

# The ABC's of Being a Christian in Today's World

## Three A's

Morning Reading: Acts 17:22-28

### Introduction:

- A. Today marks the beginning of a new month (March 2021). Thus far in this year we have themed the sermons for each month.
  1. January was based on "Being Conformed to the Image of His Son" (Romans 8:29).
  2. February was based on "Looking unto Jesus" (Hebrews 12:2).
  3. March will consider the first four letters of the "A.B.C.'s of being a Christian."
- B. In each of the Sunday morning lessons during this series we will focus on one letter of the Alphabet and all the points will also begin with that letter of the alphabet (alliteration)
- C. Years ago (when I was a much younger preacher) I warned in occasional lessons that if we did not safeguard the practice of assembly and make a very clear imprint in our communities over that consistent faithful practice that we could one day lose it (it had always been my hope that such a day would not come in my lifetime or those of future generations).
  1. Believe it or not, that day is here right now!
  2. The Prime Minister of Canada, the Right Honorable Justin Trudeau suggested that this pandemic was a good time for a "RE-SET" (which is veiled language for preparing the country for globalism, a one-world government). [That is not a conspiracy theory, but a real life situation.]
  3. John Lennon's song "Imagine" might be closer to becoming a reality than most Christians realize. Here are a few of the lyrics as drawn from [www.Genius.com](http://www.Genius.com)
    - a. First Verse: "Imagine there's no heaven..." "no hell below"... "all the people living for today."
    - b. Second Verse: "no countries" "nothing to kill or die for" "no religion too"
    - c. Third Verse: "no possessions" "no need for greed or hunger" "a brotherhood of man" "all the people sharing all the world"
    - d. Chorus: "and the world will be one"
  4. Here are some quotations that need to be noticed and considered for what they are saying:

- a. Here is a comment by U.S. Congressman Jerry Nadler (Democrat): “God has no authority in the House of Representatives.”
  - b. Here is a quotation from the First Head of the World Health Organization, a man named Brock Chisom: (WHO is the group handling the directions associated with COVID-19 and is a vital part of the Globalist’s agenda; a spin-off or adjunct to the United Nations): “To achieve world government, it is necessary to remove from the minds of men, their individualism, loyalty to family traditions, national patriotism and religious dogmas.”
- D. What can the Christian do in light of such things happening?
- E. That is the goal of this month’s preaching to consider “The A.B.C’s of being a Christian in today’s world.” This lesson will focus on “Three A’s”

**I. ALERT (be watchful, be aware, and be praying)**

- A. At a time that Jesus could have used some support from others, they were tired and they failed Him. Consider the account from Matthew 26:36-46:
1. Verse 38: “Then He said to them, *‘My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me.’*”
  2. Verse 41: “*Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.*”
- B. Regarding the Lord’s second coming (Hebrews 9:28) Jesus declared in Matthew 24:42-44: “42 *Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming.* 43 But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. 44 *Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.*” (NKJV)
- C. Mark in his gospel emphasizes that we are to be alert *as those charged with the responsibility of another’s goods*. Consider Mark 13:32-37: “32 “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. 33 *Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is.* 34 *It is like a man going to a far country, who left his house and gave authority to his servants, and to each his work, and commanded the doorkeeper to watch.* 35 *Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming — in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning — 36 lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping.* 37 And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!” (NKJV)

- D. Jesus added further insight regarding His second coming in Luke 21:36: “*Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.*” (NKJV)
- E. Paul’s warning to the Ephesian’s elders as he was about to leave them to carry on the work he had such a part in Acts 20:31: “*Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn every-one night and day with tears.*” (NKJV)
- F. More than ever we need to heed the advice of Paul to those at Corinth in the first century: “13 *Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong.* 14 Let all that you do be done with love” (1 Corinthians 16:13-14; NKJV)
- G. The Christian should be aware of their surroundings. Paul in 1 Thes-salonians 5:6-7 writes: “Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, *but let us watch and be sober.*” (NKJV)
- H. Peter encourages the followers of Christ to show their awareness by being “serious and watchful in your prayers” (1 Peter 4:7, NKJV).
- I. Consider the words of Paul to those at Corinth of the need to be alert: “lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices” (2 Corinthians 2:11)
- J. We close with the words of Peter in 1 Peter 5:8: “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seek-ing whom he may devour” (NKJV). [*He is not resting (Luke 4:13 — opportune time)*]

**II. ARTICULATE (speak clearly, speak with Scriptures, don’t shift sources of authority;** Webster’s New World Dictionary and The-saurus states among other things: “able to speak. Expressing oneself easily and clearly, well formulated; clearly presented”)

- A. The real danger is adopting the language of the “woke” world, the “newspeak” of our modern world, the terms and expressions of de-nominationalism; the language of Ashdod instead of the pure gospel of Christ (see Nehemiah 13:13-14).
- B. 1 Peter 4:11: “If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God...”
- C. 2 Timothy 4:1-5 (read the text): “Preach the word”
- D. 1 Corinthians 4:6b: “that you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other” (NKJV) [*no man is to be held in esteem over the Scriptures*]
- E. Ephesians 4:14-15: “that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery

of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him who is head—Christ”

F. Colossians 2:6-8: (read the text) especially v. 8.

### **III. ACTIVE (showing life, desiring fellowship, encouraging sharing, being identified as a follower of Christ)**

A. Matthew 5:13: “You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.”

1. Salt is a *preserver* (pickles, hams, etc.)
2. Salt is a *melter or de-icer* (on roadways and sidewalks)
3. Salt is a *modifier* (turns bland into tasteful)
4. Salt is a *cleanser* (it can purify that which it touches, hands that blistered with handling forks or strings on bales during haying).
5. Salt is a *fire restraint* (we salted the hay going in the barn to keep it from spontaneous combustion by heating in the mow).
6. *Are we influencing the world in any of those ways? If not, what then?*

B. Matthew 5:14a: “You are the light of the world.”

1. Jesus is the true light so at best we are reflectors of His light (John 1:9)
  - a. Don't approach people with your 'high beams' on to blind them but rather to show them the way, the truth, and the life through Christ.
2. Matthew 5:16: “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven” (NKJV). [*Your example is important: 1 Peter 3:1-5; Philippians 4:9*]
3. Matthew 6:22: “The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body shall be full of light.” [See good things, be good!]
4. John 8:12: Jesus: “I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life” [*Choose light; John 3:18-21*]
5. John 12:35b: “Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you; he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going”
6. John 12:36: “While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light”... [*1 Thessalonians 5:4-10*]

### **Conclusion:**

A. Paul's commission: Acts 26:17-18: read it (“open their eyes” “from darkness to light” “from power of Satan to God”)

- B. Romans 13:11-14: “Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light” etc.
- C. Ephesians 5:8-17: serious concerns for serious Christians!
- D. What Paul encouraged Timothy to do is what we too must do: “Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.
- E. Romans 12:1-3 read it and then offer **invitation**.

## The ABC's of Being a Christian in Today's World

# Three B's

Morning Reading: Romans 13:11-14

### Introduction:

- A. Our reading for today sets the scene for our lesson.
1. Romans 13:11-14: "11 And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. 12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. 13 Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. 14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts" (NKJV)
  2. We cannot and should not allow spiritual sleep or lethargy to rule in our lives (v. 11).
  3. Why? "For now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed"
    - a. As the years pass by we are growing closer to the time when either death or the coming of Christ will call us from this life.
    - b. Every day, week, month, year means we are closer to the end.
  4. "The night is far spent" (darkness is beginning to wane with the coming of a new day) (Romans 13:12)
  5. "Cast off the works of darkness and "let us put on the armor of light" (v. 12)
  6. "Let us walk properly, as in day" (sons of light are to walk in the light as He is in the light)
    - a. Not in revelry and drunkenness (v. 13) (rioting and drunkenness)
    - b. Not in lewdness and lust (v. 13) (chambering and wantonness)
    - c. Not in strife and envy (v. 13) (strife and envying)
  7. "But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts." (v. 14; 1 Peter 4:1-5)
- B. Hebrews 12:12-17: "12 Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, 13 and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed. 14 *Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord:* 15 *looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of*

God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; 16 lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright. 17 For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears.” (NKJV)

- C. The goal of this month's preaching is to consider “The A.B.C.'s of being a Christian in today's world.” This lesson will focus on “Three B's”

## I. BELIEVE

- A. Jesus stressed the importance of “BELIEF” (John 14:1; believe in God, believe also in Me; John 8:24: “For if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins”)
- B. Believing involves two aspects: Hebrews 11:6:
  - 1. That God is (He exists)
  - 2. That He rewards those who diligently seek Him.
- C. Believing gives us confidence in areas we do not know (Hebrews 11:1)
  - 1. “Now faith is the...
    - a. Substance of (or what comes under, what supports or upholds) “things hoped for” (things which we have not yet seen)
    - b. The evidence of (or assurance) things not seen.
      - (1) God and His will
- D. Sometimes our faith needs to be strengthened (Mark 9:24)
  - 1. We can't fault him (the father that is, in this account), the disciples could not cast out the demons and free his son.
  - 2. Could Jesus do what they couldn't do? Indeed He could!
  - 3. Do we have times when our faith could be strengthened or increased? [Let us remember Romans 10:17, it is available 24/7, 365.]
- E. Paul's assurance *was based on his belief and confidence in God* (2 Timothy 1:12). He had committed his soul and all to God, and God would not fail him.
- F. We are to believe *to the saving of the soul*:
  - 1. Hebrews 10:35-39: “35 Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. 36 For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: 37 For yet a little while, and He who is coming will come and will not tarry. 38 Now the just shall live by faith; but if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him. 39 But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.” (NKJV)

## II. BEHOLD

- A. Our faith and confidence can make it real to us:
1. Hebrews 11:13-16: “13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14 For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. 15 And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.” (NKJV)
  2. Not having received the promises: had confidence in God, and God’s promises (the old gospel meeting standard: “Standing on the Promises of God”)
  3. Having seen them afar off were assured of them, (as if they had visualized them).
  4. Embraced them (wrapped their arms of hope around them, not wanting to let go for fear of losing them).
  5. Confessed they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth (everything else was secondary to that primary effort to follow the promises of God to its ultimate end).
- B. *Watch carefully what follows:* “For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland.” (v. 14)
1. If they had been mindful of what they left behind they could have returned (v. 15). (Jesus said, “Remember Lot’s wife” in Luke 17:32)
- C. V. 16: “But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.” (God had promised and God had provided...it was up to them to embrace and pursue what He had set before them.)
- D. One of the most wonderful passages regarding our life as a Christian is found in 1 John 3:1-3: “*Behold* what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, *that we should be called children of God!* Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. 2 Beloved, *now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.* 3 *And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.*” (NKJV)

## III. BECOME

- A. Become people of *full age*
1. Hebrews 5:12-14: “12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers *you need someone to teach you again* the first principles

of the oracles of God; and *you have come to need milk and not solid food.* 13 *For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe.* 14 *But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”* (NKJV)

B. Paul encountered the problem at Corinth (the church with many conflicts, bvs). Here is how Paul by inspiration put it.

1. 1 Corinthians 3:1-3: *“And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. 2 I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able; 3 for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men? 4 For when one says, ‘I am of Paul,’ and another, ‘I am of Apollos,’ are you not carnal?”* (NKJV)

B. Become *the people God wants us to be:*

1. 1 Peter 2:9-10: *“9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; 10 who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.”* (NKJV)

2. 1 Peter 2:11-12: *“11 Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, 12 having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.”* (NKJV)

C. Become *the people who recognize that God's Word is Truth:*

1. 2 Peter 1:16-21: *16 For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. 17 For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’ 18 And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. 19 And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; 20 knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, 21 for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”* (NKJV)

2. John 17:17: *“Sanctify them by Your truth, Your word is truth.”* (NKJV)

3. John 8:31-36: “31 Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, *‘If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. 32 And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.’* 33 They answered Him, ‘We are Abraham’s descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can You say, “You will be made free?”’ 34 Jesus answered them, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. 35 And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. 36 *Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.*” (NKJV)

D. Become the people *who can only be accused of glorifying God*:

1. 1 Peter 4:12-16: “12 Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; 13 *but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ’s sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.* 14 *If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.* On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified. 15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people’s matters. 16 Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter.” (NKJV)

E. Become the people *who glory in the day of the Lord’s return for His own*:

1. 2 Timothy 4:7-8: “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge will give to me on that Day, *and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing*” (NKJV). **Invitation.**

## The ABC's of Being a Christian in Today's World

# Three C's

Morning Reading: Philippians 1:27-30

### Introduction:

- A. A. Our reading for today set's the scene for our lesson.
1. Philippians 1:27-30: "27 Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel, 28 and not in any way terrified by your adversaries, which is to them a proof of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that from God. 29 For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake, 30 having the same conflict which you saw in me and now hear is in me." (NKJV)
    - a. Philippians (which provides us with our reading) is addressed to: "To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:" (Philippians 1:1b; NKJV).
      - (1) A "saint" is someone who is set apart by the gospel from the world in which they live.
      - (2) 1 Corinthians 1:2 clarifies that: "To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours." (NKJV)
    - b. "Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ." (1:27; NKJV)
      - (1) Ephesians 4:1: "I, therefore the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called."
      - (2) According to 1 Thessalonians 1:11: "Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of this calling..."
      - (3) 2 Timothy 1:9 suggests of God: "who has saved us and called us with a holy calling..." (NKJV)
      - (4) Hebrews 3:1 speaks of it as "a heavenly calling" that makes us "brethren"
    - c. Paul calls for "consistency" on their part. He writes: "so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your

affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel” (v. 27; cf. 1 Corinthians 1:10)

- d. Their ability “to stand fast” and “strive together for the faith of the gospel” would allow them to “not in any way” be “terrified by your adversaries.”

- (1) Your confidence in Christ and the gospel would be “proof of perdition” for them, and “salvation” for the Christians (cf. Romans 12:1-3).

- e. Paul closes this portion of Scripture with one of those strange statements of Scripture (strange to the world, not to the Christian): “For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake” (Philippians 1:29; NKJV; cf. Acts 5:40-42: “rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.”)

- B. Are we prepared “to stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel, and not in any way terrified by your adversaries” (Philippians 1:27b; NKJV)?
- C. Are we prepared to not “only believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake” (Philippians 1:29, NKJV)?
- D. That’s the introduction, now let’s move to the “A.B.C.’s of Being a Christian in today’s modern world” and consider “Three C’s: Courageous, Convicted and Continuing.”

## **I. COURAGEOUS (Having courage when it is needed/encouraging others.)**

- A. Mark 15:43-47: In our recent study of Joseph of Arimathea we noticed that at the appropriate time he “*taking courage*” *went to Pilate to ask for the body of Jesus.*
  - 1. As we discovered in our study Pilate was not the most compliant person in that day and time.
  - 2. He was aware of others who had died at Caesar’s hand and for fear of that he allowed the Jews to words direct his decision (John 19:12), he allowed Jesus to be scourged and crucified, would he release His body to some of His disciples?
  - 3. After making sure that Jesus was dead (Mark 15:43-47), Pilate released the body to Joseph.
- B. When Paul was on his way to Rome (he had appealed to Caesar: Acts 25:11) and to Caesar he was sent! As he nears Rome we learn that “15 And from there, when the brethren heard about us, they came to meet us as far as Appii Forum and Three Inns. *When Paul saw them, he thanked God and took courage.*” (Acts 28:15)

1. He didn't know what was in front of him, but He trusted in God (Acts 27:22-25).
  2. He had encouragement and was strengthened by seeing his brethren turn out to greet him and to perhaps journey with him the final leg of his journey.
- C. In 2 Timothy 1:3-12; Paul expresses his hopes for Timothy: “3 I thank God, whom I serve with a pure conscience, as my forefathers did, as without ceasing I remember you in my prayers night and day, 4 greatly desiring to see you, being mindful of your tears, that I may be filled with joy, 5 *when I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also.* 6 Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. 7 *For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.* 8 *Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God,* 9 who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began, 10 but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, 11 to which I was appointed a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. 12 *For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day.*” (NKJV)
- D. Philippians 1:12-14: Paul suggests that being in chains “actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel” (v. 12) He was able to make it “evident to the whole palace guard, and to all the rest, that my chains are in Christ” (v. 13). It had a different effect on the Christians of that place: Paul writes: “*and most of the brethren in the Lord, having become confident by my chains, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.*”
- E. 1 Thessalonians 2:2-12 states: “But even after we had suffered before and were spitefully treated at Philippi, as you know, we were bold in our God to speak to you the gospel of God in much conflict. 3 For our exhortation did not come from error or uncleanness, nor was it in deceit. But as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who tests our hearts. 5 *For neither at any time did we use flattering words, as you know, nor a cloak for covetousness — God is witness.* 6 Nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, when we might have made demands as apostles of Christ. 7 But we were gentle among you,

just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children. 8 *So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us.* 9 *For you remember, brethren, our labor and toil; for laboring night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God.* 10 You are witnesses, and God also, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe; 11 as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father does his own children, 12 that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.” (NKJV)

- F. Here is our final illustration of courage from Acts 5:40-42: “40 And they agreed with him, and when they had called for the apostles and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. 41 *So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.* 42 *And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.*” (NKJV)

## **II. CONVICTED (Persuaded that you have the truth, and your answer to others will be in words of that truth from the Scripture)**

- A. 1 Peter 3:13-17: “13 And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good? 14 But even if you should suffer for righteousness’ sake, you are blessed. ‘And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled.’ 15 *But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;* 16 having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed. 17 *For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.*” (NKJV)
- B. Acts 13:40-46: “40 Beware therefore, lest what has been spoken in the prophets come upon you: 41 ‘Behold, you despisers, marvel and perish! For I work a work in your days, a work which you will by no means believe, though one were to declare it to you.’” 42 So when the Jews went out of the synagogue, the Gentiles begged that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath. 43 Now when the congregation had broken up, many of the Jews and devout proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God. 44 *On the next Sabbath almost the whole city came together to hear the word of God.* 45 *But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy; and contradicting and blaspheming, they opposed the things spoken by Paul.* 46 *Then Paul and Barnabas grew bold and said, ‘It was necessary that the word of God*

*should be spoken to you first; but since you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles.* 47 For so the Lord has commanded us: "I have set you as a light to the Gentiles, that you should be for salvation to the ends of the earth." 48 Now when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord. And as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed. 49 And the word of the Lord was being spread throughout all the region." (NKJV)

- C. Paul in Philippians 2:12: "Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, *work out your own salvation with fear and trembling*" (see also v. 13).
- D. Philippians 3:7-12 (see text); give up all for Christ and the hope through Him.
- E. Philippians 3:13-16 (see text); forgetting what is behind, reaching forward.

### **III. CONTINUING (never stopping until the goal is reached: a home in heaven)**

- A. Philippians 3:17-21 (see text) v. 17: my example; v. 17: us for a pattern; v. 20: citizenship in heaven; v. 20; eagerly await a Savior; v. 21: transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body.
- B. Philippians 3:16: "Nevertheless to the degree that we have attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind"
- C. Hebrews 10:35-39: "do not cast away your confidence," v. 36: "you have need of endurance"; v. 36: you may receive the promise, v. 39: "we are not of those who draw back to perdition."
- D. Philippians 3:14: read text: *press toward the goal for the prize ...*
- E. Revelation 2:10-11: read the text: *second death, eternal separation.*  
**Invitation.**

This is a sample of the material contained in  
*The ABC's of Being a Christian in Today's World*  
by Brian V. Sullivan

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