**Acts Chapter 17**

**TRIALS (Acts 16:23, 17:5-6, 13, 32)**

Yes we Christians face trials in this life and we will need to sacrifice for the Lord (**2 Timothy 3:12**).

During times of trial we need to remember what the Apostles said (**Acts 5:27-32, 40-42**).

Paul tells us in **1 Corinthians 7**, during the “present distress” that the Corinthians should serve God without distraction. During trials we need to make sure we do not get distracted from pleasing God.

Trials are for our good (**James 1:2-4**).

**UNCERTAINTIES (Acts 17:2, 5, 10, 17-18)**

Israelites gave into the temptation of uncertainty as Brian Chapman spoke about last week. Moses was gone for 40 days and they were uncertain what that was all about. During this time of uncertainty they gave into temptations (**1 Corinthians 10:6-13**). When we are tempted to stray from our Lord because we are not sure about tomorrow, we need to remember He always provides a path and a way of escape.

In times of uncertainty we must trust and remain faithful to God (**Joshua 24:14-15**). There are many gods/idols that people serve today. We must reject the temptation to follow these and serve only Him!

None of us know how all of the things going on in the world and in our country are going to turn out. But it is certain what our focus should be (**Proverbs 3:5-6**).

**OPPORTUNITIES (Acts 17:4, 11-12, 34)**

Friday Jessie found out that seven of her co-workers were laid off. Some of us will have financial hardships as a result of the current distress. We need to be willing to share with those in need. But we also need to keep our eyes wide open to the opportunities we are given to share the gospel of Salvation (**Acts 8:4**). The reality is that our entire life is only a blip compared to eternity. And many of our friends and neighbors and co-workers need to come to Jesus so they can have the hope of Heaven.

It is tempting during these times to only focus on ourselves and our loved ones. But that is not how the Lord wants His children to think (**Galatians 6:10, Philippians 2:3-4**). Sharing physically, mentally, and spiritually with others is how the Lord wants us always to be. Even in times of trials.

I was at Trader Joe’s Friday. We still have opportunities to share the gospel with others in the marketplace. We can tell folks how we know that trials are part of life and if we are with the Lord, they can make us better. We can tell them during this time we need to remain faithful to God and trust in Him. And we can tell them the only true hope of eternal life is submitting to His Son (**Acts 2:40-41**).

**HOPE (Acts 17:26-31)**

We will read a few passages here **[Psalm 23; Jeremiah 3:23; Romans 8:18, 28; 1 John 4:15-19 (ESV)]**

The bird called a goldfinch is a drab color all winter, but in Spring they transform into a beautiful yellow and black color. We are in the drab winter now, but the Lord has promised us things will get better. You know yesterday I saw some goldfinches at our feeders and they were starting to transform into their beautiful colors (**Romans 12:1-2**)! God’s will, not man’s will, can transform us now and for eternity.

We need to realize that trials and uncertainty are part of this life. Let us keep our eyes open for opportunities to share the gospel and let us never lose sight of the hope we have to go to Heaven!