

Series: Acts

Title: Hear and Heed the Word

Text: Acts 27: 9-14

Date: August 26, 2010

Place: SGBC, New Jersey

God's revealed will is manifest in his written word. We all have easy access to our bibles. It pleased the Lord to call out, instruct and keep his children unto salvation through the public preaching of his word through his earthen vessels. We have a place to gather to hear the word of the Lord preached. It pleased the Lord--does it please you?

The Lord Jesus is the Word in human flesh. In these last days, God spoke his word to us by the Word, his Son, the Lord Jesus said, "I have given them thy word" (John 17:14.) It is through his word that believers are called out, separated, and kept in our peaceful haven Christ Jesus, he said, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. (Joh 17:17.) The revelation he gives through his word into our hearts is that God has made foolish the wisdom of this world? The foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. (1 Corinthians 1: 21, 25.) Do you hear the word of the Lord. Do you believe him? How prone we are to glory in our supposed wisdom and strength. That is why his word is so very important--we must always be coming to Christ through his word, that we be no more tossed to and fro but anchored--by the Word, through the ministering he promises, through the word.

The title is the point of the message: Hear and Heed the Word.

Proposition: Tonight we will see how important it is to hear and heed the word of the Lord. And we will see some of the things that often hinder us from doing so.

Acts 27: 9: Now when much time was spent, and when sailing was now dangerous, because the fast was now already past, Paul admonished them, 10: And said unto them, Sirs, I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives.

Paul had a spirit of prophecy. (Acts 27: 21-25.) Of all the people that could have been sure that Paul would speak what was best, they could, he was in the ship with them. Are we in the same fellow-ship together?

In our text, we have THE messenger sent from God. He admonishes these men in the ship. But verse 11 begins with this sad word, **Acts 27: 11: Nevertheless...**They would not heed the word of the Lord spoken through Paul. We have before us a few things that ought never to turn us from the word of our God.

I. GLORYING IN MEN WILL TURN YOU FROM THE WORD OF THE LORD

Acts 27: 11: Nevertheless the centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship, more than those things which were spoken by Paul.

A. This master and owner may be one or two persons, but here was

1. Expertise--the master of the ship--a master sailor who could read the stars so as to know the tides and so on. And affluence--one who owned the ship
2. To the centurion, Paul was just a prisoner, worse he was a preacher. This was a practical situation, a decision of great importance, of which Paul had no expertise as a sailor, something they regarded that this preacher could not help them with.

B. But who sent Paul and for whom did Paul speak? (Job 38.)

1. Not the one who has expertise to read the stars or one who owned a boat but the one who created and owns the whole world and has expertise to control the stars to bring about his purpose--God made Job feel very small by asking him this:

Job 38: 31: Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion? 32: Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season? or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons? 33: Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven? canst thou set the dominion thereof in the earth? 34: Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee? 35: Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, Here we are?

In light of who God is and what God does, doesn't it make the centurion appear foolish for glorying in man rather than glorying in God?

Illustration: Why do we see men of power and influence used to advertise products? Carnal men will eat and wear and use the dumbest things simply because they glory in men. The more carnal you and I are the less difficult it is to turn us this way or that.

C. But God does not advertise and attract like the world does.

1. The very Son of God came forth in the body which God made with no beauty that would make men naturally desire him, no family status, no earthly credentials, no authority from men, no gospel that appeals to the flesh, and saved through a bloody cross that turns men's stomachs.

2. Even Paul--who had a good education, a good pedigree, and much wealth--was reduced to an enemy of his former religious companions, even reduced further to a common prisoner. Why?

I Corinthians 1: 28: And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: 29: That no flesh should glory in his presence.

4. God looked and saw--not that some would believe--but that there was no man.

- God chose whom he would save.
- God reveals to them that he saves
- That we had no wisdom, no righteousness, no holiness, and could by no means redeem ourselves
- God had to put us in Christ. God had to reveal Christ in us and Christ had to perform All to save us. Why?

I Corinthians 1: 31: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

Application: Carnality is unbecoming to the gospel. Glorying in men causes strife and vain glory whether it concerns our eternal salvation or simple matters in our daily lives (even what we eat, and drink, and wear.) Glorying in men will turn us from hearing and heeding the word of the Lord. So the word of the Lord to us is:

Romans 12:16: Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.

1 Corinthians 3:21: Therefore let no man glory in men.

Can you imagine how this centurion would have boasted if God honored him in allowing him a smooth voyage?

II. INCONVENIENCE WILL TURN US FROM THE WORD OF THE LORD

Acts 27: 12: And because the haven was not commodious to winter in,...

They could have wintered in the fair havens, but it was not the best place--"convenient" or "fit" in their eyes. So it is with Christ. "Lasea" means "shaggy"; "Phoenicia" means "palm trees"

A. The word of God will always go against the pleasures of the flesh.

1. The flesh wants to be rich in the world, not in Christ. The word of the Lord is:

Proverbs 23:4: Labour not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom.

Matthew 6: 33: But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Christ our King is the only Treasure there is.

2. The flesh wants to be its own wisdom--do its own seeking, do its on calculating, find out God by its own searching--"we be Christ's", "we need not that any teach us"--it is not commodious to be told that our very best wisdom is less than the foolishness of God. The word of the Lord is:

Proverbs 3:7: Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil.

Christ is the believer's Wisdom.

3. It is not commodious to confess our nothingness and suffer the rejection of men so the flesh wants to go a little further out of this harbor, taking the offense out of the cross by focusing on man, out of a pretense of love and tolerance--much more palm-tree like than shaggy.

Today--men are saying, "Let's not make such a big deal about a doctrine like particular redemption because it will cause a separation between our brethren who believe in universal atonement." If particular redemption is only a doctrine to you then you will feel the same way. It is the very glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus

It is the very reason Christ is called our Redeemer! The very reason his name is Savior--*Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins.* The successful redemption of a particular people given to Christ from before the world began is not only "AN issue" it is "THE ISSUE." Christ redeeming a particular people is the very righteousness revealed in the gospel. Remove it and you have no gospel; just as a man is dead if you remove his heart. Faith believes that when Christ redeemed his chosen people he declared (prior to us even knowing it) that God is both just and the Justifier.

Particular redemption at the cross is the death blow to every lie of the serpent: the lie of goodness in man, of descisionism, of free-will worship, of self-sanctifying worship, of the efficient and sufficient mess of Fullerism, of the universalism of Armenisim and of all the many names which are nothing more than works religion calling itself grace.

By the same token, universal redemption is the heart of works religion, of free-will, of circumcision, of worshipping the creature more than the Creator. These two are not varying opinions they are different gospels!

Paul said:

Galatians 5: 11: And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased. 12: I would they were even cut off which trouble you.

Yet, if you will not winter in Christ because this haven is not commodious for you then you will perish in the storm of God's wrath! It is either bear the reproach of men or bear the wrath of God.

III. PEER PRESSURE WILL TURN US FROM THE WORD OF THE LORD

Acts 27: 12: And because the haven was not commodious to winter in, the more part advised to depart thence also...

A. When it comes to trusting all your eternal salvation into the hands of another--Christ Jesus the Lord--the more part always advises to depart

Acts 24: 25:...Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee....26:24...Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad...26:28:...Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.

1. The more part will advise--don't get too serious--"if it comes between you and your family, you and your education, you and your career, you and your pleasure, between the word of God and other books--don't get too serious."

2. The more part advises to take safe haven just a little ways out of this harbor in the harbor of: self-will, self-righteousness, intellectualism, worldly riches, and in the lusts of sin...

Hebrews 11: 24: By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; 25: Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; 26: Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward. 27: By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.

3. Think of what great things God records for us about Moses and how nothing is recorded of those who took the road Moses left behind. They got pleasure for a season--Moses shall always enjoy his eternal riches with Christ.

IV. LOGIC WILL TURN US FROM THE WORD OF THE LORD

Acts 27: 12: And because the haven was not commodious to winter in, the more part advised to depart thence also, if by any means they might attain to Phenice, and there to winter; which is an haven of Crete, and lieth toward the south west and north west.

Logic reasons that Phenice was not that much farther, just at the other end of the island of Crete. Logic reasoned that the way the harbor of Phenice was positioned it would make it a much safer harbor to wait out the winds of winter. God's word is based on "thus saith the Lord" not on logic and reason.

A. Logic says that if God's chief end for creating his children was to reveal his glory by saving them from their sinful fall through his Son then why did he not just create them as he did the angels and make them to know him from the beginning? Faith says, "It pleased God..."

B. Logic says when he delivered Israel why did he not just send them straight across into the land of Canaan--why did he send them down to get hemmed in between a big rock and the red sea with Pharaohs' army charging in after them? Why didn't he take you to glory the moment he revealed you were redeemed, instead of leaving you in this world and continually keeping you from the evil? Faith says, "He did it that he might manifest his glory in a glorious fashion before my eyes"

C. When we behold the Son of God taking a human body in the womb of a virgin, growing up as a man, going to the cross, risen from the dead, a Man seated in glory--logic says, hogwash! Faith cries out, "Lord I believe, help thou mine unbelief."

D. When the word of the Lord comes commanding us to do that which seems so strange to our reason, faith gives way to logic, saying...

Luke 5:5: And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net.

E. The world says, "Let conscious be your guide." The word of the Lord is:

Proverbs 28:26: He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered.

V. SUPPOSITION WILL TURN US FROM THE WORD OF THE LORD.

Acts 27: 13: And when the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained their purpose, loosing thence, they sailed close by Crete. 14: But not long after there arose against it a tempestuous wind, called Euroclydon.

A. Be careful that when the south wind blows softly, you do not *suppose* that you have obtained that which you seek. Always take the "soft wind" to the book to see if it is in agreement with the word of the Lord.

Example: You have tried to get a meeting with that new business client. Finally, the soft wind blows. He wants to meet on the golf course Sunday morning from 10-2.

Do you suppose you have obtained your purpose? Do you start saying how the Lord has blessed you? Do you let loose and set sail? No. Always take the "soft wind" to the book to see if it is in agreement with "thus saith the Lord." The word of the Lord is: Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. This meeting will take me away from hearing the word of the Lord. This meeting will force me to absent myself from my brethren who are encouraged by my presence.

B. So why did that soft wind blow? To prove whether or not you will hear and heed the word of the Lord.

1. The same Lord who sent the soft wind, also sent his word through Paul, admonishing them not to set sail. The Lord who said, "Seek first the kingdom of God..." is he controls the soft winds.

2. But often the Lord sends the soft wind to prove whether or not we will hear and heed his word OR suppose--presume that this is the Lord blessing me--that we have obtained our purpose--and loose and set sail. Take even the soft wind to the word of the Lord. If the word of the Lord says, "No!" then no matter how pleasant the breeze may be we have to agree with the Lord! If we believe God, our God is able to do exceedingly more than we ever imagined with that client.

3. But know this too,

- If we glory in man rather than the revealed will of God in the word of the Lord,

- If its not commodious for us to heed the word of the Lord
- If we succumb to peer pressure rather than standfast in faith
- If we use fleshly logic to justify our rebellion rather than believe even when we don't see the logic in it
- If we jump to conclusions supposing we have obtained our purpose when the soft winds blow rather than considering, the word of the Lord

If we have set sail even after seeing it is opposite to the word of the Lord, if we are his child, then we can expect--**not long after**--a storm of chastening from the mighty hand of our heavenly Father. He will not allow us to perish in unbelief. Be careful to seek the word of the Lord even when the soft wind blows.

ONE LAST WORD

We see a few of the many ways we can so easily be turned from the Lord. But the cure for all is to keep our minds stayed on the Lord. We do so by hearing his word and heeding his word.

Isaiah 26:3: Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. 4: Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength:

Illustration: Someone talked to me recently about the worst trial I could possibly imagine someone going through. My advice was to become immersed in the word of the Lord. That is the Lord's word to us--seek those things which are above where Christ is seated.

Turn your attention fully away from everything else to the Lord and trust him. God promises to keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on the Lord Because that man or woman is trusting God to do so. And God will not disappoint

Isaiah 43: 1: But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. 2: When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. 3: For I am the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour

Before the storm, heed the word of the Lord. Though many try to turn you, heed the word of the Lord. When the southwind blows softly, heed the word of the Lord. And when you find yourself in the midst of raging waters, heed the word of the Lord. Believer, the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior is our Everlasting Strength.