

God Time Day 1: How to Take a Punch



It is actually a very common experience: someone gets an idea and gets really excited about that idea. They pour lots of passion and energy into pursuing that idea. But, as soon as they run into an obstacle, that passion fades away and quickly becomes replaced with questions and doubt.

Paul was called by God to preach the gospel, so then he planted churches and reached people all over the place. But then, Paul got arrested and put in prison for doing the very thing he was called by God to do, preaching the Gospel. What was Paul's response to this obstacle?



Read Philippians 1:12.

Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that what has happened to me has actually advanced the gospel,

How do you think Paul was able to have such an unexpected response to such a large obstacle?

God Time Day 2: What's the Gospel?



Paul's goal was to spread the Gospel as far as possible. If we are going to understand Paul's motivations, then we need to understand the Gospel. "Gospel" is a term meaning "good news." Paul had good news to share with the world. What is that good news?

The Good News is that the world and everyone living in it is hopelessly enslaved to sin, but God sent His son, Jesus, to live a life without sin. He was crucified, died, was buried, and rose again, defeating the penalty and power of sin, saving those who trust in Him. And He will one day return to restore all creation.

If you have never heard the Good News before, or if you have never accepted this gift from God or know someone who needs to hear it, you can go here to learn more.



gotquestions.org/what-is-the-gospel.html

God Time Day 3: Obstacles into Opportunity



Read Philippians 1:12-17.

¹² Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that what has happened to me has actually advanced the gospel, ¹³ so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard, and to everyone else, that my imprisonment is because I am in Christ. ¹⁴ Most of the brothers have gained confidence in the Lord from my imprisonment and dare even more to speak the word fearlessly. ¹⁵ To be sure, some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of good will. ¹⁶ These preach out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel; ¹⁷ the others proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, thinking that they will cause me trouble in my imprisonment.

Paul wanted to travel to Rome, preaching the Gospel and planting churches along the way. He was accused of a crime and was arrested and placed under Roman guard. Now, there are some who are taking advantage of Paul's imprisonment to pursue their own ambitions by moving against Paul, likely spreading rumors about Paul in the process.

For many people, the situation probably would have resulted in a great amount of despair. For Paul, the circumstances are an opportunity. His calling has not changed, even if his circumstances have. Paul wanted to go to Rome, and now he would eventually be taken to Rome to stand trial. He wanted to share the Gospel, and his guards are a "captive" audience. More people are being inspired to boldly share the Gospel, and even those moving against Paul are still spreading the Gospel along the way.

For Paul, his circumstances were an opportunity. An opportunity for God to move and be glorified.



Think of a trial or hardship you are facing today. How might you look at that as an opportunity for God to move?

God Time Day 4: Pay Attention to the Positive



Go back and read Philippians 1:12-17 from Day 3.

Continue reading in Philippians 1, verses 18-19.

18 What does it matter? Only that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is proclaimed, and in this I rejoice. Yes, and I will continue to rejoice 19 because I know this will lead to my salvation through your prayers and help from the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

From some people’s perspective, Paul’s positive outlook on his situation might seem absurd or even unbelievable. Even for some modern day, “glass half full” types of people, Paul’s positivity while in prison might seem manic. What is Paul’s secret?

Paul can be positive because he is focused on God’s will over his own. From a human perspective, Paul’s plans have been destroyed, he has enemies moving against him, he has lost his freedom, and doing the thing he is most passionate about is what put him in this position. From God’s perspective, while Paul is not getting to Rome as he expected or planned, God’s will is still being accomplished. Paul is still living out his calling, and God is being glorified in all of it.



Have you ever been in a circumstance where you felt God calling you into something, and you arrived at that calling in a completely unexpected way? Write down the names of two people you will share that story with this week.

Go back and look at what you wrote down at the end of Day 3 about a trial you are currently facing.

Write down three steps you will take for God to be glorified through this trial.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



Commit these steps to prayer and obedience.

God Time Day 5: What is Your Position?



We have been exploring what it means to find God’s purpose in trials and hardships. It is time for us to put it into practice. Here are some steps to guide you.

STEP 1: Draw Close. During a trial or hardship, the pain, fear, and stress of the situation can make it difficult to focus on God’s will. It is important for us to first draw close into God’s presence, allowing God to lead us through the storms and to guide us into healing. Write down two things you will put into practice today to draw closer into God’s presence.

1. _____
2. _____

STEP 2: Seek God’s will. In a broad, general sense, we know God’s will. We call them the 3Ds: **Demonstrate** God’s love, **Declare** the Good News, and make **Disciples**. How might your circumstances create opportunities for you to put one or more of these into practice?



STEP 3: Identify your support team. Paul had an amazing faith, but even Paul was being supported and encouraged along the way by many Believers, through letters, and by visitors. Who can you tell about what God is calling you to do? (Your 4G Group, close friends, Christian mentor, etc.). Set up a time to speak with them regularly about what God is doing. Give your support team permission to keep you focused on God’s will, to challenge you when needed, and encourage you when obstacles surface – because they will.

Meeting: Day: _____ Time: _____

STEP 4: Step out boldly. Put God’s calling into action and expect the unexpected along the way.