

Unstoppable to the End

Acts 28:1-31

6 Principles That Will Make You Unstoppable Until You Are Promoted to Heaven:

I. HELPFUL SERVICE - *Helping Others Even When Life Gets Tough (Acts 28:2-3; Matthew 20:28)*

- “Right away Paul, as a servant leader, began gathering sticks for the fire. His actions remind us that no job was beneath Paul. During the whole trip he displayed a servant lifestyle. William Barclay helpfully comments: ‘It is only the little man that refuses the little task.’”¹
- **APPLICATION:** Don't just warm yourself by the fire while others are cold. Look for ways to help. Your helpfulness in the little things prepares you for the big things God has for you.

II. HEAVEN'S SHIELD - *Supernatural Protection in the Will of God (Acts 28:3-6; Psalm 91:13)*

- “‘Justice’ in this passage is personified as a goddess, the daughter of Zeus and Themis. But to the natives’ surprise, Paul suffered no harm from what should have been a deadly bite. They thus concluded he was ‘a god’.”²
- Here's the fulfillment of **Mark 16:18** – “they will take up serpents.” It's not a command to pick up rattlesnakes, but God can protect you when you're in His will.
- **APPLICATION:** When you're doing what God wants you to do, He can protect you from dangers you don't even see coming.

III. HEALING STRENGTH - *God Uses Both Miracles and Medicine (Acts 28:7-9; James 5:14-16)*

Acts 28:8-9 – “And it happened that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever and dysentery. Paul went in to him and prayed, and he laid his hands on him and **healed** him. So when this was done, the rest of those on the island who had diseases also came and were **healed**.”

- “healed” in verse 8 is *iaomai* – healing that does not involve a human. We would say “divine healing” or “miracles”. In verse 9, “healed” is *therapeuo*, which often (but not always) means healing that does involve some human assistance (we get the word “therapy” from this word). We would say “healing through medicine.” Dr. Luke understands the difference between supernatural healing and medicinal healing. God uses both.

¹ Tony Merida, *Exalting Jesus in Acts* (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2017), 389.

² Ibid.

- **APPLICATION:** Don't hesitate to use medical doctors and don't hesitate to lay hands on and ask for miraculous divine healing. God uses both. Praise the Lord for good medical doctors.

IV. HUMBLE SPIRIT - Receiving Encouragement (Acts 28:15; Proverbs 27:17)

Acts 28:15 – "When Paul saw them, he thanked God and took courage."

- The mature Christian should be a good receiver as well as a good giver. Paul didn't reject their kindness - he was encouraged by it.
- **APPLICATION:** Learn to accept other people's encouragement. It's pride that refuses help.

V. HEART SHARING – Continual Witnessing Throughout the Day (Acts 28:17-28; Romans 1:16)

Acts 28:23 – "So when they had appointed him a day, many came to him at his lodging, to whom he explained and solemnly testified of the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus from both the Law of Moses and the Prophets, from morning till evening."

- "He couldn't go to the synagogue, so he invited the Jewish elders to his home (28:17). ...First, he wanted to gauge their hostility in the event news from the temple officials had reached Rome. Surprisingly, they knew nothing of his dispute (28:21). Second, he always preached to the Jews before turning to the Gentiles."³
- **APPLICATION:** Keep sharing and keep witnessing. Don't get discouraged when some reject the message. If one person doesn't hear it, somebody else will. God has someone who will hear and respond.
- Acts 28:25-27 says they were going to leave, but Paul said "one word" (one rhema). A "rhema" is a specific Scripture that applies to a specific situation. Paul knew the Scriptures so well that the Holy Spirit could bring just what the audience needed to hear.
- **APPLICATION:** When we know God's Word, the Holy Spirit can bring it to our minds when we need it!

VI. HOLDING STEADY – Be Consistent in Your Circumstances (Acts 28:30-31; Phil. 1:12-14; 4:22)

Acts 28:30-31 – "Then Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who came to him, preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him." [in Greek, this means "unhinderedly"].

- Paul was the same whether free or imprisoned, young or old, accepted or rejected. He didn't want to be stranded on Malta for three months, but he ministered there anyway. He didn't want to be under house arrest in Rome, but he kept preaching. Paul displayed steadfast ministry regardless of circumstances.
- **APPLICATION:** Don't let circumstances change your commitment to Christ. Be the same Christian at home as at church, in good times as in bad times. Bloom where you're planted. Steadfast consistency makes you unstoppable.

"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." – 2 Timothy 4:7-8

³ Charles R. Swindoll, Acts (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2016), 515.