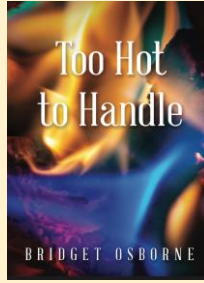


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**June 2024**

## **ARE YOU USING YOUR GIFTS FOR JESUS!**

Dear Chosen One: Greetings in the Name above all names JESUS!

In the Book of Acts, Chapter 5:12-32, we see demonstrated the kind of POWER the Apostles had and how they used that power to heal the sick and to minister to those who were around them.

The Bible says that after Jesus' resurrection, the Apostles worked miracles and wonders. Those who were sick were healed. Many people were even brought to the roadside for Peter's shadow to heal them. Because of these miracles many people believed in the Lord and believers increased in number.

However, the High Priest and some of the other religious leaders (the Sadducees), were angry and jealous so they arrested the Apostles and put them in jail. Whenever believers are committed to doing God's work, they will always find some people who want to discourage and hinder them from accomplishing His work. They were put in jail with the hope that the miracles would stop. However, even in prison the Holy Spirit can still accomplish His works through believers who surrender their lives to do God's work.

The Bible tells us, during the night an angel of the Lord opened the jail doors and let the Apostles out. You see, it does not matter *where* you are right now. What is important, however, is *what* you are doing for Jesus. The power of God could still reach you right now wherever you are. A jail cell, a prison door, a hospital bed, in a wheelchair - or any other obstacle - nothing can stop the plans and works that

the Lord has prepared for you.

These Apostles were on a mission, and no one was going to stop God's mission from succeeding. Let me assure you, if you are on a mission for God no one can stop you. Only you can stop yourself by allowing fear to create illusions in your mind. Remember FEAR-- is false evidence appearing real-- so do not believe Satan's lies.

The Apostles' mission was to go and tell the people that the same Jesus that they had crucified was alive and living among them. They were to give hope to the hopeless and that is the same mission you and I are mandated to proclaim.

The high priest and the religious leaders came together for one reason: they had a problem with the Apostles using Jesus' Name and crediting Him for all the miracles that were taking place. They were the elected leaders in Israel, and they were *not* getting any recognition or credit for the miracles that the Apostles were performing.

In addition, the Apostles were preaching and teaching in the Name of Jesus, a man whom these same leaders had crucified, and this was ruining their reputation. After a while, they gave orders to escort the Apostles from their prison cells, but when the guards went to get them, they were not there. The Jail was still locked, and the guards were still on their post, but the Apostles were not in their cells. Glory!

Soon after, the news reached the religious leaders that the Apostles had resumed teaching in the same Temple where they had been forbidden to preach. The Captain of the Temple guard went out

# STAND UP AND BE COUNTED FOR JESUS!

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and rearrested the Apostles and brought them before the high priest to be interrogated. The high priest said, “**We gave you strict orders not to teach in [JESUS] name...**” (verse 28) I am sure Peter responded by saying: “Look! Jesus is the only Name we can preach in. I was there when you arrested Him! I was there when you beat Him! I was the one who denied Him! I was there when you nailed Him to the cross. I was there when His body could not be found in the grave. I was there when He appeared to us in the ‘Upper Room’. I do not know about you; but the same Jesus who called me out of the boat to walk on the water, is ALIVE and well and I will mention His Name! I am NOT going to be silent!”

I could also hear Peter saying: “We want the world to know that God raised Jesus from the dead. He is our Savior and Redeemer. As a matter of fact, He is the reason that I am alive. He is the Head of the Church. Hey! The Name of Jesus shall be mentioned in this Temple and every other Temple in the world. All people, every nation, everything in the earth and under the earth shall bow their knees when they hear the Name of Jesus! (Romans 14:11). He defeated death and rose triumphally, and He is seated at the right hand of God the Father interceding on our behalf.” Peter was standing courageously as he proclaimed the Gospel.

Yes! The same Peter who denied Christ three times was now boldly standing in front of the council and leaders of Jerusalem telling them about Jesus.

As you read this message you may be thinking about your own circumstances or the difficulties that you may have been going through as a believer. I want to encourage you today that there is an end to every situation and circumstance that God allows to impact your life. Yes, the Bible says, “**Weeping may remain for a night, but rejoicing comes in the morning.**” (Psalm 30:5b) Continue to trust God and hold on to His unchanging hands—He is Faithful!

We need to start operating in God’s power so that unbelievers will know who Jesus is. Although, these Apostles were afraid, they did not allow fear to stop them for preaching and demonstrating God’s love to others.

They were guilty of preaching the Gospel and the religious leaders in their era put them in prison in order to keep them quiet but that did not work. In America people rarely go to jail for preaching the Gospel but in various parts of the world many believers are being tortured and beaten for being a Christian. The time and day are coming when you and I must stand for Jesus or fall to the world’s system. Jesus said if we deny Him, He will then deny us before His Father.

I can only encourage you from my own experience. During my time of incarceration, I was lied on, falsely accused, put to shame, and even had my name tainted because I was representing Jesus, similar to the Apostles’ experience. Like them, I never backed down or kept silent. After a while, the devil stopped firing his arrows because as the scripture states, “**A thousand may fall at [my] side and ten thousand at [my] right hand, but it will not come near [me]**” (Psalm 91:7).

Today, I can tell you that I made it out with my mind still intact. God restored the years that the enemy had stolen from my family and me. Yes, I am a living testimony for Jesus. I can boldly proclaim:

“It does not matter what you are going through right now. There is nothing too difficult for God to accomplish in you, through you, and around you.”

My message to you is--be patient and stay hopeful. God has not forgotten you. He knows where you are, and His timing is perfect. This too shall pass! One day you too will get the opportunity to share your testimony with others. God bless you—**Be Encouraged! LET’S KEEP HOPE ALIVE!**