

Acts 27:39-28:10 Lessons from a Shipwreck, Part 2

As we left off in our last study we saw the Apostle Paul on a Ship that was in a perilous place.

A) Two weeks of stormy weather – and the ship was losing depth every day.

B) The crew started to panic – and were ready to abandon the ship.

1) You know things are bad when the sailors are ready to jump over board.

C) Then an amazing thing happened. – Paul took command – **“Don’t jump ship.”**

quote: Joseph Parker

“Paul began as a prisoner, he ended as the captain.”

A crisis does not make a person.

A) A crisis shows what a person is made of - it tends to bring true leadership to the forefront.

Proverbs 24:10

**“If you faint in the day of adversity,
Your strength is small.”**

B) The Lord used this storm as the opportunity to show the great courage of heart that Paul possessed because of his faith in Christ.

“God’s man in the storm is the man whose courage stands when terror invades the hearts of others.”

God had made a promise to Paul – You are going to Rome – Paul was holding on to that.

A) Believing in the trustworthiness of God’s Character

B) God is the Ultimate PROMISE KEEPER!

- 1) He keeps his Word, even when that seems impossible;
- 2) even when the circumstances seem to point to the opposite.

C) We are called to be PROMISE BELIEVERS

Paul was clinging to the Promise of God

- 1) Put Paul in Prison Ok – **“I am going to Rome.”** –

D) Paul is before a firing squad – rifles – cocked – it is ok “I am going to Rome.”

E) Drop Paul from a Plane with no parachute – “I am going to Rome.”

Now I think it is worth noting that

A) Paul's experience in the storm at sea provides us with a wonderful illustration of two truths which are often thought to be in conflict:

B) The sovereignty or preordained will of God and the free will man.

C) At the height of the storm, as some of the sailors on board were attempting to jump ship, Paul warned in v 31, *“Unless these men stay in the ship, they cannot be saved.”*

D) Do you see the significance of this statement to our story?

- 1) On one hand, the angel assured Paul in verse 24 that every man in the boat would survive.
- 2) Only the boat would be lost.

E) Now Paul indicates that some could die if they didn't stay with the

ship.

Is this a contradiction?

A) Didn't God say that Paul and all who traveled with him would reach their destination safely?

B) Yes, but there was **one condition** that must be met: staying aboard ship.

C) The captain could have said, *"What difference does it make, Paul? You told us that we're all going to be safe anyway*

1) It doesn't make any difference what anybody does. If God has foreordained it, it will happen."

D) And Paul would have responded, *"Yes, it makes a great deal of difference what individuals do. Yes, you will all be saved—but you must stay on the ship to take advantage of God's protection."*

This story clearly shows how God's will and man's response work hand in hand.

A) Some say these truths are not compatible because they cancel each other out.

B) In other words, if you believe that God has preordained everything and He is in control, you cannot believe man has any freedom of choice.

C) You must either be a proponent of God's sovereignty or man's choice, they say. **You can't have both.**

1) Problem is both are clearly taught in Scripture, as this story illustrates.

D) **Salvation: God does ALL the work – God initiates the Wooing – But man has to RESPOND!**

Acts 28:1-2

Now when they had escaped, they then found out that the island was called Malta. 2

And the natives showed us unusual kindness; for they kindled a fire and made us all welcome, because of the rain that was falling and because of the cold.

GOD IN CHARGE

A) In the events of this shipwreck, and the landing of Paul on the island of Malta, we see the providence of God in the life of the apostle Paul.

B) Providence = **pro video – to see before hand.**

1) Because of what God knows it always translates into action in the present.

C) God orchestrated that the ship would be lost at the Island of Malta. – Great place

1) Even today it is considered to have the best climate in the world. Malta is always nice.

D) There they are welcomed by these really friendly natives.

1) The natives built a fire – warm these men!

3 But when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and laid them on the fire, a viper came out because of the heat, and fastened on his hand.

THE PRACTICAL SERVANT

A) Remember: This book serves as our MODEL for ministry.

B) IF you want to understand the life of the believer – understand the model for a minister – study the book of Acts and pay close attention to this man – named Paul.

C) Here we are shown another crucial facet in the life of the man that the Holy Spirit holds up to us as the **MODEL MINISTER**

D) Paul was a gifted guy, respected, anointed, courageous, - yet he was

also quite the servant.

1) he was an intensely practical man.

E)There was a bonfire to be kept burning, so Paul was gathering brushwood for it.

No matter how spiritual you might view yourself – can I encourage you – never remove yourself from the practical.

A)What PRACTICAL thing can YOU be doing right now?

B)There are many people who want to be seen as SPIRITUAL - but they would NEVER dream of doing something PRACTICAL. **Ministry is Practical**

JEREMY THE SIGN

C)Some pp would never do that!

On the other hand - there are many people who think that they can NEVER be used because they don't see themselves as having any "SUPERNATURAL" gifting.

A)Can't lead worship – can't sing – can't teach a bible study – not an evangelist

B)But do you realize that the gift of helps and administrations are in the same list of the **manifestations of the Spirit** as healing, miracles, prophecy and word of knowledge. 1 Corinthians 12:28

C)The great man that he was, Paul was not ashamed to be useful in the smallest thing.

It wasn't beneath Paul to go & gather wood for the fire.

D)It is only the little man who refuses the little task.

Illustration:

One rainy day, a man accompanied by two women arrived at Northfield, hoping to enroll his daughter in D.L. Moody's school for young women

The three needed help in getting their luggage from the railway depot to the hotel, so the visitor "drafted" **a rather common-looking man** with a horse and wagon, assuming he was a local cabby.

The "cabby" said he was waiting for students, but **the visitor ordered** him to take them to the hotel.

The visitor was shocked when the "cabby" did not **charge him**, and was even more shocked to discover that the "cabby" **was D.L. Moody himself!**

Key Point: Moody was a leader because he knew how to be a servant.

A) I can't encourage you enough to look at the world around you through the eyes of a servant.

B) Paul was willing to serve in a practical manner – to help keep **this fire going** that had been started by someone else.

C) Key Question: **What fire, can YOU keep going?**

D) It may be a fire that someone else started. But YOU can add to it to the benefit of others.

1) It may be a fire that makes *another* man shine or be warmed.

R U WILLING?

4 So when the natives saw the creature hanging from his hand, they said to one another, "No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he has escaped the sea, yet justice does not allow to live." 5 But he shook off the creature into the fire and suffered no harm. 6 However, they were expecting that he would swell up or suddenly fall down dead. But after they had looked for a long time and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds and

said that he was a god.

THE SERVANTS PERILS

A) This is actually the fulfillment of a promise made by Jesus at the end of Mark's gospel.

Mark 16:17-18 NKJV

"And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; {18} "they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."

Verse 4 NLT

The people of the island saw it hanging there and said to each other, "a murderer, no doubt! Though he escaped the sea, justice will not permit him to live."

B) These people assumed Bad things were happening to Paul because he was a bad person.

1) They felt that Paul was guilty of a great crime, and *justice* was catching up with him.

C) He had escaped from the sea - but they had seen these vipers kill others and they expected it to happen to Paul.

D) These natives assumed like so many do today that **BAD THINGS** happen to **BAD PEOPLE**.

Now think about this:

A) Paul is this stellar individual – 100% God's man – and yet bad things have been happening to him for quite some time.

B)Lesson here: Bad things do happen to good people!

1)May we never be found – guilty of looking at misfortune in someone’s life as they must deserve this or they must have done something wrong.

C)Note Well: This passage, along with so many others in Scripture, proves that bad things do happen to good people.

D)This passage also disproves the erroneous doctrine which teaches that it *is always and only unbelief and sin* that lead to pain and suffering.

E)That is a damnable heresy – that says if you are sick or suffering it is because of unbelief and sin.

Note Well: We saw last week TREMENDOUS FAITH in the life of Paul -

A)Ship is in the storm – not looking good – Paul says:

(Acts 27:25 NKJV) "Therefore take heart, men, for I believe God that it will be just as it was told me.

B)Paul couldn’t have been bitten by the viper because of unbelief.

C)Listen: Unemployment is not an indication of blessing or cursing.

1)A diagnosis – is not an indication of blessing or cursing.

D) Divorce is not an indication of blessing or cursing.

Infact: I know pp who were totally in sin or not doing good with Jesus – Raise – or great job.

A)People look and go wow – what a blessing they must really be doing well spiritually.

B) Yes it is a blessing: But often times it is **ALL GRACE- it is his kindness that leads us**

1) Examples of this throughout scripture – God blesses His pp even in their rebellion

C) Hoping they will turn to Him – see Him as the author of all good things.

1) When they don't then He resorts to punishment

But often He starts with grace.

We need to remove ourselves from making these false assumptions – that the outward circumstances define where a person is at.

A) You can be in a great place spiritually – lose your job - and Still be blessed by God!

B) Key App: Do NOT make the mistake of measuring the MERCY OF GOD by your experience with UNMERCIFUL MAN.

C) Listen even Church people can be so unmerciful – even Christians can be so unmerciful the way they deal with other Christians

HOSPITAL – We are all sick and needy

D) Whatever lack of mercy you experience at the hand of men do not think that is the way that God is.

1) These guys looked at Paul and said he is the criminal of the worst sort. No He is the Hero –

2) He is the man of faith – and yet they hurled these accusations at him –

E) **DON'T THINK THAT IS THE WAY THAT GOD IS!**

Now when Paul doesn't die – the natives move from he is cursed to he must be a god!

A) That is ministry – that is so often the fickleness of people. Love you one day – Hate you the next.

B) Comes with the territory – The applause of men cannot be your motivation.

God would miraculously save Paul

A) And as we have seen so often in this Book of Acts, this would open the door for a radical work of God in the lives of many people.

7 In that region there was an estate of the leading citizen of the island, whose name was Publius, who received us and entertained us courteously for three days. 8 And it happened that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever and dysentery. Paul went in to him and prayed, and he laid his hands on him and healed him. 9 So when this was done, the rest of those on the island who had diseases also came and were healed. 10 They also honored us in many ways; and when we departed, they provided such things as were necessary.

GOD'S GLORY

A) I believe that it is very important to note that the gifts of miracles and healing were in operation in Paul's life

B) and yet he himself had always to bear about with him the thorn in the flesh.

C) Amazing - Paul was content to be the channel of blessings which he himself would never enjoy.

1) Paul would never experience the benefit of this blessing in his own life.

D) He prayed for God to remove his thorn in the flesh and God said no –

Paul would pray for others to be healed – and would watch God touch them and yet he never grew bitter at God's healing power in the lives of others

A) We always want Jesus to be glorified when it means that our life is going to be blessed. -

B) But what about in the lives of others. - Paul was not so much concerned at how God would bless Paul –

1) but he was more concerned with how – God would be glorified through his life by being used to bless others.

C) This is CONFORMITY TO CHRIST.

1) **It is a radical testimony to the work of God in Paul's life.**

Acts 28:11-14

11 After three months we sailed in an Alexandrian ship whose figurehead was the Twin Brothers, which had wintered at the island. 12 And landing at Syracuse, we stayed three days. 13 From there we circled round and reached Rhegium. And after one day **the south wind** blew; and the next day we came to Puteoli, 14 where we found brethren, and were invited to stay with them seven days. **And so we went toward Rome.**

AN EXPECTED END!

A) The STORM IS OVER and they have a FAVORABLE wind.

B) That is LIFE. - The trials PASS.

C) God has them MEASURED out.

1) The storm was measured out in God's time frame and it had to come to an end – there was an expected end.

D) There is an EXPECTED END in your storm as well.

Jeremiah 29:11 KJV

“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD,

thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.”

Jeremiah 29:11 NLT

“For I know THE PLANS I have for you,” says the LORD. “They are PLANS FOR GOOD and NOT FOR DISASTER, to GIVE YOU A FUTURE and A HOPE.”

Not for Disaster

A) 14 days in a storm – where everything would be lost – looked in the natural like a huge disaster.

B) God had a plan that was for good.

C) There was a future that God had for them – The plan = Rome!

D) Beginning in Acts 9 at Paul’s conversion and moving all the way through Acts 28 God had a plan in store – the plan was to get Paul to Rome –

But there were going to be things that God wanted to accomplish along the way.

A) Areas and means through which God would use Paul and much of it would involve suffering – trials.

B) LISTEN: IF we want to see the purposes of God fulfilled in our lives – i. e. - reach our destination –

C) THEN we MUST **expect the STORMS** and the SOUTHWINDS of life.

D) In my journey I wish there were more south winds – but that is just not the way it usually works.

E) Still moving – **still sailing** – We need to remember that in transit God’s

plans for us are good.

We can script our day: and so many times God gets the white out.

{Change order here

A) We want to script our lives – God says that is nice –but that is not what I have planned.

B) Very little of my life has gone the way that I have scripted it.

C) Encourage you and me – lets not be Christians who are on board as long as there is a south wind that is blowing.

D) And lets make sure that this is not a place where we are all here simply to polish our boats

Life is about getting our boats in the water- some days southwinds – fun

A) Other days storms – rough – someday Typhoons – really rough

B) In the boat together – in the storm together.

C) No we need to be real – Some of you are cursed like me – when you are not doing well – it shows.

1) I can't fake it-

We need to be real – and that is why the word says that we need to stir up one another to love and good works

A) I need stirred up at times – listen – your pastor puts his pants on the same way you do – one leg and at a time

B) Wrestle with the same things – Kids, finances, trusting God,

C) Sometimes – I might seem heavy hearted – yea – there is a lot going on.

1) My decisions affect 800 families – call this their church home

2) and if you count the school staff – 70 families who are employed here
{ Friends – family

C) Storms weigh heavy – good days bad days

2009 -2010 two of the toughest years for us as a Church.

But it will come to pass – there is an Expected End

Acts 28:1

“When they had been brought safely through.....”

NASU

No matter the present hardship – You are going to arrive safely through

**God’s plan is going to be fulfilled – It is going to turn out for His good –
which ultimately means our good.**

REST IN THAT TODAY!