
First Baptist Dyersburg • Sermon Notes

Keeping a Godly Perspective in Every Circumstance

Sunday, October 4, 2026 • Mike Hickman, Senior Pastor

³ Every time I think of you, I give thanks to my God. ⁴ Whenever I pray, I make my requests for all of you with joy, ⁵ for you have been my partners in spreading the Good News about Christ from the time you first heard it until now. ⁶ And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.

⁷ So it is right that I should feel as I do about all of you, for you have a special place in my heart. You share with me the special favor of God, both in my imprisonment and in defending and confirming the truth of the Good News. ⁸ God knows how much I love you and long for you with the tender compassion of Christ Jesus.

⁹ I pray that your love will overflow more and more, and that you will keep on growing in knowledge and understanding. ¹⁰ For I want you to understand what really matters, so that you may live pure and blameless lives until the day of Christ's return. ¹¹ May you always be filled with the fruit of your salvation—the righteous character produced in your life by Jesus Christ—for this will bring much glory and praise to God.

Paul's Joy That Christ Is Preached

¹² And I want you to know, my dear brothers and sisters, that everything that has happened to me here has helped to spread the Good News.

¹³ For everyone here, including the whole palace guard, knows that I am in chains because of Christ. ¹⁴ And because of my imprisonment, most of the believers here have gained confidence and boldly speak God's message without fear. (Philippians 1:3-14, NLT)

Though Paul had been imprisoned in Rome because of his commitment to preach about Christ, he knew that God was working all things out for his good and for God's glory. (see verses 12-14 above)

²⁸ And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them. (Romans 8:28, NLT)

There are two ways to look at every situation: How it will affect you, and how it will affect God's kingdom. Paul's concern was how he could use his current situation to tell others of God's good news of salvation. Often when we encounter a new situation, our first thoughts are not about God's kingdom. When we face a crisis, we can become angry or fearful for our own wellbeing, rather than looking to see what God intends to do through our circumstances. If we remain self-centered we will miss so much of what God could do through our experiences, both for us and for those around us. Ask God to make you aware of how He could use your present circumstances to bless others. Perhaps someone around you needs to see the difference Christ's presence makes in your life. Are you willing for God to use your circumstances to demonstrate His saving power to those around you? (Henry Blackaby, *Experiencing God Day-by-Day*, June 25.)

The same omnipotent God who is sovereign over our lives invites us in to be part of His eternal kingdom work. Almighty God charts a course for our lives and calls us to follow Him in obedience to the mission He has given us. This is a great comfort for us. (The Gospel Project, 2018)

Once we were safe on shore, we learned that we were on the island of Malta. ²The people of the island were very kind to us. It was cold and rainy, so they built a fire on the shore to welcome us.

³As Paul gathered an armful of sticks and was laying them on the fire, a poisonous snake, driven out by the heat, bit him on the hand.

⁴The people of the island saw it hanging from his hand and said to each other, "A murderer, no doubt! Though he escaped the sea, justice will not permit him to live." ⁵But Paul shook off the snake into the fire and was unharmed. ⁶The people waited for him to swell up or suddenly drop dead. But when they had waited a long time and saw that he wasn't harmed, they changed their minds and decided he was a god.

⁷Near the shore where we landed was an estate belonging to Publius, the chief official of the island. He welcomed us and treated us kindly for three days. ⁸As it happened, Publius's father was ill with fever and dysentery. Paul went in and prayed for him, and laying his hands on him, he healed him. ⁹Then all the other sick people on the island came and were healed. ¹⁰As a result we were showered with honors, and when the time came to sail, people supplied us with everything we would need for the trip. (Acts 28:1-10, NLT)

Lessons I can learn from this passage:

- 1. God's plan for my life may lead me _____
a storm that strips away _____.**

Indeed, Christ can still every storm, but He does not immunize Christians from problems that others in the world also face. Sometimes He miraculously delivers Christians from such situations, while at other times He gives Christians courage to endure natural and other disasters. We thank Him for performing miracles but also for His sufficient grace that provides endurance in the midst of storms. (Ajith Fernando, The Gospel Project)

Sometimes God puts us in the water so we will have nothing to cling to but Him. We are better off for it, and so are others. Christ often shines more through our suffering than He shines through our safety. Our testimonies are forged by rough water more than by calm water. (The Gospel Project)

- 2. God often uses the storms in my life to _____
me for a more _____ ministry to those in
need around me. (Acts 28:8-9)**

³All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is our merciful Father and the source of all comfort. ⁴He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us. ⁵For the more we suffer for Christ, the more God will shower us with his comfort through Christ. ⁶Even when we are weighed down with troubles, it is for your comfort and salvation! For when we ourselves are comforted, we will certainly comfort you. Then you can patiently endure the same things we suffer. ⁷We are confident that as you share in our sufferings, you will also share in the comfort God gives us.

⁸We think you ought to know, dear brothers and sisters, about the trouble we went through in the province of Asia. We were crushed and overwhelmed beyond our ability to endure, and we thought we would never live through it. ⁹In fact, we expected to die. But as a result, we stopped relying on ourselves and learned to rely only on God, who raises the dead. ¹⁰And he did rescue us from mortal danger, and he will

rescue us again. We have placed our confidence in him, and he will continue to rescue us. ¹¹And you are helping us by praying for us. Then many people will give thanks because God has graciously answered so many prayers for our safety. (2 Corinthians 1:3-11, NLT)

3. God also uses the storms to provide _____ the opportunity to minister to _____. (vv. 7, 11)

4. I can trust God to fulfill his _____ for my life. He _____ over all creation and over every situation, and I can _____ Him. (vv. 3-6)

¹ The LORD is my shepherd; I have all that I need. ²He lets me rest in green meadows; he leads me beside peaceful streams. ³He renews my strength. He guides me along right paths, bringing honor to his name. ⁴Even when I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me. Your rod and your staff protect and comfort me. (Psalm 23:1-4, NLT)

⁵ O Lord, you alone are my hope. I've trusted you, O LORD, from childhood. ⁶Yes, you have been with me from birth; from my mother's womb you have cared for me. No wonder I am always praising you!

¹⁷ O God, you have taught me from my earliest childhood, and I constantly tell others about the wonderful things you do. ¹⁸Now that I am old and gray, do not abandon me, O God. Let me proclaim your power to this new generation, your mighty miracles to all who come after me. (Psalm 71:5-6, 17-18, NLT)

FBC Prayer Card – October 2026

Jesus is our firm foundation.

As written in Scripture, "Therefore, this is what the Sovereign Lord says: 'Look, I am placing a firm foundation stone in Jerusalem, a firm and tested stone. It is a precious cornerstone that is safe to build on. Whoever believes need never be shaken.'" (Isaiah 28:16, NLT)

Prayer

Lord, we thank You for Your son, Jesus, our firm foundation whom we can build our life on. Amen