

Acts of Jesus 34 notes

There is a study reveals a fascinating peculiarity about human nature
our focus determines our reality.

--How we feel is not determined, necessarily, by outward
circumstances, but more by our inward focus.

--Another way of looking at it: **our internal attitudes are more**
important than our external circumstances.

--If that were not true then by simple deduction, we could conclude that
all rich people are happy and those not so rich are sad.

--But some of the happiest people in the world have hardly anything to
their names.

John Milton: "The mind is its own place, and in itself, can make a Heaven out of a Hell and a Hell out of
a Heaven."

--That is so true isn't it?

--We all know people who can find something good to focus on in the
worst of circumstances.

--We all know people who can find something bad to focus on in the
best of circumstances.

--There is a universal principle out there that says: **We tend to see**
what we're looking for and we tend to be shaped by what we see.

--There are essentially 2 types of Christians in this world: Worshippers
and Complainers

--Complainers can always find something to complain about.

--Worshippers can always find something to praise God about.

--We see and We become what We are looking for: **It's not a matter of**
choosing what is reality, but choosing how reality shapes us!

1. We are going to be looking at an example of this very thing right here in our study of Acts.

--**Acts 16:22**

--We saw last time that things weren't starting off so well in the first
mission trip to Europe, at least not at all like they had probably
planned. And now because they've tried to help a girl enslaved by a
demon they get some very horrible treatment.

--If there was potential for a low time for them, it would be now.

Put yourself into their shoes:

--You're somewhat disillusioned by the unusual circumstances that they
face here in Philippi.

--You're shocked at how quickly things went south after delivering this
demon possessed girl.

--You're a long-ways from home or anyone you know.

--You're hurting from a bad beating.

--You're spent emotionally, physically, and spiritually.

--If you are going to go low, it's now!!

V. 25 reads, "Around midnight, Paul and Silas were sitting around complaining about their
circumstances."?

2. Let's zoom out for a second.

- Here's is something we will find true most of the time when our circumstances get us down:
- When we get into a spiritual or emotional slump, it's usually because we've zoomed in on a problem.
- We're fixating on something that is wrong.
- We're focused on the wrong thing.
- Nine times out of ten, the solution is zooming out so we can get some perspective.

Dear Mom and Dad,

I have so much to tell you. Because of the fire in my dorm set off by student riots, I experienced temporary lung damage and had to go to the hospital. While I was there, I fell in love with an orderly, and we have moved in together. I dropped out of school when I found out I was pregnant, and he got fired because of his drinking, so we're going to move to Alaska, where we might get married after the birth of our baby.

Your loving daughter

PS: None of this really happened, but I did flunk my chemistry class and I wanted to keep everything in perspective.

- Sometimes you need to zoom out and look at the big picture.
- Something goes wrong and it feels like the end of the world. But it's not.

3. So how do we zoom out? Let me give you a one-word answer from our text: worship.

- Worshipping is taking our eyes off of our external circumstances and focusing on God.
- We stop focusing on what's wrong with us or with our circumstances. We start focusing on what's right with God.

Here's what worship does. It restores spiritual equilibrium.

- It helps you regain your perspective.
- It enables you to find something right to praise God about even when everything seems to be going wrong.
- Nothing is more difficult than praising God when everything seems to be going wrong.
- Worship isn't based on circumstances. Worship is based on the character of God.

It's not our circumstances but our response to our circumstances that matters.

- Worship is exercising our response-ability
- We have response-ability----We are response-able.
- Paul and Silas demonstrated that very thing 2000 years ago.
- They exercised their response-ability.
- You have response-ability this is why Paul wrote this: **Philippians 4:8**
- Your troubles and problems are a reality, but so is God, so is Heaven, so is the fact that He's working it all together for good.
- Focus on those things.

It was Albert Einstein who said, "You can't solve a problem on the level it was created."

--Problems created on a human plane are solved on the supernatural plane.

--That's what happens when we worship God.