encouraged, or we can be inspired.

So now, what we're going to do today, we have Paul under the custody of the Roman soldiers, and he's been for a while now. First, there was a governor named Felix, who left him for two years, waiting to decide what to do with him. They actually saved him from being killed by a mob in the temple in Jerusalem.

And now, two years has gone by, and now there's another governor, not Felix, but a guy named Festus. Last week, he called in the Jewish king, albeit under the heel of the Roman Empire. They let them have their kings, but nobody had ultimate authority but the Roman Empire.

So now, you have King Agrippa and Festus listening to Paul and reacting to what Paul said. Now, we're not going to focus so much on what Paul said. We're going to talk about reactions to Christ, reactions to the gospel, because we have three distinct reactions.

Isn't it something like, I've been doing this for years. Someone comes in the building, boom, Sylvia Glover. I told from her testimony, she walked in here so far from God.

She felt the message I preached was just for her. She said in testimony, no one else seemed to be alive in the building but her. Everything was for her.

She came forward, received Christ. Another person in the same meeting walked out maybe halfway through and said, this guy's nuts. This guy's nuts.

I got to get out of here. What is this lifting of hands and singing? And what are they doing? How could that be? Same meeting, same God, same Jesus, same Bible. One person's life is transformed into a tremendous woman of God.

And another person walks out on Smith Street and goes, there's a bunch of crazies in there. So this is, God wants us to learn about that so we don't get false assumptions, false expectations. So we're going to focus on three people who heard Paul and their reactions.

So we're going to start going back to Felix. Let's look at Felix first. After some days, Felix came with his wife, Drusilla, who was Jewish.

He sent for Paul and listened to him as he talked about faith in Christ Jesus. But as Paul went on discussing about goodness, self-control, and the coming day of judgment, Felix was afraid and said, you may leave now. I will call you again when I get the chance.

All right. Now we're going to jump ahead, Paul in front of Festus and King Agrippa. This is where we left off last week.

And so King Agrippa, I did not disobey the vision I had from heaven when Jesus appeared to him. First in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and then in the whole country of Israel and among the Gentiles, I preached that they must repent of their sins, turn to God, and do the things that would show they had repented. It was for this reason that these Jews seized me while I was in the temple and they tried to kill me.

But to this very day, I've been helped by God. And so I stand here giving my witness to all, to small and great alike. God doesn't recognize stature of people.

What I say is the very same thing which the prophets and Moses said was going to happen. In other words, Jesus coming was rooted in the Old Testament. This is not something new.

This was prophesied and promised hundreds of years before that the Messiah must suffer and be the first one to rise from death, to announce the light of salvation to the Jews and to the Gentiles. As Paul defended himself in this way, Festus shouted at him, you are mad, Paul. You're crazy.

Your great learning is driving you mad. King Agrippa, he goes on now to say to King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you do. Agrippa said to Paul, in this short time, do you think you will make me a Christian? Whether a short time or a long time, Paul answered, my prayer to God is that you and all the rest of you who are listening to me today might become what I am, except of course for these chains.

So then we have three people here, Felix, a governor, Festus, a governor, and King Agrippa, a Jewish leader, at the same time that Festus was the governor in Israel. So let's start with the more recent one, Festus and Agrippa, and what do we learn? We have the same speaker in all cases. We have Paul, the apostle.

We have him saying the same message in one way or another, different words. What is the message? The good news about Jesus. Paul's the speaker.

Same guy, giving the same message. What's the message? That God, the creator of the universe, there's only one God who created the heavens and the earth, that God loved the world and gave the world his son, Jesus Christ. Why? Because the world had shied away from God, turned its back on God, and said, no, I don't want God governing me, and I don't want to go by his rules.

Yeah, but his rules will keep you from a lot of trouble. I still don't want to go by his rules. I want to do my own thing.

And that got the world in a lot of trouble. So from God's original attention, you have now people in rebellion against God. And God could have said, oh, you don't want me? I'll wipe you all out, because he has power to do that.

He's a holy God. No, but God so loved the world that he sent his son into the world. So Paul is saying, and this son that he sent was prophesied about.

Micah in the Old Testament said he would be born in Bethlehem. Isaiah said that he would be knocked down, beat down, spit upon, back opened up. He would look, in fact, his visage, his face would hardly look

like a human anymore by the time they got through with him, leading him to the cross of Calvary.

This was all prophesied. So Paul's message to them is all the same. Listen, God loves you whether you're a Jew or a Gentile.

But for you Jews that know the law, look in your own scriptures. We didn't make this stuff up. Look at your own verses.

You have to reject your verses to reject Jesus. He fulfilled those promises. How could somebody say something 600 years before, and then it works out just that way? How could Jesus set that up? He couldn't have.

He loves you, and he wants to forgive you of your sin. He doesn't want to judge you. He doesn't want to hurt you.

There is a final judgment. We saw the reference to that. But that's not why he sent Jesus into the world.

He sent Jesus into the world to save the world, that anybody who would put their faith in him, put your trust in him, give him your life, that word for faith there is like committing yourself to him, depositing your whole life into the hands of Jesus. Anyone who does that will be forgiven of their sins. They'll experience peace and joy that no money, no sex, no drugs, no alcohol can ever give you.

Not high and low, but joy unspeakable and full of glory, no matter what circumstances you're in. And then when you die, come on guys, you all know you're going to die, and you have an instinct that there must be something beyond this. For one of these people, Elsie Larrison with her daughter, who have been helping people and feeding people, she's going to have the same end as Adolf Hitler.

No, everything in us tells us, no, there's going to be something else at the end of that. Otherwise, Paul says in other places, let's eat, drink, and be merry, because tomorrow we die. If there's no judgment, no afterlife, then what are you restraining yourself? Get over on everybody.

Rob everybody. Live like an animal. Animals have no thought of wrong or right.

When a lion attacks a zebra, a young zebra, he doesn't have any compassion like, yo, you're just young, but no, he just, I'm going to eat you. That's it. You're my lunch.

Live like that, Paul says. So he's reasoning, same message, but talking about the good news that Jesus Christ came. That's our message.

That's the good news. Not God, not Lord. Jesus is the name.

The demons do not tremble when you say Yahweh or Jehovah, creator, or holy, holy, holy. That all has its place. The name that gets you in a lot of trouble is Jesus.

How many know what I'm talking about? Say amen. It's Jesus. That was his message.

It was about Jesus. Always be sure about that. Don't tell your friends, oh, believe in the Lord, because Lord to them could mean Hare Krishna, could mean anything.

Say Jesus. Don't tell people, you just, you know, love God and live a good life. That's not the message of the gospel.

It's believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Believe him for what? For what he did on the cross and who he is and what he accomplished for my sins, my filthy sins and your terrible sins. He died for us.

Aren't you happy for that? How many are happy we don't have to pay for our sins because he paid for our sins? Come on, let's say amen to that. That's the good news that we're supposed to preach. Not join my church, not there's something special about the Brooklyn Tabernacle, not you got to be black to be beautiful or white and all of that stuff.

That has nothing at all to do about anything. In fact, in Jesus, there's no more Jew or Gentile. We're all the same.

So Festus, while Paul's defending himself, Festus yells out and goes, you're out of your mind. Stop it. You've been reading too many books.

You're a nut job. In the Greek language there in multiple translations, which I was looking at this week, it goes from you're a lunatic. You're a madman.

You're crazy. The Fulton Street translation, you ain't right. I have that in my library, that translation.

That's a reaction that you can get when you tell people about Jesus. That's why Luke wrote it. Oh, when I was young, I thought if you were anointed and God was with you and you gave the gospel, you know, the Lord is with us, a kind of triumphalism.

Everybody gets converted. No, that didn't happen there. It didn't happen when Jesus was here.

Did you know in John 10, chapter 10, they said that he was crazy. They said he either has a demon or he's lost his mind. That's Jesus, the son of God.

And now we see Paul sharing the good news. And some people, when you do it, tyrant are going to say, you are out of your mind and you don't even let it phase you because God told us that's what some people are going to do. It's the mystery of life.

It's the mystery of salvation. Some hear and believe and others turn and mock and go crazy and say, you're a lunatic. And Paul says, whenever he's accused of that, he goes, wait a minute, wait a minute.

He's polite. He says back, Oh, noble Festus. No, I am not crazy.

I'm just reasoning with you that your conscience tells you there's a wrong and a right. Come on Festus. You don't know the old Testament scriptures like King Agrippa does, but you know, your conscience, animals don't have a conscience.

You can get the most remote tribe in the world. They have a conscience. They see a 10 year old girl being attacked and raped and all of that.

They know that's wrong. They're going to go to defend that girl. Well, who put that there? Animals don't have that.

Animals don't protect other animals. And you know, you're going to die. And why is it so surprising to you that there's life after death? Why are you so bewildered that Jesus rose from the dead? If there's a, if there's a God and he has all power, why cannot he raise someone from the dead? Well, he did it and we

saw him and his disciples saw him.

So what are we saying? That's so crazy to you. They saw him. They saw the nail prints in his hand just because you've never seen that doesn't mean it can't happen.

And they were so sure they saw him. They risked their life to follow him. So person mocking me or person saying I'm crazy.

What is so crazy about that? So Paul noticed this is a lesson for us. Even when they say he's crazy, he doesn't lose it. Sometimes when we as Christians are mocked or ridiculed and someone says, you're out of your mind, you're crazy.

Get out of here. We get tempted to get defensive and we can lash back. Oh yeah.

I'll show you the day of judgment. When you're looking for me, I won't be looking for you. Tell me how hot it is down there in hell.

Send me an email, will you please? No, we shouldn't do that. Paul always stays under control. And he says, oh, noble Festus, I'm not doing that.

Brothers and sisters, here's a lesson for us. You're not going to win anyone to Christ unless you act like a gentleman and a gentle woman. By being impolite and nasty, we're not going to win anyone to Christ.

The only Bible people are going to see this week in Brooklyn for a lot of people is you and me. They're not picking up the Bible. So the only thing they're going to learn about Jesus is you or me.

So if we act ugly, we act nasty. We act self-righteous. We act judgmental.

We act prejudice. We have white prejudice, black prejudice, whatever. We act like that.

That's the Bible. That's the picture they're going to get of Jesus. No, that's the picture they're going to get Jesus.

All they know is Pam. They met Pam Petway. That's all they know.

And how Pam answers and talks and shares about Jesus. That's their Bible. That's the only Bible they will read this week is Pam Petway.

Think of that. They're not going to pick up the Bible. We pick up the Bible, but they don't.

So Paul is under control at all times because he knows I have to be the light of the world, the salt of the earth that Jesus said we're supposed to be. But notice this. You'll see this often.

The moment someone gets nasty in their language or what's the word I'm looking for, the minute someone gets abusive in their speech and starts saying things like, you're out of your mind. You're crazy. Paul will defend himself, but he will slowly start turning to look for someone else to talk to.

Because most times when people are yelling and screaming and mocking you, they're not going to be open right then for the word of God. We have to be wise, don't we? He that winneth souls is what? You got to be wise. So when people get up in your grill and are yelling at you, what you have to do is to know, well, right now is not the moment for them.

So who can I turn to that I could talk? So immediately he turns to Agrippa. He says, now, King Agrippa, I know you know more than Festus because you know the Old Testament scripture. So we have first the reaction of Festus, which is, you're crazy.

Get out of here. You're nuts. And we should not be ashamed of that, should not be surprised at that.

So we stay under control. We're not surprised when people mock us and say, where was my anointing? I didn't pray hard enough. I should have brought that out.

No, this is what happens sometimes. You do your job perfectly and people mock you. One time preaching a long time ago when I was less experienced and very self-conscious, someone walked out in the other building while I was preaching.

I had the thought that had to do with race. I said something that they did not agree. I don't think.

And they left. But as they were walking out of the building, when someone gets up and walks out while you're preaching, you can notice that and be conscious of it. And as they were walking, they just didn't walk out.

But they turned to me right at the side door that they were going to go out. And they looked up at me. And I happened to be looking at them.

And they turned their fist at me like this. No. Immediately, it was like a sword going through me.

Because I'm like anyone else. I don't want to be disliked. I don't want you not to like me.

And I just felt wounded. And I actually thought, how will I go on preaching? Because that hurt. It was a viciousness in it.

It was a viciousness in it. I think it was some Caucasian people who took exception to something I said about us all being the same. And the skin color means nothing.

And it's only skin deep. But the way they did it, it was ugly. But I felt the Lord speak to me.

Because I was battling. Do you want their approval or mine? If you want their approval, you're not going to be able to preach for me and represent me. But if you want my approval, let it go.

Let it go. So, if you're looking for approval, and we're not marketing the gospel. We're not trying to sell the gospel.

We're trying to proclaim the gospel. And sometimes people will have Felix's reaction. But let me rush to a close here.

Now, we have the king. And Paul gets now, moves on. And he says, but King Agrippa, he might think I'm crazy.

But you don't think I'm crazy, do you? Because you know the verses. How about those verses in the Old Testament that talk about the Messiah coming and that he would suffer. You know that.

And Jesus suffered just like it says in the Old Testament. All the Jewish people wanted a conquering, a heroic Messiah. When they saw Jesus as a carpenter's son suffering, arrested by the Romans, they said,

that's not our deliverer.

What kind of deliverer is that? You, King Agrippa, you're down with this, right? You know, right? The verses. And as he begins to talk, Agrippa says this. Hey, what do you think? In just a few minutes, you're going to make me a Christian? Now, in the translations, that Greek is very confusing.

So, some of the translation actually have him saying, in just a little time, you'll make me a Christian the way you're talking. But others make it more cynical, like, hey, Paul, what do you think? You're going to make me a Christian? Here, he just started talking. You think I'm going to give up my kingship? I'm going to give up my Judaism to believe in Jesus, who the whole religious establishment is against? What are you, out of your mind? But notice what we learn here, that when you're a Christian and you're filled with Jesus, you and I should always be the master of every situation.

Listen to what I mean by that. When King Agrippa says, what do you think? You're going to convert me in a couple of minutes here? You just start your sermon? You think I'm going to tumble down here and become a Christian? And Paul says, listen, I don't care if it's a short time or a long time, but here's what I want for all of you. Now, he's the prisoner.

He's got chains on him. He's talking to a king and a governor who can have him killed at any second. And he goes, hey, guys, listen, I don't care if it's a short time or a long time.

I want you to become what I am. I don't want to be what you are. No, but Paul, you're in chains.

I know, but I don't want to be what you are. I don't want to be a king. I don't want to be the governor, because I have something better than both of you.

I have Jesus in my life. So I want you to be what I am, what I am. I want you to be like me.

Just think of that, to be in that room. Just think of what he's saying. I want you to be like me.

Yo, you're a prisoner. You're chained. I know, but I want, if you only knew what I knew, if you only knew the peace and the joy I have, I wish you could be like me.

And they must have been thinking, what is he talking about? No, when you're chained, you want to be like the governor. You want to be like the king, not Paul. He's so full of Jesus.

He's like, no, if you, I want, oh, I wish I could take a long time, short time, but not just you two guys, all you guards, all you people listening. I want you all to be like me. I wonder how many of us live every day as I close.

I wonder how many of us live every day with that consciousness and that sense of victory. I want you to be like me. You're a billionaire.

I don't want to be like you because I have something money can't buy. I have my sins forgiven. I have peace.

You know, I was talking to some businessmen who have become my friends who God, thank God, has sent in here to help us in some ways more about that in the weeks and months to come. But some of them, one of them has shared with me that you can be with people who are very, very wealthy and own all kinds of real estate. And guess what? They're, they're empty as a drum.

They are unhappy as can be. That's why they're smoking weed and trying to get out or drugs or whatever, experimenting with whatever. Why? Because I got to get out of my life.

I know, but you have so much. Yeah, but not only Jesus can satisfy your soul. Come on, let's put our hands together.

Only Jesus can satisfy. So Paul takes command of the situation. It's like you think he would be intimidated.

Like, listen, guys, could I say something? No, he's like, I wish all you guys were like me. Oh yeah. Governor Festus, I know you got a throne and all that, but it ain't all that.

I got what's all that. I got Jesus. Did you know that you can be so full of Jesus that you have command of every situation? Isn't that what Jesus had when he was in front of pilot pilot was trying him or reviewing Jesus? Or was it the other way around? It was the other way around.

Jesus was never in a situation where he was like, oh guys, please don't. He was like, whatever. You can't do anything unless God permits it.

My life is in his hands. If you kill me, I go to be with him. If I don't go to be with him, I stay and I walk with him and he uses me.

So really what can you do to me? Oh, how many want a faith like that? Come on, lift your hand. How many want a faith like that? So strong that just knows Jesus is in me and nothing can happen. The steps of a righteous man or woman are ordered by the Lord.

Jesus is with me. Nothing is going to happen unless he permits it. And if he permits it, it's for my good.

And if he wants me home, I'm going home. If he wants me here, I'm going to work for him. So let's get this on.

Let's roll like this. Oh, I want us to live like that. Instead of reading the newspaper.

Oh no, the stock market, the LIBOR rate. What's going to happen in the Middle East? ISIS. What's going on over there? What's going to happen in Syria? What's going to happen now in Iraq? Nah, Paul said, I know in whom I have belief and I'm persuaded that he's going to take care of me.

And here's a word of wisdom. Someone brought to my office before that during the summer here, there was just, I think a two or three year old child that died in a lake accident here in Brooklyn. Just, it was in this morning's news.

I didn't hear or see of it. Brothers and sisters, let's watch our children carefully. Be alert.

We trust God, but then we use our intelligence, but we know that he has to do the ultimate keeping. So we have Vesta saying, you're out of your mind. We have King Agrippa saying, what do you think you're going to make me a Christian? And he goes, in such a short time, he goes, short time, long time.

I don't care how much time. I just want you to be like me. King Agrippa, I love you.

And you might think that you have my life in your hands. No, Jesus has my life in his hands. You might think you can do what you want, but he's got this whole thing mapped out.

Oh, I want to have that faith. I want to have that faith. Don't you want to have that faith? Rather than being just wheeling, dealing all through life, shaking, laying in bed at night, worrying and worrying and worrying.

I told you about the time. Let me just add this for someone who's going through a trial. I was in the middle of this project here, millions, dozens of millions of dollars, no resources, no money, never raised money once in the Brooklyn Tabernacle for something that is colossal in scope.

And God provided one way or another. But then, I don't know, the bottom fell out. Money was needed.

The plans weren't, you know, nothing. You learn two things in construction. Nothing takes as long as they say.

Am I right? And it never costs what they say. Those of you take that to the bank. So I don't know what we needed.

A million and a half dollars in 10 days, let's say. It was one of these episodes. And my wife was away.

Her mother had pancreatic cancer. And Carol spent, I'd say, the good part of nine to ten weeks in Florida. Coming up a little bit, I would go down and see her.

But it's the longest we were away from each other. She was nursing her mother. They didn't want to put her in a hospice.

So I was sleeping one night. And before I went to bed, the enemy just came to my mind and said, they're going to walk off the job. The union, one union walks off, they all walk off.

You're going to walk off because you're not going to pay the requisitions. And the building's 70% done, but you can't meet there. And you've started something, you fool.

And you could talk about God being this and God being that. But how are you going to face the people when all this, these millions have been spent and the building's not done? Then where are you going to meet? Where are you going to meet? How are you going to face the people? You love them so much. You're representing them, but how they, they're going to turn on you.

I had every kind of evil thing come to my mind. So I would turn in my bed and I'd turn on my pillow and I'd get that out of my mind. And then I just heard, as God is my witness, I heard laughing in my room.

I heard laughing, as real as you people are there. I heard laughing like, you're a jerk. You're talking all this Christian talk, and then you're going to see it's all going to be nothing.

It got so strong that at one point, you ever get oppressed and attacked? How many have ever been attacked by the devil here in your life? You know what I'm talking about mentally, emotionally. I jumped out of the bed because my heart started pounding. I thought I was going to die.

Not of a heart attack, but I don't know what I was going to die from, but it was like just oppressive. And I jumped out of the bed and I started walking around the room, pitch dark. I'm all alone in the house.

Carol's in Florida. I'm in that time in Queens living and I'm walking around saying, no, you're a liar. You're a liar.

God's going to take care of me. God's going to take care of us. God's going to take care of us.

Never, never. No, you're a liar. You're a liar.

You know, sometimes you just have to fight and stand on the word of God. Am I right? No, you're a liar. You're a liar.

My life is in his hands. And then God began to remind me, do you think I would begin a good work and not finish it? Do you think I would save you and put you there and you got the greatest congregation in the world? You don't think I'm going to take care of them. Come on.

Let's praise God out loud. Come on. You can say hallelujah while you're clapping.

I'm telling you, at least 45 minutes, I was just pacing and praying and calling on God. Because sometimes you're just in a fight, but we can have mastery as we stand on God's word and the spirit helps us. No, no, no, no.

My life is in his hands. I just wish you all were like me. And if you're here and you're looking and you're not a Christian, I don't care what you have, what you own, not interested in it.

I just wish you were like me. I wish you were like us. I wish you were like these people.

Because when you know Jesus, that's the sweetest thing in the whole world. Come on. Am I right? Last word.

When he spoke to Felix, the governor, prior to this, Felix heard him in front of a bunch of people. And then later Felix called him and said, my better half has arrived, Drusilla, my wife. Why don't you talk to us a little bit more? And he comes.

Now, meanwhile, he was looking for to get paid off because he heard Paul had access to money. And he thought, let me get some dough from this prisoner. So Paul begins to talk to him about Jesus and about the judgment to come.

And the Bible says that Felix was convicted and he got afraid. But you know what he did? Oh, don't do that today, please. I plead with you.

You know what he said? Manana. Not now. I can't go all in.

I know what you're saying is true. Something rings true, but I'm not ready yet. Not ready yet.

Maybe tomorrow. Manana. But no manana ever came.

Because every day that you hear God's word and you feel his love and he talks to your heart, there's always a manana that you can put it off to. One of the main truths of the Bible is that today is the day of salvation. Yesterday you cannot change.

Saturday is gone. Monday, tomorrow, we're not sure about that. We're not sure about that.

How many say amen? We're not sure about that. We are not sure about that. We lost four people on 9-11.

Not one of them woke up that morning and said, today's the last day of my life. Not one of them. So the Bible always says, whenever he talks to you, whatever he calls you, whatever he says to you, whenever he beckons you, you got to go now, today.

You never say tomorrow. Because the power of the voice wears off because you harden yourself. You know what? How many times have you heard Jesus call you? How many times has he said, come on, I want you to do something for me? How many times has he said, get all in.

Commit yourself all to me. Don't go to church on Sunday. Forget the Brooklyn Tabernacle.

They didn't die to save you. I died to save you. Now I want you all in.

But you can only go all in one day. Today. And Felix fell prey to that trick of the enemy.

I'm feeling something. I know this is right. But not yet.

Not yet. You know, in the biography of St. Augustine of Hippo, famous father of the early church, he lived as a profligate, running around with prostitutes and living wild, fleshly indulgence, no carnal pleasure, did he deny himself. And then he heard the gospel and he heard God calling him to come to him.

And he said, Lord, save me. But not yet. Let me just see her one more time.

That's awesome, isn't it? That's what Felix said. No, it's true. I'm feeling it.

You're frightening me now. You're frightening me, Paul. You know what? No, Felix, close the deal.

Come to Jesus. Listen, a couple of days from now, let's talk again. And he did.

You saw him many times. But there's always a manana that comes in. I did that in different areas of my life.

Felt the Lord grabbing, felt the Lord calling me, felt the Lord beckoning me. I was in the business world. No, I want you to be a minister.

I know it's you, but not yet. I want to go to Hawaii with my wife, lay on a beach. I have a feeling I might not get to Hawaii if I go in the ministry, you know? Come on, we've all done that.

What a battle I put up. Wouldn't say no. I would just say, not yet.

Let's close our eyes. Come on, everyone on the balcony, just bow your head, close your eyes. If you're here today and God's calling you to do something, give up something, go somewhere, I don't know.

I just feel this thing that God, when he tugs, he might be calling you to lay something down. Today's the only day you can do it. Don't deceive yourself.

You can't do it yesterday, and tomorrow you don't know about it, and it'll be just the same story tomorrow. It's always going to be mañana. Anybody here who would just say, pastor, I want to end the service singing? Is there anybody up in the balcony or downstairs here? Just make your way out of your seat and say, pastor, in a way that you don't know, or in the choir, in a way you don't know.

That was for me today. And I just want the Lord, I'm saying yes to him today. I'm saying yes.

Si, señor. Not tomorrow, today. Whatever it might be about, whether you want to become a Christian, or whether it's some personal dealing that the Lord has with you.

Just get up out of your seat and come up. That's it, ma'am. You come.

You come. If you're watching over the webcast, or you're here in the building, and God's been talking to you about getting ready to leave your job, to stretch out in faith to do what he, you know he wants you to do. You're not even happy doing what you're doing.

And when the people were up on the side of me, he was reminding you even then. So just say yes to him. You don't have to figure it all out.

You don't have to get the timing of everything, but you got to say yes today. Si, señor. Si, señor.

Seguro. For sure. Yes, today.

I say yes. No more mañana. No more battling.

I'm ready to do what you want. Today. We say yes to you today, Lord.

No more procrastinating. No more excuse making. No more mañana.

No more not yet. Today, we go all in. Jesus, you went all in for us.

We go all in for you. You gave your life for us. The least we can do.

You didn't ask us to die on a cross. You asked us to just trust you. We trust you today.

We give you our sins. Give you our weakness. We give you our mess-ups.

We give you our confusion. We give you the idols that are in our heart that sometimes keep us from you. We give you our plans for our life, but it's no more.

It's your plans for our lives, Lord. We say yes. No more struggling.

No more laying in bed at night, fighting that inner fight. We say yes to you. Everybody in the building, repeat after me.

Dear God, I say yes to you. In every area of my life, I will live for Jesus. Though the world will turn aside, I will live for Jesus.

I will trust in Jesus. I will trust in Jesus. Keep me by your power.

Keep me by your power. In Christ's name. Join hands with someone next to you.

Lord, bless your people. As we dismiss, we just pray now that you'll warm our hearts to love each other, say good things to each other. Bless us all today, we pray.

In Jesus' name and everyone say. In Jesus' name. Since we're doing triumph today, turn around and give a high five to four or five people.

Go ahead. No handshakes, just high five.

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