

# Necessity of Rejoicing in Missions

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Date: 04 September 2022

[ 0 : 00 ] Acts 14, 27, our passage that talks about the church coming together, rehearsing what God has done, and speaking of open doors, it starts off with a they came together. I'd like for you to imagine this group of people who gathered, who they were, what God had done with them, what caused them to rejoice, the importance of their rejoicing.

We get some of their stories. We learn about the tax collectors that were there. We learn about the people that were outcast. We have an idea of who made up that room, but we don't know all of their stories, but every one of them that we heard is wonderful.

This is the same with the group in here today. I don't know all of your stories. I know a lot of your stories, but every one of them is wonderful when we meet Jesus. Acts 14, 27, And when they were come and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them and how it opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.

So not just speaking about mission, missions, and missionaries, we talk about disciples, discipling, and disciplers. As we understand that the work of missions is the work that we are all given the doom, then we can rejoice together in a special way.

We've all been given this joy and privilege of sharing the gospel with those who do not know it. Book of Acts gives us so many examples and stories that help us understand what it looked like as the gospel was moving forward.

[ 1 : 25 ] It's what we want to know about, right? We want to know if the gospel is moving forward. If I was to talk to somebody at another church and they were telling about something that they were doing, the question I'd want to know is, is it helping the gospel move forward, right?

Because that's what we're looking for. How do we take the gospel from where it's at and get it to places where it is not at? Verse number 21, it says, And when they had preached the gospel to that city and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra.

That returning again, as we look at the work of making disciples and the characteristics, they're returning. These are people that they had already met. On that map you saw that they'd already went by, that they'd already shared the gospel with, and now these people that had heard the gospel, they were coming back to them once again.

And what is it that they do? There's a group of people that had heard the gospel and they were going to return to them. Verse number 22 and 23 show us what they did. They confirmed the souls of the disciples, they exhort them, they ordained elders, they commended to the Lord.

Confirming means that they make solid, they fix the glow down. They make them solid in the Word. They took this group of new believers. Last week in Luke chapter number 17, a very strong passage about what should not happen with little ones, what shouldn't happen with new believers, with people who are new in their faith.

[ 2 : 46 ] We should not live as an offense to them. It may come, but woe unto us if we are an offense to little ones, young children, those that are new in the faith. But what should we do with a new believer?

We should help confirm them. We should help make them solid in the Word. We should teach them the Scriptures. That's one thing that it says in discipleship. Next thing it says, exhorting them. That's urging a person to a proper course of conduct.

Just encouraging them on. Hey man, just keep it up. So proud of what you're doing. Let me help you out. Here's a resource. Let me keep you accountable. You know what we talked about last time. Let me help you with that.

Confirming and exhorting. Then it says that they ordain them elders. This is where you may step out and say, well that's not something that I can be involved at. But what they're doing is, they're just helping create an order, some involvement, some organization.

They're just, the person that's being confirmed, that knows the Bible now, that they're exhorting in the Word, they're helping them find their place in serving. They're bringing some structure to it. Hey, have you considered signing up for this ministry?

[ 3 : 52 ] Or hey, I just heard about this opportunity. I really think that you may enjoy this. We should go to that thing together. And then lastly, they're commending unto the Lord, saying, these disciples are not followers of me.

These disciples are followers of Jesus, and I trust him with them. So that's what we see with the apostles. They'll come through an area, they'll preach the gospel, but then they're returning back to that place, and what we see in them is the work of discipleship.

I'm going to tell a story about my mom. She's really nervous today, as you can imagine. All right? But y'all know I tell a lot of mom's stories. My wife would say I'm a mama's boy, but I asked my mom. She said I'm not, so I don't think I am. All right? And there was a young man that was living out of his car outside of a YMCA there, where we're from, and he came to know Christ and just had a great zeal for the Lord.

And I was out in California where he was at, and my mom wanted me to stop and see him, and he was standing outside. Gary, you're going to love this. He's standing outside of the church where he was attending, and he was telling me, he said, this week I saw seven people come to know Jesus, and he told me the story, and he was standing there, and he said, I do this every week, and I never see them.

They never come to church. And he went out there, and he was standing with tears in his eyes. And I said, we have, the work isn't over. You've got a disciple. You have to go, you need to go through them.

[ 5 : 15 ] You need to help them. You need to take them in the Bible. You need to show them how to get here. You need to show them what time to be here. You need to tell them why they ought to be here. There's so much more work to be done. But he had such a great zeal for the Lord, but he didn't understand this area of discipleship.

And as disciples, which is what every one of you here believers are to be, are to be disciples, people that take what has been given to you. Last Sunday night, we looked at Aquila and Priscilla, just a couple that says, hey, we learned something.

Can we teach this to you, Apollos? That's the job that we've been given to do as a church. And so these disciples, we follow up. We don't quit after we lead somebody to Christ.

We go back and we teach them. We go back, we exhort them. We go back, we help them get involved. We go back to them, we help commit them to the Lord through prayer and praying for them that they would follow Christ.

And that is the true work of a discipler. I'm glad to say that he grew. He got confirmed and exhorted. And now he has, last I heard, he was serving as one of the pastors at Bellevue Baptist Church outside of Memphis, Tennessee, which many of you, if you ever listened to Adrian Rogers, he pastored there for many years.

[ 6 : 23 ] He was a kid. I was homeless. But then he got saved. But then he got disciplined. And then he turned around and said, this is the best thing in all of the world. And he started doing it. And the story continues.

And God can use you. When you meet a person, if they're an unbeliever, you share the gospel. But if they know the gospel, the work is still not over them in helping one another. And so they were obediently doing the work that God had called them to do.

So that's one of the things that we see about them, the characteristic, is that they were faithfully going about what God had given them to do. Verse 21, it says they preached the gospel. In verse 23, they ordained elders.

In verse 10, it tells a story where Paul, he had walked in with a loud voice. He healed somebody. This is what he was given to do in his ministry there as apostle. And they were using the gifts that God had given them.

And as they were doing that and going about their work, God was directing them to those that they could disciple. They were faithfully being obedient to what God had given them to do, that God brought people into their lives.

[ 7 : 28 ] Alex, would you mind showing that picture I have there of Katie Holt? This is Katie coming back from Honduras. All right? And so here's a very literal example of this because she is on a flight.

But Katie went to Honduras with the thoughts that she wants to work in orphan care and in foster care. And she went over there to see that ministry. But on her way back, she met this man and shared the gospel with him.

And he became a believer. And we can rejoice in this today. And this is not, we're not often on our way to Honduras to look at an orphanage. That's a very literal interpretation.

But as we're being faithful at doing what God has called us to do, he brings people into our lives and he gives us opportunities at the workplace and the places that we go as we're being obedient to the things that God has gifted us to do.

That video that showed during our offering devotion today, and we say, God, thank you for giving us the blessing of work. Thank you, Lord, for the gifts and the talents that you have given us.

[ 8 : 29 ] God's given each one of you gifts and talents. And those gifts and talents take you different places all throughout the week. And as it takes you there, you look for opportunities like the one that Katie found here.

So first of all, we see that they're obediently going about their work. And as they do, God leads them, the people that they can share the gospel with and see disciplined. Next, we see here that they continue despite opposition.

Acts 14, 2. It says, And the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and made their minds evil affected against them. That's verse 2. And then in verse number 6, it says, And they were of it and they fled the Lystra and Derbe, and the regions that lied beyond it went past it.

So here's opposition that comes and then they flee from it. And you're like, well, that's not a very good example of how to withstand opposition. Well, that's not all, okay? Verse number 21, And when they had preached the gospel to that city and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra.

They're coming back. It wasn't the time, but they had come back and in spite of the opposition, they just continued doing what God had given them to do, being faithful to it.

[ 9 : 39 ] Even though there was opposition, they were going to go back and they're going to do the work. And then they see this confidence that they have. There's a confidence in God's power, not in themselves that they act upon, but they had real confidence that God could and would work in and through them.

Acts 14, 8. And there sat a man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who had never walked. Here's Paul and Barnabas. They walked upon a man and he's not able to walk.

And Paul told him, verse 10, with a loud voice, Stand up on thy feet and leap and walk. This could have been quite an issue for Paul, couldn't it? If he would have walked upon this man and he would have said this, that this thing could happen and it did not happen.

But in doing that, Paul had confidence in what God had called him to do in that moment. There was a man who knew God had promised him power. He claimed it and he used it.

You know, Christian, you have the same thing. Not necessarily we don't have the apostolic gifts of miracles and healing, but you've been given a power of God by the indwelling Spirit to share Christ in his power.

[ 10 : 48 ] That when you go around with the sharing of the gospel, it has a power. It is the power of God unto salvation. That you can believe that the Holy Spirit can and will use you.

And so you can move through this life with a confidence knowing that the Holy Spirit can use you with a real confidence. Not beat down, not discouraged, not just watching all the time the news that tells us how incredibly bad the world is.

Not always looking at every situation thinking, woe is me, I can't do anything about it. But with a real confidence that God cares for the people that you know and that he wants to work in and through your life.

And speak loudly with a voice and ask God to work in and through you to do what he wants to do in these situations. And so in doing this, they do all of this with a great humility.

The work of confirming, the work of discipleship, they're doing this and as they go about their work, they're meeting people and they have the confidence that God wants to work and they do it with humility. Verse number 12, and they call Barnabas Jupiter and Paul Mercurius because he was the chief speaker.

[ 12 : 00 ] And so he was very good with his speech and the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates and would have done sacrifice with the people. So here's Paul and Barnabas and they're standing there and when they do, they had, something had happened, right?

Something miraculous had happened and they said, Paul and Barnabas, they must be these gods, these false gods that we have been worshiping and they're finally here and they went and got, made a parade and they went and got things and they were going to worship with Paul and Barnabas because they're like, wow, the power really lies in with these guys here and could you imagine the situation?

Like they say, that did not go as planned, right? I can see Paul and Barnabas look at each other and say, that is not what we were expecting to happen but they were in a moment. Talk about being a celebrity.

These people were going to be beyond celebrity status. They were getting to a point where they were going to be worshipped. That what God had done in and through them was being as if it was done by them and what is their response in verse number 14?

And when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of it, they rent their clothes and ran among the people crying out. And this is what they said. Verse 15, Sirs, why do you do these things?

[ 13 : 15 ] We are also men of like passions with you and preach unto you that you should turn from these vanities unto the living God which made heaven and earth and the sea and all the things that are therein.

They looked at him and said, guys, this is, we are not what you think we are. We are men just like you, men of like passions but it's the gospel message. It is the fact that we have a living God.

It is God that has done the work and then they remain persistent at it. Verse 19, And there came therein Jews from Antioch and Iconia who persuaded the people to have stoned Paul.

But what's the response of verse 20? How be it? How be it? As the disciples stood around about him, he arose up and came into the city the next day. And so they continued persistently in the work that they were doing.

2 Timothy 2.3 tells us that we should endure hardness in our work that we're doing in trying to win people to Christ and in making disciples. Some of you may have a copy of Crudence Concordance.

[ 14 : 16 ] I don't but from here it looks like I do, doesn't it? I thought I had a Crudence Concordance but I don't. I have Adam Clark's commentary. You ought to take some time and read about Crudence Commentary.

It is known as the largest task of manual compilation ever undertaken by one man. Over 2 million words.

There's no software for this, Brother Ty. There's no computer going on. There is no team of people that other people would use but Crudence takes looking down at the words and creates a concordance with over 2 million words for people so that they would have this resource in studying the Bible.

Doesn't make any money off of it for a long time and the first prince gets to a place where people even consider that he's crazy which I imagine if you're looking at a book for that long every day all the time and having to fund it himself he gets to a place where it's just not to understand.

I can think of so many different stories but do you understand the gift that was given to us by a person who would be willing to just be persistent who said I'm willing to care my life is going to be lived for other people.

[ 15 : 25 ] I'm willing to give my life to providing a concordance so that when my brothers and sisters for the years to come will know how they can find up scripture passages and how they can do it.

What a gift we've been given because of their persistence. Some of you in here today you think of other stories of persistence people inviting you people sharing the gospel with you the people not giving up on you but the story of Christians ought to be those one of persistence one that understand that what we're doing it really matters and so they endure hardness and they continue so we see them as doing the work of making disciples persistently obediently enduring hardness with humility in the midst of all this description and the strategy permissions we find a very deliberate plan to gather together to rejoice.

I don't expect that you're surprised about any of the characteristics that I've given you so far as a disciple maker nor do I think you're surprised that I'm going to tell you that they're going to rejoice but what I want you to contemplate today is that rejoicing was part of their mission's strategy it's the role of rejoicing in our mission is to make disciples of all nations disciple makers disciples share what God is doing with other disciples so they can be encouraged.

Acts 14 verse 24 and 25 it says that they're returning once again and when they do in verse 27 they gather the church together to rehearse what was done.

We should love together and rejoice. Luke 15 one of my favorite portions of the Bible just a few less than a month ago we were looking at Luke 15 and we were seeing a group of people we saw a shepherd who found the sheep hey what does he do?

[ 17 : 07 ] He gathers up people and rejoice. We find a woman who lost a silver corn she finds it she goes and shares it with other people. We find a father whose prodigal had come home he kills the fatted calf he calls everybody in and he rejoices then we find at the end of that this is a time of rejoicing that takes place in heaven when a sinner comes to repentance.

That heaven is a gathering place of people that are rejoicing in the work that God has done. And so we should recognize when God has done a work in and through us.

Through the book of Acts we have statements like this in Acts 15:4 and when they were come to Jerusalem they were received of the church and of the apostles and elders and they declared all the things that God had done with them.

That recognizing that God has done something special and we need to praise his name. 2 Chronicles we're told that the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout this earth and what he's looking for is he's looking for people with a perfect or a complete heart towards him in which he can show himself strong and when he does that we rejoice.

Acts 5:12 And then all the multitude kept silent and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them. Paul and Barnabas did not come in and say look at what we have done.

[ 18 : 28 ] They came back and they said let's gather together let's rejoice in what God had done through us. And so there must be so first of all we recognize from the Luke 15 stories about rejoicing that it's good we need to recognize that it's when God is working in and through us that God is doing the work that God has done something that we are not able to do we praise his name.

And secondly very simpler simply there must be a gathering of people in order to have a party. Each story they went out and gathered people to tell the story.

We should make this a pattern of our lives. It ought to be a desire to rejoice and to gather people. We will do this this coming weekend as a missions conference in a very way that the church will gather together as I've said.

But that is not the only way in which people can get together. You can make a phone call and I'm going to encourage you to do that today. If the person that led you to the Lord or the people that were influential in your life in bringing you to Christ I want to encourage you this afternoon make a phone call write a letter do something so that you're sharing in what God has done and as we said there's rejoicing that takes place in heaven.

What we also learn about rejoicing in heaven from Zephaniah it says Zephaniah 3:17 The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty he will save he will rejoice over thee with joy he will rest in his love he will joy over thee with singing that the Father rejoices and there's joy in the fact that we have been redeemed.

[ 20 : 01 ] The prodigal the older brother did not want to enter into the joy of the Father that was a place of rejoicing but he did not want to enter into that. We ought to be rejoicing people there's great joy that's found with it because our Father is a rejoicing Father he's a rejoicing God and there's joy.

Apostle Paul speaks a lot about rejoicing there's things that we learn from him he rejoiced when he was in prison because he knew that being in prison would result in other people here in the gospel. Philippians 1:12 but I should understand brethren that the things which have happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel.

I can rejoice because being here makes more people know. He says it isn't just that the guards around him here but Philippians 1:14 it says and many of the brethren in the Lord waxen confident by my bonds and much more bold to speak the word without fear.

He is rejoicing that he is in prison because by being in prison it has brought courage and confidence to the other believers and then it says that some people are preaching the gospel out of contention they preach Christ and there in verse 18 there and do rejoice yea and will rejoice he is rejoicing that as well he is rejoicing in the things he is directly connected with and then he can look across the way and say those are things that aren't connected with me that are being done out of contention and I rejoice in that because when I hear that the gospel is going forward I rejoice because that's what he wants in life Paul would teach that there is a connection between one another through rejoicing Romans 12 15 rejoice with them that rejoice and weep with them that weep we have responsibility as a church to weep with one another when it's time for weeping but we equally have a responsibility to rejoice when it's time to rejoice 1 Corinthians 12 26 and whether one member suffer all members suffer with it or one member be honored all members rejoice with it we should share together and rejoicing it's one of the ways in which Christians can obey this imperative of rejoicing as we gather together and share and tell stories of what God has done and so how would we rejoice with those that rejoice it says that even in the midst of suffering though I'm sorrowful 2 Corinthians 6 10 yet I rejoice as poor yet making many rich as having nothing yet possessing all things though we can weep at a time that we are sorrowful but we would rejoice and there's a contrast just like riches to poor or having nothing to having everything or rejoicing is a contrast to being sorrowful we have something that has not saddened us but has brought us great joy and happiness and it requires having a relationship if we are going to rejoice together it requires caring for other people

Philippians 2 2 and 3 tells us that we are to not have strife and vain glory but with a lowliness of mind that we should look after the things of other people and that is the mind of Christ and so having a relationship inside the church means that the things that are important to you should be important to me the things that you can weep over are things that I can weep over the things that you rejoice in are things that I would rejoice in and so when the seasons come as Ecclesiastes says where there's a time of mourning we can also gather together for a time of rejoicing and so Philippians 2 17 it says yea and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and the service of your faith I joy and rejoice with you all for the same cause also do you joy and rejoice with me Apostle Paul says he's gathered with a group of people in Acts we saw that there was a gathering now we have another gathering and we're getting to see even more getting to see a little bit even closer Acts 14 they gathered we're kind of seeing it from a distance here now in Philippians we're seeing the Apostle Paul gathered with some people and what are they rejoicing with and he says the thing I'm rejoicing in you're rejoicing for the same cause and this thing we're rejoicing in it brings us great joy and it's Paul whose life had been offered

[ 24 : 04 ] Philippians 2 Timothy 4 6 he says that his life had been offered the same thing that he's saying here in this passage and so he is rejoicing him that he has given his life he has poured it out for the sake of the gospel and that they have responded in faith and he's rejoicing over that he's rejoicing over people coming to Christ and those same people now are rejoicing with him so for Paul joy and faith are inseparable when you have saving faith you have tasted the joy that belongs to that faith and so when it's given away it multiplies it doesn't divide and so this is the work of the ministry to give the testimony of the work of God in your life you can do this as well you can give testimony to believing friends you can give testimony to unbelieving friends simply speak about what God has done in your life and the passage ends with and there they abode a long time with the disciples everything in

Acts seems so fast paced to me right but it says they got to a place and they just sat down and they just enjoyed this moment where they could rejoice in what God was doing a time when the church was flourishing was a time where people had time to sit down and rejoice together in what God had done and so as they were traveling Acts 15:3 tells us they're going to take this story of how God is saving Gentile people and when they travel through in Acts 15:3 and being brought on the way by the church they pass through Venus and Samaria declaring the conversion of the Gentiles and they caused great joy unto all the brethren what a great ministry to have right they went around sharing stories of what God had done and everywhere they went where there were brothers and sisters there was in Christ and they shared the story there was great rejoicing that's a great ministry to have you know that's the ministry that you have as well is sharing with one another the great things that God has given

Travis and Terry Snowed and their family this Thursday almost 18 years in Northern Ireland and England they poured their life out as a drink offering as the apostle Paul would say people responded in faith they are a people that are rejoicing that God used their life and so what is the natural response to us as brothers and sisters is that we're going to rejoice with him we're going to celebrate you in here today you don't need to have a missions presentation on Thursday night like the snows but Jesus Christ saved you you have a story to tell you need to tell it to brothers and sisters in Christ you need to get with them and tell them what God has done and you need to rejoice in that and so we get together in moments and rejoice in all that God has done it's wonderful and all the busyness in the book of Acts there's plenty of time that have taken where the disciples abode for a long time and just celebrated

I want you to be with us as much as you're able to this coming weekend that our rejoicing as a church is not limited to one weekend a year but we are a people that the Father rejoices over we are a people that rejoice over what God is doing because we're involved in this work this isn't somebody else's story but this is a story of the Holy Spirit working in our time this is a story of the Holy Spirit working in and through our church to see people saved to hear testimonies are you grateful today do you rejoice in the fact that Jesus Christ saved you if not let me share with you a story let me tell you how Jesus Christ can save you and if so are you rejoicing in what God has done with other people in this room I am so blessed to know so many of the stories in here today and my heart leaps as I look out of here and I think about what God has done in your life but that story doesn't need to stay with you it needs to be shared one to another and we need to find it as a church family as a group of disciples we need to gather together and rejoice often and



I hope and I pray that is your heart as we go into our coming missions conference this coming weekend let's pray Heavenly Father thank you so much for what we get to see here in the book of Acts Father I thank you that I'm reminded Lord that I've been confronted with the fact that these apostles were not just effective at the work that you called them to do because they were very busy but Lord they had their hearts aligned that what was important to you Lord was important to them they rejoiced together over the same things or they rejoiced together over their salvation they rejoiced together over the salvation of other people with every head bowed and every eye closed let me ask a couple questions first of all to those who have in here that may not be believing that you have yet to rejoice and know that Jesus Christ died for you you're outside of knowing him but today could be the day through the word of God that you could be shown something that is very much rejoicing in that your life that could be filled with sorrow and depression that you say I just have nothing good that's ever happened to me that's of any value of eternal value let me tell you what happened 2,000 years ago on a cross but believer would you evaluate what's what matters to you the day would you evaluate your rejoicing is it part of the rhythm of your life is it part of the conversations that we are having and let's make it part of it let's make a decision right there in your seat or here at the altar would you pray and say God would you put the name of a person upon my heart maybe it's the name of a person in this room or maybe it's somebody that you'll need to call but it's somebody that you can rejoice together in the gospel and let's begin doing it now not waiting for next weekend not waiting for Thursday but starting right now let's look for opportunities to rejoice in what God has done piano is going to play you're going to continue to pray there at the altar in your seat I'm going to find a place to pray and then I'm going to come back here and close us with a word of prayer and then we will stand and sing together prayer and then we'll pray together so

[ 30 : 45 ] Heavenly Father, as we end our time together today, we are going to sing from our heart, Father, how you are a rock and you are a redeemer.

And we rejoice in our salvation. I pray, Lord, that is sung from the heart of every man and woman in this room today, that our rejoicing in our salvation would be not contained or confined, Lord, to this building.

It would not be confined to the songs that we sing, but it will be part of the life that we live. Father, make us as a church a rejoicing people, those that value what you value, that rejoice in what you have said is worthy of rejoicing in.

In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.