

God's Work For God's Glory

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Preacher: Pastor Ken

[0 : 01] All right, so please turn in your Bibles to Acts chapter 3, where we're at this week. And as we are preparing to dive into this chapter, and as I've thought about what we've covered and what we've gone over in the book of Acts thus far, what we've gone over in our Sunday school class and our discussions there, and what I'm planning on sharing with you today and what we've sung so far, I just, and I've said this many times and I'll say it many times more, it amazes me how God just brings things together.

And He is in control and He knows what's going to be said and covered when, and it just, what seems like a small detail turns out to be a major one when it's next.

I'm thinking earlier in one of the songs we were singing with the worship set, talking about our desperation, it's, what was it?

It was about us being desperate, you know, for God. And that's kind of what a little bit of the theme is today. One thing we're going to look at today is the desperate state of an individual in chapter three.

As we were singing, living for Jesus, a hymn that I absolutely love, and stanza three, living for Jesus wherever I am, doing each duty in His holy name.

[1 : 37] That means for His glory and for His purpose. Willing to suffer afflictions or loss, deeming each trial a part of my cross.

And again, we're going to be looking at that guy who's desperate, who's in a state of desperation. We're going to see, you know, Peter and John ministering to Him. And then, you know, as we continue in the book of Acts now in chapters three, four, and five, what happens in chapter three, directly pours into chapter four, and five, and following, is you're going to start to see trials, and you're going to start to see persecution, you're going to start to see opposition to the gospel message and to the church.

And we see how they respond to that and what we can take from there. So like I said, it is amazing to me just how God brings together the little details, but it all fully supports and brings us back to the central message and purpose of why we gather and why we're in His word.

And it's ultimately for His glory and for our good. So coming out of chapter two, we see the church's devotion to prayer, to the teaching of the word of God, and to one another.

That's what we looked at last week. So you have Peter's sermon on Pentecost. He's calling people to repentance. He's proclaiming Jesus as both Lord and Christ.

[3 : 13] And you have 3,000 people who respond in faith in Christ and are baptized on that day. And then we see afterwards that they were gathering regularly.

They were gathering day to day. They were gathering at the temple. And they were devoting themselves to two things primarily, the apostles' teaching and to prayers.

And so, and to fellowship as well. Fellowship and prayer kind of go hand in hand there. And God's clearly working in the lives of these new believers.

And He's about to bring them through some intense trials, as I've already mentioned, that will truly put their commitment to Jesus to the test. But before that, we get this healing encounter in Acts 3, verses 1 through 10, between Peter and a man at the temple gate.

So let's go ahead and read Acts 3, verses 1 through 10, and then break it down a little bit. Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer of the ninth hour.

[4 : 18] And a man, lame from birth, was being carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple that is called the Beautiful Gate, to ask alms of those entering the temple.

Seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked to receive alms. And Peter directed his gaze at him, as did John, and said, Look at us.

And he fixed his attention on them, expecting to receive something from them. But Peter said, I have no silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you.

In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand and raised him up. And immediately his feet and ankles were made strong.

And leaping up, he stood and began to walk and enter the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God. And all the people saw him walking and praising God and recognized him as the one who sat at the beautiful gate of the temple, asking for alms.

[5 : 30] And they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him. Father, thank you for this word today and ask that you would give clarity of meaning and understanding as we go through it.

Amen. So this is an interesting account, and some things that I want to take from it we'll get to in a second.

But I want to just make a disclaimer at the front end of things in case it's not made abundantly clear as we go through. I do not advocate for the attempted healing ministries that the apostles were able to accomplish through the Holy Spirit during their day.

So I just want to make that abundantly clear that I'm not saying as we read this that you are to go out and lay your hands on people and attempt to heal them in the name of Jesus. I believe that is a ministry that was particular to the apostles, to their time, and is no longer a ministry that we see today worked out by the Holy Spirit through people.

All right. So I've addressed that. Now, let's go on. So we get into, getting into the Acts 3 here, we see in verse 1 what I call the sweet hour of prayer.

[6 : 53] All right. So apparently, and we saw this last week where they were gathering, verse 46, and day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with gladness to their hearts.

They were attending the temple daily together. And it seems like, wow, they were super religious people, right? They had church service every day of the week.

Well, I think what they were doing at the temple was they were praying. Because every day, the Jews were expected to pray three times a day.

In the morning, in the afternoon, and at night. And traditionally, it's taught that Abraham introduced prayer in the morning when in Genesis 19, verse 27, it says that Abraham went early in the morning to the place where he had stood before the Lord.

And so you get this practice of, oh, he goes early in the morning to be before God. And the understanding of prayer is that when you are praying, you are in the presence of God.

[8 : 05] And that's why they would host prayer at the temple, because that was traditionally symbolic of the presence of God. So Abraham introduced it in the morning.

Isaac introduced it in the afternoon. In Genesis 24, verse 63, it says Isaac went out to meditate in the field toward evening. It was not evening. It was toward evening. So it was the afternoon.

And that Jacob introduced prayer at night in Genesis 28, verse 11. And he came to a certain place and stayed there that night because the sun had set. And taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in a place to sleep.

And you know this is where the vision of Jacob's ladder comes into play. And there's that communion with God, that time in the presence of God. So this is the tradition of how the prayer three times a day has come up for the Jewish people.

King David and the prophet Daniel also provide further scriptural support for this practice. In Psalm 55, verse 17, David writes, evening and morning and at noon, I utter my complaint and moan and he hears my voice.

[9 : 15] So David's saying these three times I am coming before God and I know he hears me. And of course, Daniel, when you get to Daniel 6, we'll get there eventually for my Bible study.

But when Daniel knew that the document had been signed, that forbidding prayer to anybody except the king, when he knew that that document had been signed, he went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem.

And he got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God as he had done previously. So this idea of prayer three times a day in the Jewish community, it's present in Scripture.

And we see where it comes from. And these times for prayer were commonly 9 a.m., also known as the third hour of the day. 12 p.m., the sixth hour of the day, and 3 p.m., the ninth hour of the day. So now you have a time frame as to when Peter and John here are going up to the temple for prayer at the ninth hour. This would be their evening prayer, the last prayer of the day at the temple. [10:29] In my study, turn to Mark 15. In my study in preparation for this, I came across a comment that I investigated a little further.

But one thing that's interesting is that the times of day that the Jews were to be praying to God for mercy and deliverance were also when God was given a clear message that it was happening. I'm sorry, I skipped ahead in a note here. So the times that they were supposed to be praying, it correlates with major events that happened on the cross.

And so while they're praying for mercy and deliverance, God is indicating that that is actually taking place. So in Mark 15, verse 25, it says, And it was the third hour when they crucified Him. So Jesus was crucified at 9 a.m. It was the third hour of the day. It was the first of the three times of prayer at the temple.

[11:43] In Mark 15, verse 33, it says, And when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.

So darkness fell over the land starting at 12 p.m., the second appointed time of prayer at the temple. And darkness was over the land from 12 p.m. to 3 p.m.

And then at 3 p.m., Mark 15, 34 through 38, And at the ninth hour, Jesus cried with a loud voice, Which means, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

And some of the bystanders hearing it said, Behold, he's calling Elijah. And someone ran and filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink, saying, Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down.

And Jesus uttered a loud cry and breathed his last. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.

[12:51] At 3 p.m., the third appointed time of prayer at the temple is when Jesus breathes his last and the veil in the temple is torn from top to bottom.

So it's interesting that the Jews, three times a day, going before God, seeking his mercy, seeking his deliverance, seeking for the Messiah to come, and those three appointed times are three major events during the death of Jesus on the cross.

At 9 a.m. is the people bring their prayer of need to God, the Savior is being nailed to the cross. At 12 p.m. is the people bring their prayer of need to God, a supernatural event takes place for three hours.

It was a physical sign of darkness, which was indicative of their spiritual state, but also shows the wrath of God being poured out on the Christ on behalf of the people.

And then at 3 p.m. is the people bring their prayer of need to God, the final sacrifice of atonement is completed, and the veil of the temple is torn in two, representing the wall of division between holy God and a sinful man being removed because of Jesus' death.

[14:09] I did not realize the correlation. And when I realized it in preparation and study for this time in Acts 3, I could not ignore it. The three appointed times of prayer, where people are laying their burdens down before God and crying out for mercy and deliverance is when God sent His Son to the cross to provide the mercy and deliverance that they needed, that we need.

And over and over again, God has presented Jesus as the hope for His people. Yet the people continue to rely on their own devices for hope.

They ignored Jesus, right? He lived a sinless life. He had a ministry among the people. The blind could see, the deaf could hear, the lame could walk, the dead were raised.

I mean, this is Jesus walking among the people, and they said, nope, no good for us. And even while they were still crying out for mercy, Jesus is on the cross as the payment and the atonement for their sin, the mercy that they were needing, or that they need, that we need.

It's amazing. Like I said, God orchestrates things and brings the pieces together and lines things up. It's amazing. So this time of prayer, Peter and John are going.

[15:47] It's the ninth hour. It's the third time of prayer in the day. It's 3 p.m. And now we get to a desperate situation, verses 2 through 5. We're introduced in verse 2 to a very desperate man.

This man was born lame. He's never been able to walk. Thus he was dependent on others to help him to get around. And we see that the people laid him at the gate that led from the, at the gate

called Beautiful, the Beautiful Gate, that led from the Gentiles' courtyard into the women's courtyard of the temple.

Foolish me had an image, a picture for you to see what that looked like. And then I deleted it. Sorry. But, so just know that this is a, this is a gate where they're going from the Gentiles' courtyard into where the women's courtyard is for temple worship.

And people had to go through there. Like, they couldn't really avoid it. And he was put there so he could beg for alms.

Alms is just, it's charitable giving. Basically begging people to be kind and generous toward him with their money. And I thought that was interesting. It stands in direct contrast to what we're told in Acts 2, verse 45, that the early church, the believers there, were selling their own possessions to help meet the needs of those in the congregation.

[17:21] You see, so in the, in the church body, what you have happening is people in the body helping one another. And you see here at the, at the temple, these, the Jewish individuals leaving him here and said, all right, you got to beg for alms and hope for the best.

And, you know, people would give, hopefully give sacrificially for him. I'm assuming there was some degree of giving because he's 40 years old at this point and he's been lame since birth.

So somehow he had to have been being cared for. But I just thought that was an interesting, you know, in my mind, that was an interesting contrast. Oh, the church is selling possessions to help meet each other's needs.

And, you know, here the people are saying, all right, you've got to, you know, sit here and hope for the best and carry him along home afterwards. But whatever the, nonetheless, he was put in a position to be helped each day with his monetary need to survive.

But how long? How long before he becomes overwhelmed with the monotony? How long before his hopelessness catches up to him?

[18:26] This is what I'm thinking about. Like, I try to, I had a conversation with somebody recently about how there are some people who when they read, they don't develop, like, images as they read.

They don't, they can't see the story in their mind. I'm kind of one of those people. But when I do read in this situation, I try to put myself in their position.

I'm like, what if I was lame from birth? What if I was dependent, begging people to be merciful toward me? Day in and day out.

My whole life. And then I think about people who are dealing with, you know, chronic illness and, you know, cancer and their bodies are breaking down.

And they're dependent on others to help them, to move them. And you just think about, you know, a person who's in that, in that state, you get to a point where it's enough.

[19:31] Where you're like, man, I am just tired of this. There's a hopelessness that creeps in and takes over. And you get overwhelmed by the monotony.

You get overwhelmed by the desperation. So how long for this guy? As I mentioned, to one degree or another, no, we've all been at a place of desperation.

If not, you will at some point in your life. You'll be at that point of feeling desperate. Now, how long is, you know, we ask questions, how long is this going to, you know, how is this going to end up? How much longer are we going to have to endure this? Where are we going to get the money for whatever it is you need money for? When is this finally going to end? Why is this happening to me? We've all had questions similar to these as we've endured different trials and hardships. So we can kind of get an idea of where this guy's at.

[20:32] Lame from birth, dependent on other people, the monotony, when's it going to end? Our focus, it becomes on our needs and our wants and our desires and, you know, we're in a fight or flight mode and we're frantically trying to keep our heads above water.

Desperate. In desperation. I suspect that's where this lame beggar's at. He's there day in and day out begging for people to give him something to help him get by.

And these people, they see him all the time. In fact, they know that he's going to be there. So they may even make a point to walk on the other side of the gate entrance and not make eye contact.

You know how it is. You know, you know, the individual who's going to be where they're at at a certain time of day and you just, you're tired of seeing him, you're tired of interacting when he helped him out a little bit here, there, or whatever.

And so once you see them, you make it a point to cross the street or go as far away as possible, avoid eye contact and keep going on your way. I imagine there's probably some people in the crowd that are like that.

[21 : 55] Oh, Joe's there again. All right. So let's go, let's jump behind these people and we're kind of, you know, kind of hide ourselves and avoid eye contact.

We didn't see him and keep going. Because there he is day in and day out. So not only is he getting overwhelmed with the monotony of it and the, you know, needing to depend on people, people are tired of him depending on them.

And so that's why I think this, or I believe that we have here in verse 3, or 4, excuse me, it says that Peter directed his gaze at him as did John.

He was used to people ignoring him. He was used to people trying to not look at him and just go walking about doing their business. And yet here you have Peter looks directly at him to get his attention.

This was a real meeting taking place. What could have simply been the occasion of absent-minded charity turns into a personal encounter?

[23 : 07] Peter and John could have, you know, probably fished around for a quarter or, you know, a nickel or I'm not, you know, like conversant with the coinage of their day.

But they could have probably fished around for something and like just kind of tossed it in and kept going. But they didn't. They stopped. They got his attention and now this went from him just begging for alms and receiving it from people to an encounter, a conversation.

And we see that hope is delivered and God is glorified. Verses 6-10. See, the man was seeking money. Yet God sent Peter and John by way of divine appointment to this man.

And they didn't have any money. Get that. They didn't have any money. But they had something greater that he needed. He needed wholeness in the name of Jesus.

And so Peter does what only an apostle can do. He gives him the physical ability to stand and walk. A literal miracle miracle of healing. And you notice the man's reaction.

[24 : 29] He walked. He jumped. And he couldn't get enough of moving with his own two legs. He's probably like Owen was this morning everywhere.

Like, you know, over here and dancing and singing and doing his thing and over here. And that's probably what this guy's like. He's like, oh man, I've got my legs and I can jump and he's praising God.

And he's walking and jumping and shouting for joy. Which is not the temple etiquette. No, he was not doing it was a no-no.

He was disrupting the peace. Because he was praising God. God. And the real purpose of this whole encounter has nothing to do with the man being healed.

Understand that. It's not about the physical need being met. It's about something greater. That healing was a secondary detail.

[25 : 40] this encounter and healing is all about God being given the glory which is the main theme through Scripture. That is what mattered most.

Was it good that he got healed? Absolutely. Was it a conduit that led to God being given the glory? Absolutely. So I'm not saying, I'm not dismissing it altogether.

What I'm saying is that's not the main thing. The main thing is what happens afterwards. When he's praising, jumping, and leaping, and walking, and praising God for what has been done in his life.

And you see through Scripture, Psalm 86, verse 9, all the nations you have made shall come and worship before you, O Lord, and shall glorify your name.

Romans 11, 36, for from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever.

[26 : 49] Amen. 1 Corinthians 6, verse 20, for you were bought with a price, so glorify God in your body. And that's what this guy was doing. He was using his body to glorify God.

1 Corinthians 10, 31, whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. The glory of God is the main theme through Scripture beginning to end.

Revelation 4, 11, worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power for you created all things and by your will they existed and they were created.

God is in the business of miracles. miracles. But they're not for the purpose of our comfort and peace. They are ultimately so that we will praise and glorify his name before all people.

In preparation for this message, the Holy Spirit brought to my remembrance the account in John 9. So I'm going to have to turn there. If you want to turn there, that would be good too. In John 9, verses 1-7, you got this account with the man born blind.

[28 : 08] And it's only appropriate that it would come to my mind because he was born blind. This guy in Acts 3 was born lame. So these are problems and issues that have been their whole life.

These are circumstances that define their life physically. John 9, verses 1-7. As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth.

And his disciples asked him, Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, it was not that this man sinned or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him.

We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day. Night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world. Having said these things, he spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva.

Then he anointed the man's eyes with mud and said to him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, which means sent. So he went and washed and came back seeing.

[29 : 18] and then you go on through the rest of this encounter here and ultimately you see that he gives glory to God and he praises God for what he has because he once was blind but now he can see.

This man was born blind so that the works of God could be done through him so that God would be glorified because of it. and that is the case here in Acts 3.

The man in Acts was lame from birth so the works of God could be displayed in him and the works of God happen in our lives so that glory is brought to God.

When God puts in us a heart of flesh instead of a heart of stone, we praise him because of the mighty work that he has done. When God brings us to a trial that is going to shape us into the image of his son, we ought to be thankful and praise him for his goodness toward us.

We half joke about the verse in James 1. Count it all joy when we encounter various trials. But we shouldn't laugh at that because that is what God's desire is for us.

[30 : 36] To count it joy when we encounter various trials knowing that it's perfecting us and maturing us and ultimately molding us into the image of Jesus. We ought to be giving thanks to God.

Now let's admit it. Let's be honest. A little human here, right? It's hard to be thankful when things are difficult. It's hard to be thankful when you're getting to a point of desperation in your life.

It's hard to be thankful when you don't know why something is happening and it hurts. And we often make excuses from our circumstances as to why we are incapable of living obediently to God and giving glory to His name.

But the reality is that God has put us here for His glory. Isaiah 43, verse 7, and everyone who is called by my name whom I created for my glory.

Whom I formed and made. God says that we are created for His glory. If joy and peace and happiness is our goal in life, then we are functioning wrong.

[32 : 00] If our goal in life is joy and happiness and peace, then we have the wrong goal in life.

Living for God's glory is the goal that we ought to have. 1 Corinthians 10.31, whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Guess what?

Even in death we are to glorify God. John 21 verse 19 when Peter and Jesus are talking and John's there and they're having their conversation and he tells Peter that you're going to go, you're going to find yourself in a place where people are going to carry you away to a place you don't want to go. Ultimately is what he says indicating death. He's going to stretch out his hands and he said this to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.

Think about that. Have we considered this? I don't know how much people think about death. I'm not going to assume on you and your thoughts and such.

[33 : 22] Admittedly it comes across my mind more often than I'd like it to. sometimes it's my own sometimes it's others. Right? And I imagine I cannot be the only one who thinks along those lines.

I cannot. Can I get a nod like somebody's thought about their own? Okay, thank you. I got one at least. So, you know, just thinking about this. Our death is to glorify God.

God. That's beyond comprehension and like, oh my word. Not just the way I live my life but now also my death.

Psalm 116 verse 15, precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. The death of a saint is not something that the Lord considers as cheap.

He does not let his people die for no reason. It's through the death of a believer that a lost sinner can see the light of the gospel. And we've heard that from the standpoint of people who have cancer and going for treatment or who are on dialysis and are going for treatment that they have their nurses or their doctors or whoever is there to care for them, the medical team there.

[34 : 42] And they talk about it and say, I take the opportunity to share the gospel with that person. And I've heard encounters where it's the same person time and time again.

They've developed a good relationship with them. Maybe they've led them to Christ, maybe they haven't, but they take the opportunity. They see it as this is my burden and problem, my cross to bear.

I have to go for dialysis, I have to go for radiation, I have to go for chemo or whatever. But God has then put in that a divine appointment for whoever I talk to for me to share the gospel with, for me to glorify God and talk about how great and awesome and mighty he is.

Even though my body is breaking down and I'm dying, I can still praise him and thank him because I have eternal life through Jesus Christ. And God uses those opportunities through a believer to reach a lost sinner, to work in their life.

And you may not be, that may be you when you go to the doctor or you go for treatment or whatever and you're sharing the gospel, you're sharing the gospel, sharing the gospel and glorifying God and you just don't see anything.

[35 : 50] But you might just be one of many in the line that might bring that person to Christ. The fact and reality is that you are faithful to glorify God even in the midst of your trial and desperate hardship because God will use that.

The hope and praise that are on the lips of a believer exists in the soul of a believer because of Christ. And that brings peace beyond all understanding and as the last bit of testimony from those who are committed to Christ.

And I've read and heard about testimonies of saints in the past who, like, their last words were quoting Scripture. No, in praising God even in death.

I've mentioned before, I've been listening through a podcast, Men Who Rocked the World. And let me tell you something, every time I listen to it, I am just in awe of these individuals from years ago that lived for God's glory.

And I just started yesterday listening to the, about the Marian martyrs. first guy that, you know, so those who were killed under the reign of Mary I of England, Bloody Mary.

[37 : 20] And she's a Catholic, diehard Catholic, and, you know, the whole deal there. Well, I was, the first, what I listened to is about John Rogers.

I want to just share with you an excerpt from Fox's Book of Martyrs as it relates to this guy, John Rogers. Because I was just, I was blown away and challenged, encouraged, and thankful for his testimony.

So John Rogers, he was in prison because he was charged with heresy due to the fact that he denied the real presence of Christ in the sacrament of communion. So think about that.

John Rogers is being killed, is going to be martyred, because he doesn't believe that the bread is the actual body of Christ or that the cup is the actual blood of Christ.

Okay? This is real. This is what was going on. Mr. Rogers was confined. Not the Mr. Rogers you and I know. So Mr. Rogers was confined for a long time, lodged in Newgate among thieves and often harshly examined by Gardner and others.

[38 : 29] Those are committees. He was at length condemned by the Bishop of Winchester. The keeper of Newgate's wife was sent to tell him to prepare for the fire.

When she came to him, she found him sleeping so profoundly that she had some difficulty in awakening him. At length, being aroused and fairly awaked, he was told to make haste.

He was then led to Bishop Bonner to be degraded, which being done, he craved one petition of the Bishop. So John Rogers asked for one thing, that he might speak a few words to his wife before he was burnt.

Even this was denied him. Then he said, you declare what your charity is. The sheriff's now led him away to Smithfield, where he was asked if he would recant his opinion.

He answered that what he had preached, he would seal with his blood. Then, said the sheriff, thou art a heretic. To which the unshaken hero of God replied, that shall be known at the day of judgment.

[39 : 38] Well, said the sheriff, I will never pray for thee. But I will pray for you, said John Rogers. All the way to the stake, he was singing psalms.

All the people were rejoicing at his constancy, at his testimony. He was unshaken. On the way, he was met by his wife and his eleven children, one an infant in her arms.

The sad sight did not move him, but he cheerfully and patiently went on his way to Smithfield, where he was burned to ashes in the presence of a great number of people. And his soul ascended in a chariot of fire to the redeemer of whom he was worthy, inasmuch as he loved him more than wife and children, yea, even than his own life also.

The testimony of John Rogers constantly pointed to Christ. Even in his death, he was unmoved in his commitment to the truth that gave glory to God.

As you look at the lame beggar, he had no regard for the temple etiquette.

[40 : 50] He had no regard for what they expected of him. He glorified God because of what God had done in him. You got the man born blind, glorified God with no regard to being concerned or scared of the Pharisees and Sadducees and of being put out of the temple.

John Rogers glorified God to the end. Was not moved by his circumstance, was not moved by what lay before him.

He constantly was committed to the truth of Scripture and to glorifying God. Ladies and gentlemen, each one of us endures particular hardships in life.

And the severity of the hardship is up to the perspective of the individual. But no matter what the issue is that we're facing, we have been placed here and in that circumstance for the glory of God. And as the Apostle Paul mentions to the church at Philippi in Philippians 4.4, rejoice in the Lord always. Again, I will say rejoice. So resolve that in the midst of your trial, you will say as Mary, the mother of Jesus said in Luke 1.46 and 47, my soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God, my Savior.

[42 : 25] Our trials, our hardships are meant for a purpose to glorify God. Let's pray. Lord, thank you for this time in your word and this time to reflect on this amazing account in Acts 3.

Lord, I just pray that we would indeed recognize that our circumstances do not dictate our attitude. It does not dictate our actions. And it does not determine your goodness. But Lord, you bring us in trials through trials so that we may glorify your name.

So we may give praise to you. That we know we're being molded and shaped into the image of Christ. Christ. And Lord, we recognize the immense trial that our Savior went through on the cross. What he endured. Physical pain. Breaking down. Ultimately. Ceasing of the body.

[43 : 40] But even more so, Lord. The three hours of darkness from 12 to 3. Where your wrath was being poured out on him. To atone and forgive our sins.

Oh, thank you, Lord. For such a trial that was endured by our Savior. And Lord, for the confidence in knowing that there is no trial that we endure.

That we cannot. Also, give thanks to you for knowing that we are being molded and shaped into the image of Christ and sharing in his sufferings.

Amen.