

Acts 27:10-13 (R. Hiebert) 209768

Chicago Conference: 2005, Some Critical Decisions We Have to Make (27:10-13)

YP Sing Address—R. Hiebert

Now Brother Ross Siebert has something for us, so. Anybody have any capacity left for listening? I know it's been a long day and I feel. Really sincerely honored and appreciative of the opportunity to speak. To you tonight, and I just want to take this opportunity to tell you how thoroughly. Is the word excited or just thrilled? I was when I saw some of you, many of you today during the meetings. And I saw so many of the, the young men just from my vantage point sitting forward on the chairs listening. I saw some of the ladies taking notes and as I walked by, I, I heard some people just. Talking in their conversation, I heard the Lord being talked about and, and I had some opportunities to talk to people and it was so encouraging to see a group of young people. And I know that there's always exceptions in a group, but generally speaking that really seemed to want to go on for the Lord And that was just so encouraging to my heart. And so we won't take a whole lot of time tonight. But maybe it's just a good way to close off the day to look at a quick word from the Bible that hopefully will be an encouragement to all of us. But maybe let's just start off with a word of prayer and we'll ask for the Lords help. I wonder if anybody. Tonight would like to just share in a couple of words, something that they've enjoyed. Oh, I didn't know I would be involved in having to say anything tonight. I thought I could be an audience, truthfully. Does anybody just wanted to say something quickly that you've enjoyed? Anyone. The gospel, it was very interesting. I've never heard of defended this way. That's great. It's encouraging to hear the message of the gospel and it's it's wonderful to be able to hear that, even if even if you do belong to the Lord Jesus. Anyone else? Thank you for that. Anyone else want to share something that you've enjoyed? He'll be shot. Various descriptions of the temple. Good. Thank you for that. Anything else? The picture was given the aunt. That's great. So thanks for those things and, you know, have those conversations with each other. It's it's great to talk about all the things that we're doing, school and sports and all those kinds of things. But just wonderful thing to just over dinner or breakfast or whatever, just to talk about something that you've enjoyed or ask for an opinion from, from one of your peers. It's a great thing to be able to do, you know. I was talking to somebody just before this this. Sing tonight and we were talking a little bit about work and, and things like that and the busyness of life and the tough decisions that have to be made. And I want to talk a little bit about decisions because I, I believe with all my heart that not only are you at a crossroads in life, many of you, some of you trying to struggle with decisions related to school or maybe related to an employment or maybe related to family situations or maybe related to a relationship. Not only do you have those decisions to make at this particular time in your life, but the decisions that you are making have will have many of them an impact on your life for the rest of your life. And it is so critically important at these crossroads to have the tools to make the right decisions. And you know, I believe that we do. I believe that those of us that truly belong to the Lord Jesus Christ. We have the Holy Spirit within us able to direct us into the right decisions. And I believe that the Lord is speaking to us and saying this is the way walkie in it. But sometimes for some reason we have a real hard time, and I relate to this really directly in hearing what the Lord would have us to do. So I thought if it's OK with you, we'd just take a few minutes and talk about some of those critical decisions we have to make.

And in doing so, I'd like to look at acts. Chapter 27 maybe an unlikely place to go to look at this, but I'd like to look at a point in time in the life of a young professional. A man that was in charge, a man that was number doubt respected, a man that was going places, and a man that at the setting of this story is on a mission, and that man's mission is to get what he believed was a criminal to Rome. The man was a centurion means he was over 100 men and as you probably guessed this was the the the man, I think his name was Julius, that was tasked with transporting the Apostle Paul from Caesarea to Rome. And we don't have time to really go into the story in depth, but let me just give a little bit of background. They had left from Caesarea and they'd had a tough, tough voyage, and they had come to an island. Does anybody know what the name of the island was? Don't say Melita. I know you were going to. Do you know what island it was that they had come to? They had a tough time getting there and it starts with AC. No. Great. That's right. Whoever said Crete, that's right. They had come to Crete and I take it they were off schedule. They were behind. And like most young professionals that have a mission and they want to get somewhere and they don't want to be held up. He was under the gun and he wanted to get going and he wanted to get moving. Do you relate? I think we can all relate to that. We have a place we want to go. We have a young people's weekend we want to get to. We have a career we want to achieve. We have. Academic goals or maybe athletic goals that we want to achieve and it's of utmost importance and when something slows us down, in this case it was just plain bad weather. We want to get going, be careful. Be careful because it's at those points in our lives where we feel under pressure to make a decision, under pressure to get going, under pressure to make a move that we can make unwise decisions. Let's just look. At verse. 10. 9. Now when much time was spent, and when sailing was now dangerous because the fast was now already passed, Paul admonished them and said. Unto them, sirs, I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only of the leading and ship, but also of our lives. Nevertheless, the centurion believe the master and the owner of the ship more than those things which were spoken by Paul, and because the haven was not commodious to winter. In the more part advised to depart fence also if by any means they might attain to finish and there to winter, which is an haven of Crete and lieth toward the southwest and northwest. So the Centurion made a decision, and I would like to ask. It appears to me that there's at least three reasons why he made his decision. His decision was to try to leave Fair Havens, which apparently was not very fair because it wasn't a great place to spend winter, and to head for a place called Finice or Phoenix. Who can tell me one reason, one thing that made his mind up? One thing that influenced his decision? Anybody. The the helmsman, the the the person that actually was the captain of the ship. True. And anything else or anyone else. Soldiers of Rome still to carry out their weather is very promptly all right. The the the need for speed, the need for you know, we're already late. Let's get this show on the road. True. Anything else?

Reg. The South wind did blow softly and I think that that's probably that could very well. It looked nice. It looked like the right thing to do. I've always wondered whether the South wind was blowing softly when he made the decision or after you made the decision. But true, it looked like a smart thing to do. Conditions looked all right, yes. Anything else? Anybody from over there? What else? What does it say? I think everyone's grown used to being an audience today. I can wait, anyone else? Rather listen to somebody else other than the desire to listen to

somebody else other than the Apostle Paul. Yeah. Yeah. I support. Like, who is this guy? I mean, like, it's not. She's not like he's not a helmsman. He's not a captain. And yet I do. It's so true. And yet I do believe he had a respect for Paul. So let me just say it looks like there was several people. Let's look at the verse. What does it say here? Nevertheless, the centurion believed the master. So I take it the captain and the owner. So I take it the guy who owned the ship was on the ship more than the things of Paul. So those are two people. And what does it say? Verse 12? And because the haven was not commodious to winter, in other words, this isn't comfortable here. It's not convenient. I don't like my current situation. I want something different. That's another reason. And listen to this last thing. The more part advised to depart. What does that mean? The more part advised. The majority, the majority said let's get the show on the road, it looks nice, we have a place to go. And then men of experience, namely the captain and men of means, I think in those days you didn't own a boat unless you had a bit of cash, right? So men of means and men of influence and the majority and the uncomfortableness, if that's a word of the current of the status quo, those things converge together for him to say. I hear what you're saying, Paul, but I got my own. I got my own plans here and to do something different. Now, do you know where they were headed? If you have a map in your Bible and you don't need to do this, but it's kind of neat to look at it, and you were to look at Crete. They were on the South side of Crete and they were sort of centered to to the east side. And they had a desire to get to a harbor. And that harbor was on the West side. It was on the West side of Crete. You know how far away it was? It's about 40 miles. It was just a blip on your map. It was nothing. It was a very small decision to make, or so it would seem. It was just a little decision. It was just a small departure from what the apostle had said. It was such a little, little thing. You know where I'm going with this? It was a small thing. And you know, I guess here's what I'm trying to say to you tonight. You're faced with decisions, decisions that will affect you for a very long time, quite possibly for the rest of your lives down here. And the Clarion, clear voice. Of the apostles, doctrine and I and the voice of scripture. And the things you know to be right are there, but there are men and women in your life. Who are men and women of influence and men and women of means? And it is very, very, very easy to be influenced by them in a wrong path. Who are you listening to? Who are you listening to? Who has the ability to change your mind? I coach young executives sometimes, and I work with people that are making their way up the corporate ladder. And they have a lot of pressure from people that have a very strong ability to make them wealthy or to make their careers go somewhere. And it influences them tremendously. You know, we're saying just before this meeting is talking to somebody, the workforce is getting smaller and smaller and smaller over the next 12 years. And the amount of things that need to be done is getting bigger and bigger and bigger. And so your generation is going to be stuck in the middle and you will have to make a decision. You will have to make a decision as to who is Lord of your time and who is Lord of your life. That's a decision you will have to make. And if you don't make it, it's already made for you. Because men and women of influence and men and women of means that have little care or little interest in what the Lord has to say will make decisions for your time if you don't in the fear of the Lord. And then there's always the majority, right? What's everybody else doing? You know, it's just great, like.

What if you were to say tonight, well, let's let's, I probably shouldn't say this, but let's go for pizza. You know, probably at two or three people would make that decision. Then everybody would go where the majority, where the majority is going, right? We're sort of built that way. We like to sort of do what everybody else is doing. And so if we let ourselves get pulled by the majority, rather than making decisions in the fear of the Lord, we're going to make decisions that can affect us for a very, very long time. But then, you know, there's the biggest thing and I think it's something that more than any of these other things, effects our ability to make good and right decisions. And you know what it is, it has to do with that reason, that main reason they left, which was because it wasn't comfortable. It just wasn't comfortable. You know, we live in a in a time and we live in a generation and we live in a country. That is very affluent and life is all about me and it's all about you and it's what do you want and what do you need and luxury and and living life to its fullest. Vacation, the vacation industry is going crazy. The automobile industry and the options and the homes and things like that. It's all about me and it's you and it's what you want and it's what you deserve and and what you can strive for and advertising multi multi billion dollar industries all very much focused on making you discontent and dissatisfied with what you have. So that you will want something different. And. If we haven't been spending time on our knees. In the presence of the Lord. Enjoying the love flowing from his heart. To us. And realizing that in him, that one who is altogether lovely, every need, every desire, every hope, every dream of my heart is realized. You haven't come to that. It's so easy to be carried away. In the winds of what my preference and my needs, I think one of our biggest problems is that we read the Scripture sometimes from a perspective of what do I want? Have you ever gone to Scripture and tried to look for a verse that supports what you want to do? You know, we need to read the scriptures and let them say what they say. Somebody said, I heard somebody say not too long ago, and maybe I'll explain what they meant by this. They said, you know, we Satan knew that you and I wouldn't buy liberal theology. So he sold us liberal hermeneutics and we ended up in the same place. Hermeneutics is the way that we interpret scripture, and what he meant by that is. Satan knew we wouldn't wholesale turn aside from sound doctrine, so he caused us to look at Scripture from a perspective of what I want. And as soon as I look at scripture from a perspective of me and my needs and what I want. Then I'll end up eventually throwing overboard. The apostles doctrine. And that's exactly what happened on this journey. That's exactly what happened. Remember how far they were going to go? 40 miles. You know where they ended up. Look at it on your map some way, someday. Many, many hundreds of miles off course. Shipwrecked without a ship and without anything. Left and with the mission of the trip really destroyed. Because they made decisions based on the majority. Because they made decisions based on men and women of influence and means. Because they made decisions based on preference and what I personally want for myself. And that's where you and I can find ourselves. But you know. Sometimes we find ourselves in situations. That are not our own making sometimes other people's sins. Sometimes other people's bad decisions put us in an uncomfortable situation. And what then here was the apostle and he was on this ship and he was weathering the storm just with the rest of them. Had he made a bad decision? There was no doubt sailors there that maybe hadn't agreed with that decision, but they found themselves in the same situation. And you know something, You may be in a situation tonight.

A difficult situation, a bad situation, through no sin of your own and through no decisions of your own. What then? You know, Reg told us that they made the decision to go when the South winds were blowing. How much were they willing to listen to the apostle when the South winds were blowing? But you know, what do you know, right. But when Euro Clyde and this big hurricane came, they were willing to listen to the apostle. And sometimes the Lord may allow you, young person, to go through a difficult time. So that His love and his wisdom flowing through you and His peace will be seen by others, and they will be willing to see it. There are young people I know that go to high schools and they have Bible studies in their high school. And I'm so thankful for it. And sometimes they say, but, you know, so few people show up and people think we're crazy and they make fun of us and stuff like that. But, you know, there's going to come a day, there's going to come a time in the lives of young people, your friends and your peers, where they're going to have a crisis and they're going to know who to go to. They're going to know who has answers. And so when the South winds are blowing softly, nobody listens to you. But when the Lord allows circumstances into their lives, suddenly they're going to be willing to hear. Well, you know, there's so much more that could be said about this chapter, but I

want to respect your time. It's getting, it's getting late. My encouragement to you though tonight is this. I read a book many years ago. It was called the Spanish Brothers and it was if you, if you like novels, it's a it's a great book. It's kind of an old book, but one of the IT happened during the time of the, of the, the what they call the holy Inquisition, where people were tortured for their faith. And I remember so distinctly one quote from this book. It was from a person that was facing. Being imprisoned in the dungeon, torture and ultimately death for their faith. And he makes this quote. He makes this comment. The love of the Lord Jesus Christ felt enjoyed walked in is absolutely enough. It would be enough if I had to spend the rest of my nut life in a dungeon. Now that may be an easy thing for us to say sitting here tonight, but you know, one of the things that was said in the meetings today and it spoke to me so much is that. The answer to all of our difficulties, the answer to all of our uncertainties, the answer to all those tough decisions and those discouraging moments is for you and for me to enjoy a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, to know His love to. Be able to lay our heads on our pillows at night and say maybe I was rejected by the majority. Maybe I was snubbed by other people of means and influence. Maybe I missed out on an opportunity. Maybe I missed out on a relationship. Maybe I had to break off a relationship with somebody that's not a believer, but but. I'm enjoying the love of the Lord Jesus Christ. His love will find you in that place and His love. Will be an encouragement to you. Just one quick story and then we'll be done. There was a young lady who was in college and she was a very talented musician. She played the piano and sang beautifully. And while she was there she heard an evangelist speak and she was saved and she was so excited. She called her parents and she said I've come to know the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior. Her father was livid. And he came that weekend to the university and he said we got to talk her out of this nonsense. And so he spoke with her very firmly, but she was quite taken aback, but quite decided. She had decided to follow the Lord Jesus Christ and that was it. And he said, if that's your decision, then I'm not paying for any more college. You're going to leave this place and you're going to come home. And it was a tremendous cost because she had great talents and great abilities. Well.

She made a decision. If that's the way it's going to be, then that's the way it's going to be before she left. She sat down at the piano. Don't remember all the details. She sat down at the piano and she played this song and the words to it were this Jesus, I, my cross have taken all to leave and follow thee. Destitute, despised, forsaken, Thou henceforth my all must be. She didn't know it, but her father was standing within earshot and he heard her playing this song and singing with a breaking heart about her love and her devotion to the Lord Jesus Christ. And he was so overcome. He was so overcome that he came to his daughter and he said, I'm so sorry. Anything that could mean that much to you, I want to know more about. The answer The answer is a coming to know the love of the Lord Jesus Christ. Spending time with him, just spending time not attacking his word to find answers to tough questions. Not rigorously reading because I'm on a schedule and I must do this and get through the Bible in a year as great as a thing that might be. But just to sit there in the presence of the Lord and like David, just to say what am I and what is my family that you have brought me to this and just to be excited and to enter into with joy the love of the Lord Jesus Christ for you. That's what he wants for you. That's what he wants for me that will keep us. Let's just bow our heads and and commend ourselves tonight. To the Lord.

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