

Digging Deeper

Sermon: The Maltese Serpent

Scripture: Acts 28:1-6



GETTING STARTED

Divide the men into one group and the women into a second group and ask each group to identify the types of problems and difficulties they struggle with the most (each group should have its own leader). Then come back and discuss them as a group. Do you identify areas of difference between the types of things men struggle with versus the areas in which women have difficulty?

BIBLE STUDY

Read Acts 28:1-6

1. Although the natives of Malta were not believers, how did their behavior suggest that they were “good” people?
 - Compare their conduct with the “Christian” mentioned in James 2:14-17. What would James suggest that believers could learn from the unbelieving heathen who lived on Malta?
2. What was Paul doing when he was bitten by the snake?
 - How does this illustrate the fallacy of thinking that if you are doing the “right” thing, you won’t suffer hardship or adversity?
3. What do we read in these verses to suggest that the problem that Paul endured was:
 - Secret?
 - Sudden?
 - Serious?
 - What can we learn about adversity from this example?
4. What promises from the following verses can we claim that God will take care of us during times of trial and tribulation?
 - 1 Corinthians 10:13
 - 2 Timothy 4:18
 - 2 Peter 2:9
5. The people of Malta declared Paul to be a “god” after he survived the snake bite. When Paul faced a similar situation in Lystra where the people tried to equate him with deity, how did he respond (Acts 14:14-17)?

APPLY IT

Which of the following statements best describes the area in which you struggle most when it comes to dealing with trials and tribulations?

- I don't expect adversity and am often caught off guard when I face difficulties.
- I too often entertain doubt and uncertainty about God's promises and/or power.
- I have trouble experiencing peace and tranquility in the midst of adversity.

Ask God to help you to deal with the area you have identified. Write down specific lessons you learned from this study that can assist you in dealing with this weakness.