



MAIN SCRIPTURES

- Isa. 55:8-9; Acts 9, 14, 20, 21
- Prov. 3:5-6; 1 Sam. 23, 24

SURRENDER MY RIGHTS

- Surrender Explanations
- Practice Acceptance

FOUNDATIONAL SCRIPTURES:

“Beloved, now we are children of God. **It is not yet revealed what we will be; but we know that when He is revealed, we will be like Him**, for we will see Him just as He is.” 1 John 3:2 WEBUS

“**For my thoughts are not your thoughts, and your ways are not my ways**,” says Yahweh. “**For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways** higher than your ways, **and my thoughts** than your thoughts.” Isaiah 55:8-9 WEBUS

“**Trust in Yahweh** with all your heart, and **don’t lean on your own understanding**. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.” Proverbs 3:5-6 WEBUS

“...they **stoned Paul** and dragged him out of the city, **supposing that he was dead**. ...he **rose up, and entered into the city**. **On the next day he went out**... When they had **preached** ... and had made many disciples, they **returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch**, strengthening the souls of the disciples, **exhorting**

them to continue in the faith, and that through many afflictions we must enter into God's Kingdom." Acts 14:19-22 WEBUS

"...Who knows if you haven't come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" Esther 4:14 WEBUS

"[David] said to his men, "Yahweh forbid that I should do this thing to my Lord, Yahweh's anointed..."" 1 Samuel 24:6 WEBUS

"Now, behold, I go bound by the Spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there; except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions wait for me. But these things don't count; nor do I hold my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to fully testify to the Good News of the grace of God." Acts 20:22-24 WEBUS

"...For I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." When he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, **"The Lord's will be done."**" Acts 21:13-14 WEBUS

INTRODUCTION:

Cease resistance; abandon control of your life entirely, and come into complete submission to God. That's what it means to surrender. When Y'shua returns, some of you will be like Him. And

for that transformation to occur, it requires that you surrender your need for explanations and practice acceptance with joy.

Pray this without ceasing: “God, I stand before You today and confess that You do not owe me a reason for why You do anything. I know that Your thoughts, Your plans, and Your ways are on a need-to-know basis, and most often they are beyond my need to know. So, I no longer need to understand Your methods nor Your motives. Today, I welcome whatever You have for me with joy in my heart, even if You have not revealed why things are the way they are. I will no longer depend on my own understanding; and instead, at times when I just can’t reason why things are the way they are, I will acknowledge that You are God and I am not!”

Whoever won’t surrender their need for explanations and instead practice acceptance with joy simply won’t become like Him.

SURRENDER THAT I HAVE ANY RIGHTS AT ALL!

1. Surrender My Rights: Surrender Explanations & Practice Acceptance

A. Surrender Explanations

- (1) **Introduction:** God does not need to explain Himself to you, even when what He allows is not to your liking.

(a) **Surrender Explanations:** God does not owe you a reason for why He does anything. You need not understand His methods nor His motives.

1. ““**For my thoughts are not your thoughts, and your ways are not my ways,**” says Yahweh. **For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways** higher than your ways, **and my thoughts** than your thoughts.” Isaiah 55:8-9 WEBUS
 - a) God’s thoughts, plans, and ways are on a need-to-know basis, and most often they are beyond your need to know.
- (b) If you are to maximize the benefits of this study, there are three critical questions you must answer honestly:
 1. Do you believe God owes you a reason for what He allows?
 2. Does God need to check-in with you about His plans?
 3. Must God’s methods and motives make sense to you?

(2) Paul’s First Missionary Journey

(a) An embittered audience does not make Paul embittered!

1. “In Iconium, they entered together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spoke that a great multitude both of Jews and of Greeks believed. But

the disbelieving Jews stirred up and embittered the souls of the Gentiles against the brothers. Therefore they stayed there a long time, speaking boldly in the Lord, who **testified to** the word of **his grace**, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands. But the multitude of the city was divided. Part sided with the Jews and part with the apostles. When some of both the Gentiles and the Jews, with their rulers, **made a violent attempt to mistreat and stone them**, they became aware of it and **fled to the cities of Lycaonia, Lystra, Derbe**, and the surrounding region. There they preached the Good News.” Acts 14:1-7 WEBUS

- a) Paul is all-in on the mission field...
 - 1) The message of the cross clearly evokes strong reactions in Iconium—bitterness and violence.
 - 2) Paul's response: he stayed longer, preached more boldly, and openly testified of God's grace (which manifested miracles).
 - 3) What God allowed: Paul and his team were almost stoned, but they fled...

- b) Question

- 1) Must God's methods and motives make sense to you?

(b) Paul lands in Lystra...

1. “At Lystra a certain man sat, impotent in his feet, a cripple from his mother’s womb, who never had walked. He was listening to Paul speaking, who, fastening eyes on him and seeing that he had faith to be made whole, said with a loud voice, “Stand upright on your feet!” He leaped up and walked. When the multitude saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voice, saying in the language of Lycaonia, **“The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men!” They called Barnabas “Jupiter”, and Paul “Mercury”**, because he was the chief speaker. The priest of Jupiter, whose temple was in front of their city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates, and would have made a sacrifice along with the multitudes. But **when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of it, they tore their clothes** and sprang into the multitude, crying out, **“Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men of the same nature as you**, and bring you good news, that you should turn from these vain things to the living God, who made the sky, the earth, the sea, and all that is in them; who in the generations gone by allowed all the

nations to walk in their own ways. Yet **he didn't leave himself without witness**, in that he did good and gave you rains from the sky and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.”” Acts 14:8-17 WEBUS

- a) Is Paul's experience in Lystra any different?
 - 1) Paul heals a lame man in public and the people immediately begin to worship and sacrifice to him and Barnabas as if they are pagan gods.
 - 2) The mission team corrects the people, exposes their absurdity, and begins to point them to the true and living God.
 - 3) It is explained to them that what they experience from observing nature is not from the presence of pagan gods at all, but is a witness to the one true God.
- b) Question
 - 1) Must God's methods and motives make sense to you?
- c) The violent men from Iconium show up in Lystra...
 - 1. “But some Jews from Antioch and Iconium came there, and having persuaded the multitudes, **they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city**,

supposing that he was dead. But as the disciples stood around him, he **rose up, and entered into the city.** **On the next day he went** out with Barnabas to Derbe." Acts 14:19-20 WEBUS

- a) They persuade the people of Lystra to stone Paul!
 - 1) Paul is dragged outside Lystra and stoned until they believe he is dead.
 - 2) But when the persecutors dispersed Paul actually got up; his team brought him back into the city to rest overnight.
 - 3) The next day Paul departed with Barnabas to Derbe. To do what?
- b) Question
 - 1) Do you believe God owes you a reason for what He allows?
- (d) God has allowed Paul to be stoned to within an inch of his life... and how does Paul respond?
 - 1. **"When they had preached the Good News to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch,** strengthening the souls of the disciples, **exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that through many afflictions we must enter into God's Kingdom."** Acts 14:21-22 WEBUS

- a) In Derbe, Paul goes right back to preaching!
 - 1) And when he is done, he returned to Lystra, where he was stoned, and then to Iconium, from where the men came who inspired those who stoned him in Lystra.
 - 2) Instead of seeking any explanation from God for his suffering, he accepts his situation and it obviously does not deter him even a little.

- b) Question

- 1) Do you believe God owes you a reason for what He allows?
- (e) I want you to really appreciate how Paul (and his team) framed what just took place.

1. **"When they had appointed elders for them in every assembly, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord** on whom they had believed. They passed through Pisidia and came to Pamphylia. When they had spoken the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia. From there **they sailed to Antioch, from where they had been committed to the grace of God for the work which they had fulfilled.** When they had arrived and had gathered the assembly together, **they reported all the things**

that God had done with them, and that he had opened a door of faith to the nations. They stayed there with the disciples for a long time." Acts 14:23-28 WEBUS

- a) Paul was out on a mission for God and he was nearly stoned to death! He did not complain; he did not alter his plans (God's plans); and he did not even ask God why. Instead...
 - 1) He organized church leadership and dedicated them to the Lord in the cities he visited (and kept moving on to new cities).
 - 2) When he arrived back to Antioch (where the mission began), God is given all the credit (it was by God's grace they were able to minister).
 - 3) They testified to the fruit of the mission (the things God did through them.)
 - 4) But, do you know what they didn't talk about? They didn't say a single word about their trials, difficulties, persecution and torture.
 - 5) Now that is total surrender of the need for explanations and total acceptance with joy!
- b) Questions

- 1) Do you believe God owes you a reason for what He allows?
- 2) Does God need to check-in with you about His plans?
- 3) Must God's methods and motives make sense to you?

(3) Let's rewind to the moment Paul was apprehended by Christ and assigned his ministry.

- (a) By doing so, we might better understand why he was so accepting of his troubles...
 1. “But Saul, still breathing threats and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked for letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. As he traveled, he got close to Damascus, and **suddenly a light from the sky shone around him. He fell on the earth, and heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?”** He said, **“Who are you, Lord?”** The Lord said, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But rise up and enter into the city, then you will be told what you must do.” The men who traveled with him stood

speechless, hearing the sound, but seeing no one.

Saul arose from the ground, and when his eyes were opened, he saw no one. They led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. He was without sight for three days, and neither ate nor drank. Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus named Ananias. **The Lord said to him in a vision, “Ananias!” He said, “Behold, it’s me, Lord.” The Lord said to him, “Arise and go to** the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judah for one named **Saul, a man of Tarsus.** For behold, he is praying, and in a vision he has seen a man named Ananias coming in and laying his hands on him, that he might receive his sight.” **But Ananias answered, “Lord, I have heard from many about this man,** how much evil he did to your saints at Jerusalem. Here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on your name.”” Acts 9:1-14 WEBUS

- a) Paul was on a very different mission than the one we just read about (the one committed to him by the grace of God).
 - 1) His original mission was one he fabricated himself.

- 2) He asked for permission from Jewish leadership if he could go on a mission to persecute Christians.
- 3) Remember, this was shortly after he oversaw the illegal trial and murder of Stephen (Acts 6, 7).

- b) On his travels to Damascus, Y'shua got hold of him!
 - 1) The light of life shone from heaven and knocked him off his feet.
 - 2) Y'shua introduced himself to Paul as the one he's been persecuting.
 - 3) Paul received his new assignment; which he accepted IMMEDIATELY!
- c) Meanwhile, elsewhere...
 - 1) God prepared a prophetic word for Paul from a man named Ananias, who lived in Damascus.
 - 2) Ananias was understandably apprehensive, considering Paul's reputation and his assignment from the "*chief priests to bind all who call on His name.*"
 - 3) But he too accepted his assignment.
- d) Question

- 1) Does God need to check-in with you about His plans?
- (b) And what is that prophetic word?
 1. "But the Lord said to him, "**Go your way, for he is my chosen vessel to bear my name** before the nations and kings, and the children of Israel. For **I will show him how many things he must suffer for my name's sake.**"" Acts 9:15-16 WEBUS
 - a) This is how God prepared Paul to surrender the need for explanations and to accept every moment with joy...
 - 1) Tell Paul he is God's chosen vessel!
 - 2) Tell Paul he is called to testify about Y'shua: to the nations, to kings, and to Israel.
 - 3) Tell Paul that his assignment comes jammed-packed with opportunities to suffer—as we just witnessed in Acts 14 (on his first missionary journey).
 - b) FYI: it did not even take that long for Paul to experience an opportunity to surrender... and accept...!

- 1) Before Paul even departed from Damascus, after his conversion, he went out immediately and preached about Y'shua.
- c) Some accepted His conversion and his message with amazement...
 - 1) *"Immediately in the synagogues **he proclaimed the Christ**, that he is the Son of God. **All who heard him were amazed**, and said, "Isn't this he who in Jerusalem made havoc of those who called on this name? And he had come here intending to bring them bound before the chief priests!"*" Acts 9:20-21 WEBUS
- d) Some quite the opposite...
 - 1) *"But Saul increased more in strength, and confounded the Jews who lived at Damascus, proving that this is the Christ. When many days were fulfilled, **the Jews conspired together to kill him**,"* Acts 9:22-23 WEBUS
- e) Question
 - 1) Must God's methods and motives make sense to you?

B. Practice Acceptance

(1) **Introduction:** Accept whatever God has for you with joy in your heart even when you don't understand it.

(a) **Practice Acceptance:** Welcome what God has for you, even when God has not revealed why things are the way they are.

1. “**Trust in Yahweh** with all your heart, and **don’t lean on your own understanding**. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.” Proverbs 3:5-6 WEBUS

a) Don’t depend on your own understanding; and instead, at times when you just can’t reason why things are the way they are, acknowledge that He is God and you are not!

(b) If you are to maximize the benefits of this study, there are three questions that you must be willing to answer:

1. Are you ready to surrender your need for explanations and practice acceptance with joy?
2. Will you welcome whatever God has for you, even if He has not revealed why?
3. Will you surrender the requirement to understand, before you accept what God is doing?

(2) Esther

(a) “*For such a time as this.*”

1. "They told Esther's words to Mordecai. Then Mordecai asked them to return this answer to Esther: **"Don't think to yourself that you will escape in the king's house any more than all the Jews.** For if you remain silent now, then relief and deliverance will come to the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. **Who knows if you haven't come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"**" Esther 4:12-14 WEBUS

- a) It's the story of a Jewish exile named Esther, who becomes a queen willing to die for her people.
- b) It highlights her cousin and guardian Mordecai, an uncompromising officer at the king's gate.
- c) They work together to rescue their people from a plot to destroy them, a diabolical plan hatched by Haman, the evil progeny of king Agag, whose family line survived when king Saul of Israel discarded God's command to utterly destroy the Amalakites some 520 years earlier.
 - 1) Learn more about Saul and the amalekites...
[Surrender Entitlements and Practice Gratitude](#)
- d) Esther is understandably fearful and hesitant, but the words of her cousin Mordecai inspired her to

surrender her need for God to explain, and to accept her assignment...

- 1) *"Who knows if you haven't come to the kingdom **for such a time as this?**"*
- 2) Note: The Holiday commemorating the story of Esther is Purim.
- 3) You can see a complete teaching about Purim here: [The Queen who was Willing to Die](#)

e) Questions

- 1) Are you ready to surrender your need for explanations and practice acceptance with joy?
- 2) Will you welcome whatever God has for you, even if He has not revealed why?
- 3) Will you surrender the requirement to understand, before you accept what God is doing?

(3) David and Saul

- (a) The Chase! In 1 Samuel 23 we see Saul's relentless chasing of David to execute him.
 1. "When Saul had returned from following the Philistines, he was told, "Behold, David is in the wilderness of En Gedi." **Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and went to**

seek David and his men on the rocks of the wild goats. **He came to the sheep pens by the way, where there was a cave; and Saul went in to relieve himself.** Now David and his men were staying in the innermost parts of the cave. **David's men said** to him, **"Behold, the day of which Yahweh said to you, 'Behold, I will deliver your enemy into your hand, and you shall do to him as it shall seem good to you.'"** Then **David arose and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe secretly.** Afterward, David's heart struck him because he had cut off Saul's skirt." 1 Samuel 24:1-5
WEBUS

- a) David never did anything to harm Saul, nor anything to cause Saul to mistrust him. There was no legitimate explanation for why Saul was so embittered and enraged that he would literally hunt David to kill him. And yet, God delivered Saul into David hands.
- b) This is a critical piece to that story.
 - 1) Saul was informed that David had been spotted.
 - 2) He took three thousand men to capture David.
 - 3) During his hunt, Saul came to a cave and he went in to relieve himself.

- 4) Not coincidentally, David and his men were in that cave.
- 5) David's men reminded David that Yahweh promised He would deliver Saul into his hands.
- 6) This was David's opportunity to eliminate Saul.
- 7) David chose, instead, to sneak up behind Saul and to cut off the tassels from Saul's tunic.

c) Why would David not seize the moment and eliminate the imminent threat to his own life?

- 1) *"He said to his men, "**Yahweh forbid that I should do this thing to my Lord, Yahweh's anointed**, to stretch out my hand against him, since he is Yahweh's anointed."*" 1 Samuel 24:6
WEBUS

d) Questions

- 1) Are you ready to surrender your need for explanations and practice acceptance with joy?
- 2) Will you welcome whatever God has for you, even if He has not revealed why?
- 3) Will you surrender the requirement to understand, before you accept what God is doing?

(b) David Confronts Saul

1. “**So David checked his men with these words, and didn’t allow them to rise against Saul.** Saul rose up out of the cave, and went on his way. David also arose afterward, and went out of the cave and cried after Saul, saying, “My Lord the king!” When Saul looked behind him, David bowed with his face to the earth, and showed respect. **David said to Saul, “Why do you listen to men’s words, saying, ‘Behold, David seeks to harm you?’** Behold, today your eyes have seen how Yahweh had delivered you today into my hand in the cave. **Some urged me to kill you, but I spared you.** I said, ‘I will not stretch out my hand against my Lord, for he is Yahweh’s anointed.’ Moreover, my father, **behold, yes, see the skirt of your robe in my hand;** for in that I cut off the skirt of your robe and didn’t kill you, know and see that there is neither evil nor disobedience in my hand. **I have not sinned against you, though you hunt for my life to take it.** May Yahweh judge between me and you, and may Yahweh avenge me of you; but my hand will not be on you. As the proverb of the ancients says, ‘Out of the wicked comes wickedness;’ but my hand will not be on you. Against whom has the king of

Israel come out? Whom do you pursue? A dead dog? A flea? May **Yahweh therefore be judge, and give sentence between me and you**, and see, and plead my cause, and deliver me out of your hand.”” 1

Samuel 24:7-15 WEBUS

- a) David rebuked his men’s recommendation to kill Saul and also prevented them from taking action.
 - 1) Saul left the cave and David went after him.
 - 2) David revealed his presence and then bowed to Saul in respect for his king.
 - 3) David asked Saul to explain why he so easily believed the lie that “David seeks to harm you.”
 - 4) He then proved, by showing Saul the tassels from his garment, and how Yahweh gave him a chance to kill him moments earlier, and even that his men encouraged him to do so—but he didn’t!
- b) Why would David not do such a thing?
 - 1) Because, *“I will not stretch out my hand against my Lord, for he is Yahweh’s anointed.”*
 - 2) David had definitively proved to Saul that he had no ill will, nor evil intentions, against him.

- c) David then quoted an ancient proverb to explain his position (paraphrase):
 - 1) Wickedness comes from wicked people
 - 2) And David is content with Yahweh as the judge between them and as his avenger.

- d) Questions

- 1) Are you ready to surrender your need for explanations and practice acceptance with joy?
- 2) Will you welcome whatever God has for you, even if He has not revealed why?
- 3) Will you surrender the requirement to understand, before you accept what God is doing?

- (c) Something miraculous happens when you surrender!

- 1. “It came to pass, when David had finished speaking these words to Saul, that Saul said, “Is that your voice, my son David?” **Saul lifted up his voice and wept. He said to David, “You are more righteous than I; for you have done good to me, whereas I have done evil to you.** You have declared today how you have dealt well with me, because when Yahweh had delivered me up into your hand, you didn’t kill me. **For if a man finds his enemy, will he let him go**

away unharmed? Therefore may Yahweh reward you good for that which you have done to me today.

Now, behold, I know that you will surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel will be established in your hand. Swear now therefore to me by Yahweh that you will not cut off my offspring after me, and that you will not destroy my name out of my father's house." David swore to Saul. Saul went home, but David and his men went up to the stronghold." 1

Samuel 24:16-22 WEBUS

- a) Saul wept and admitted...
 - 1) David was the righteous one.
 - 2) David had done only good, whereas he had done only evil.
 - 3) Saul admitted that David just proved this by his actions. "*What man finds his enemy and lets him go away unharmed?*"
- b) Saul Conceded...
 - 1) Yahweh should reward you for the goodness you've shown today.
 - 2) "*You will surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel will be established in your hand.*"

- c) Saul Requested... (only the defeated make requests)
 - 1) *"Swear by Yahweh that you will not cut off my offspring."*
 - 2) David graciously agreed with Saul's request.
- d) Question
 - 1) Will you welcome whatever God has for you, even if He has not revealed why?

(4) (Back to Paul) Acceptance with Joy Exemplified!

- (a) *"That I may finish my race with joy..."*
 - 1. "From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called to himself the elders of the assembly. When they had come to him, he said to them, "You yourselves know, from the first day that I set foot in Asia, how I was with you all the time, serving the Lord with all humility, with many tears, and with trials which happened to me by the plots of the Jews; how **I didn't shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, teaching you publicly and from house to house**, testifying both to Jews and to Greeks repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus. **Now, behold, I go bound by the Spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me**

there; except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions wait for me. But these things don't count; nor do I hold my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to fully testify to the Good News of the grace of God.” Acts 20:17-24 WEBUS

- a) Paul intimates, “I don’t need explanations for anything; the joy of completing my ministry is enough for me!”
 - 1) Paul assembled the elders to reiterate the testimony of his ministry in Asia.
 - 2) I was with you constantly in service to the Lord.
 - 3) I was humble and emotional about the plots against me.
 - 4) No amount of persecution stopped me from declaring what was profitable, nor from teaching you publicly and from house to house, about God and faith in our Lord Jesus.
- b) Paul is prepared for his final journey...
 - 1) He is bound to the leading of the Holy Spirit
 - 2) He knows he is called to go to Jerusalem, even though he’s not sure exactly what will happen.

- 3) What he does know from the Holy Spirit is that in every city along the way, conflicts, chains, persecution, and afflictions await.
- c) Paul has totally surrendered: "*I accept my destiny with joy and have no need for explanations.*"
 - 1) I consider the threats on my life as nothing.
 - 2) I don't value my life above my calling.
 - 3) It is an absolute joy just to complete the ministry, which I received from the Lord, to fully testify to the Good News of God's grace.
- d) Questions
 - 1) Are you ready to surrender your need for explanations and practice acceptance with joy?
 - 2) Will you welcome whatever God has for you, even if He has not revealed why?
 - 3) Will you surrender the requirement to understand, before you accept what God is doing?

(b) A final goodbye.

1. ““Now, behold, **I know that you all, among whom I went about preaching God’s Kingdom, will see my face no more.** Therefore I testify to you today that I am clean from the blood of all men, for I didn’t

shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God. Take heed, therefore, to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the assembly of the Lord and God which he purchased with his own blood. **For I know that after my departure, vicious wolves will enter in among you, not sparing the flock.** Men will arise from among your own selves, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.

Therefore watch, **remembering that for a period of three years I didn't cease to admonish everyone night and day with tears.** Now, brothers, I entrust you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I coveted no one's silver, gold, or clothing. You yourselves know that these hands served my necessities, and those who were with me. In all things I gave you an example, that so laboring you ought to help the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' "

When he had spoken these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. **They all wept freely, and fell on**

Paul's neck and kissed him, sorrowing most of all because of the word which he had spoken, that they should see his face no more. Then they accompanied him to the ship." Acts 20:25-38 WEBUS

- a) Paul informed those to whom he ministered and worked alongside that this was his farewell speech.
 - 1) He faithfully preached about God's Kingdom.
 - 2) His conscience was clear because he did not hold anything back; "*He declared the whole counsel of God.*"
 - 3) He admonished the overseers to shepherd the flock faithfully, as he did—those purchased with the blood of Christ.
 - 4) He warned them that after his death, vicious predators, from among them, would attempt to sway believers by introducing perverse doctrines with the intention of drawing disciples toward themselves.
 - 5) Paul reminded them that for three years he passionately administered the truth daily.
 - 6) Then he entrusted them to God's grace, which he was confident would carry them forward.

- 7) He also reminded them that he coveted nothing from anyone and that he supported himself in ministry as a good example, and how important it was to help others.
- b) Before he departed Paul prayed...
 - 1) They cried together and shared affection.
 - 2) They were most sorrowful because they realized this was the last time they would see Paul.
- c) Questions
 - 1) Are you ready to surrender your need for explanations and practice acceptance with joy?
 - 2) Will you welcome whatever God has for you, even if He has not revealed why?
 - 3) Will you surrender the requirement to understand, before you accept what God is doing?
- (c) Acceptance with Joy: One Final Example
 1. “As we stayed there some days, **a certain prophet named Agabus** came down from Judea. **Coming to us and taking Paul’s belt, he bound his own feet and hands, and said, “The Holy Spirit says: ‘So the Jews at Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt, and will deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.’”**

When we heard these things, both we and the people of that place begged him not to go up to Jerusalem. Then Paul answered, “What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For **I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.**” When he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, “**The Lord's will be done.**”” Acts 21:10-14 WEBUS

- a) A prophetic word over Paul:
 - 1) Agabus, a prophet, took Paul's belt and bound his own feet and hands.
 - 2) He prophesied: “*The Holy Spirit says: 'The Jews at Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt, and will deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.'*”
 - 3) Paul's friends begged him not to go to Jerusalem.
- b) Paul's response... Total Acceptance with Joy!
 - 1) Don't cry over me! I am ready to be bound and to die for the name of the Lord Y'shua.
 - 2) His friends concluded; “*The Lord's will be done.*”

- 3) Like Y'shua said, "*Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done.*" Luke 22:42 WEBUS

c) Questions

- 1) Are you ready to surrender your need for explanations and practice acceptance with joy?
- 2) Will you welcome whatever God has for you, even if He has not revealed why?
- 3) Will you surrender the requirement to understand, before you accept what God is doing?

Prayer: I SURRENDER MY NEED FOR EXPLANATIONS (*Father, I stand before You and confess that You do not owe me a reason for why You do anything. I know that Your thoughts, Your plans, and Your ways are on a need-to-know basis, and most often they are beyond my need to know. So, I no longer need to understand Your methods nor Your motives.*) I WILL PRACTICE ACCEPTANCE WITH JOY (*Today, I welcome whatever You have for me with joy in my heart, even if You have not revealed why things are the way they are. I will no longer depend on my own understanding; and instead, at times when I just can't reason why things are the way they are, I will acknowledge that You are God and I am not!*)

ASSIGNMENT #10

1. Pray about and meditate on these Scriptures:

- A. *"For the word of God is living and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and is able to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart. There is no creature that is hidden from his sight, but all things are naked and laid open before the eyes of him to whom we must give an account."* Hebrews 4:12-13 WEBUS
- B. *"But there is nothing covered up that will not be revealed, nor hidden that will not be known."* Luke 12:2 WEBUS
- C. *"For God will bring every work into judgment, with every hidden thing, whether it is good, or whether it is evil."* Ecclesiastes 12:14 WEBUS
- D. *"For no one can lay any other foundation than that which has been laid, which is Jesus Christ. But if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay, or straw, each man's work will be revealed. For the Day will declare it, because it is revealed in fire; and the fire itself will test what sort of work each man's work is."* 1 Corinthians 3:11-13 WEBUS
- E. *"For the time has come for judgment to begin with the household of God. If it begins first with us, what will happen*

to those who don't obey the Good News of God?" 1 Peter 4:17 WEBUS

2. **Surrender Explanations:** *“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, and your ways are not my ways,” says Yahweh. “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.” Isaiah 55:8-9 WEBUS*

A. Search your heart humbly and honestly.

- 1) Do you confess that you oftentimes believe that God owes you a reason for what He is doing and what He allows?
- 2) Do you believe that God's thoughts, plans, and ways are on a need-to-know basis, and you always need to know?
- 3) Do you demand that God's methods and motives should make sense to you?
- 4) Please review your answer to each question and explain your strategy to address it. Who will hold you accountable to surrender your need for explanations?

3. **Practice Acceptance:** *“Trust in Yahweh with all your heart, and don't lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.”*

Proverbs 3:5-6 WEBUS

A. Are you ready to surrender your need for explanations and practice acceptance with joy?

- 1) Will you welcome whatever God has for you with joy in your heart, even if He has not revealed why things are the way they are?
- 2) Will you surrender the need for your own understanding as a requirement before you accept what God is doing?
- 3) When things just don't make sense and you cannot fathom the reason things are the way they are, will you acknowledge the Yahweh is God and you are not?
- 4) Please review your answer to each question and explain your strategy to address it. Who will hold you accountable to practice acceptance with joy?