

Acts 27:1-44 Lessons from a Shipwreck

When I was in college – I worked at the Sheraton Hotel in Newport Beach.

A)A buddy of mine – Todd L – also worked there – 2 day Pass – Sheraton mission Bay.

B)One day – **decided – Catamaran** – The day we chose was really windy. 40mph

1)You really want to go out? Hey Dave – Jack Sparrow and B Fraser George of the Jungle

C)These guys want to take a Hobie Cat out – Far out

I knew at that moment we were in for trouble.

A)Wind really fast - - easy to get the p

B)Crashed – boat – rescue.

1)STORMS ARE A PART OF LIFE !

Well in our study tonight we are going to see the Apostle Paul on a boat headed for Rome

A)He ends up in a treacherous storm at sea – no rescue – but a Major shipwreck.

B)Before we look at this scene **lets recall how Paul ends up here.**

C)Paul was determined to go to Jerusalem – Passion to share Jesus there!

He Finally arrives but after 7 days – his presence there causes an uproar – riot

A)Paul is rescued by the Roman Centurion

B)A group of Jews make a pack that they will not eat or drink until – Paul is death.

1)They devise a plan to capture and execute Paul

C)The **Roman Centurion hears of it** – and decides to send Paul with a military escort to Caesarea.

1)Why Caesarea? – That is where the Governor Felix resides – let him try to sort this out

D)**Felix interviews Paul** – Paul shares with Felix and his wife – Drusilla – about Jesus

1)Felix isn't sure what to make of him or this whole situation – keeps Paul in custody for 2 yrs

E)Felix is Replaced by Festus – who hears the case again –

Festus realizes this is a religious matter – Not a Legal matter wants to send Paul back to Jerusalem

A)Back to the Jewish religious council

B)Paul knowing that would spell disaster for him – Appeals to Caesarea

1)Which was his right as a Roman citizen!

But now Festus has a problem – he can't send someone to Caesar without – actual charges.

A)So when King Agrippa comes to Caesarea for a visit – he implores him to hear Paul case.

B)In hopes of helping him find some reason of which to write as to why he is sending him to Caesar.

C)Paul shares his testimony and the gospel with Agrippa and his response is incredible

1)Agrippa says – Paul you almost persuade me to become a Christian

D)But after sharing with Agrippa – Agrippa says – if he didn't appeal to Caesar – no reason to hold him

E)But Paul appealed to Caesar and to Caesar he is going to go.

That is where we pick up here in Acts 27

V.1 And when it was decided that we should sail to Italy, they delivered Paul and some other prisoners to one named Julius, a centurion of the Augustan Regiment.

2 So, entering a ship of Adramyttium, we put to sea, meaning to sail along the coasts of Asia.

Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, was with us.

And the next day we landed at Sidon. And Julius treated Paul kindly and gave him liberty to go to his friends and receive care. When we had put to sea from there, we sailed under the shelter of Cyprus, because the winds were contrary. ----→

And when we had sailed over the sea which is off Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to Myra, a city of Lycia. There the centurion found an Alexandrian ship sailing to Italy, and he put us on board.

(Acts 19:21) “I must also see Rome” Those were Paul’s words during his ministry in Ephesus
A)Paul had wanted to preach the Gospel in Rome for a LONG time. **PASSION**

God had a plan to get Paul to Rome – but it was different from what the apostle imagined.

A)An illegal arrest in Jerusalem -- Roman and Jewish Trials – confinement in Caesarea for 2 years

B)And as we will see today even shipwreck

C)Note: This trip might not have been undertaken as **Paul anticipated - but it had been scripted by God.**

D)**Encourage you in this:** We have our dreams and visions and desires but not all of it goes as according to a plan.

1) **God has a script.** – Die at 22 ? No sense

E)**Paul would get to Rome** His journey would be an “**all expenses paid**” trip, courtesy of the Roman GOVT because he would travel as the prisoner of Rome.

The Lord was in all of it. AND The Lord saw him through all of it.

A)As you navigate your way thru the course of life – AND pursue all that God has put in your heart.

B)Know this: when things don’t transpire the way that you thought/ Know that God is STILL in it
1) God will see you through it

C)God’s part is to see us through – **Our part is to trust Him to do that!**

Consider tonight The means of God’s encouragement in the storm. 4 LESSONS

#1 God often uses PEOPLE as **His means of ENCOURAGING His Children in the storm.**

B)In these first few verses we are introduced to **three individuals who are examples of the kind of people that God uses.**

C)The first is easy to miss - V.1 - **And when it was decided that WE should sail**

D)**We tells us LUKE IS THERE** - remember he is the author

E)Now Luke had not included himself in the narrative since Acts 21:18, **but now he has joined Paul for the voyage to Rome.**

Important observation: The HS could have continued to have Luke write in the third person.

A)But the Holy Spirit wanted us to know that Luke was there.

B)It is believed by a number of commentators that Luke was permitted on board as Paul’s physician.

1) **Only way that He could have been there.** He chose to be there.

C)Luke was a true friend. –

1) You know who your true friends are when you are in the midst of a storm. – **“Friends Run towards you – when others are running away.”**

When words don’t work, remember that presence does, that is the beauty of the incarnation. God didn’t shout His love from heaven, God came near in the person of Jesus.

Craig Groeschel - Hope in the Dark

D)Sometimes the Lord comes in the presence of a friend

E)When you are in a dark trial there is nothing better than to have a friend who has faith in the Lord – who will point you to Jesus.

Next we see that God richly blessed Paul through the kindness of A stranger.

JULIUS, A CENTURION OF THE AUGUSTAN REGIMENT

Centurions were cream of the crop in the Roman army – men known for their bravery and their Proven character. -

A)All through the voyage Julius, the Roman centurion, treated Paul w/ kindness & consideration.

B)I wonder if Julius saw in Paul those same qualities of **Bravery and a proven Character** that he admired in his fellow centurions

C)Julius no doubt treated Paul well out of his sense of responsibility to his duties.

1) If you want to be used by God – **Be responsible.**

E) Be the kind of person who takes his responsibilities seriously.

....ONE ARISTARCHUS (acts 19:29; 20:2, 4)

A) God used the devotion and loyalty of Aristarchus to encourage Paul.

B) Incredible guy: It is believed that there was only ONE WAY in which Aristarchus could have accompanied Paul on this journey -
1) That was by enrolling himself as Paul's slave.

C) In other words, Aristarchus chose to act as the slave of Paul rather than be separated from him.
1) Loyalty can go no further than that.

What is the KEY to such faithfulness?

"When men cease to be faithful to their God, he who expects to find them faithful to each other will be much disappointed."

A) True ministry is always VERTICAL – before it is horizontal –

B) Aristarchus was a free man who chose to be a slave because he was already God's slave –
1) he was sold out for Jesus!

C) If you are going to be a blessing to this church, to your family, to your friends, or in this world –
1) it starts with you being sold out to JESUS

D) So Paul would be encouraged through the Means of these 3 men that God had in His life at this time.

One more thing before we move on v.1 SOME OTHER PRISONERS

A) Paul was not the only prisoner that Julius and his men were taking to Rome, for there were "other prisoners" with them.

B) The Greek word means "others of a different kind".

C) This may suggest that, unlike Paul, these men were going to Rome not to stand trial, but for execution. Fight the GLADIATORS

Isn't the Lord awesome –

A) Here are a bunch of men who are on this boat – sailing to their death –

B) These men hardened Criminals who are going to spend an eternity in Hell.

1) God totally hooks them up !

C) Places Paul on their boat – So that before they die they will have the chance to hear the gospel.

Church/ Precious saints – know this God does the same thing in our lives.

A) The World around us is floating toward an eternity of torment – separated from a God who loves them - GAVE HIS SON.

B) God places you and I who know Him – who have been touched by His grace – on the same boat.

1) In the same seas of storm – financial storms – relationship storms –

C) So that we can shine the light of Jesus to people who are lost and going to Hell

1) WE MUST NEVER LOSE THAT PERSPECTIVE – especially in the midst of the storm. It was out of

D) God orchestrated all of this – getting Paul on that particular boat so that these men who were hardened criminals could hear the gospel before they died –

Glorious

When we had sailed slowly many days, and arrived with difficulty off Cnidus, the wind not permitting us to proceed, we sailed under the shelter of Crete off Salmone. Passing it with difficulty, we came to a place called Fair Havens, near the city of Lasea. Now when much time had been spent, and sailing was now dangerous because the Fast was already over, Paul advised them, saying, "Men, I perceive that this voyage will end with disaster and much loss, not only of the cargo and ship, but also our lives."

Nevertheless the centurion was more persuaded by the helmsman and the owner of the ship than by the things spoken by Paul. And because the harbor was not suitable to winter in, the majority advised to set sail from there also, if by any means they could reach Phoenix, a harbor of Crete opening toward the southwest and northwest, and winter there.

Paul had already endured 3 shipwrecks in his life -

A) Paul perceived that they should stop – put in for the winter. – His Advice

B)But because of impatience – the Sailors wanted to try and push forward to one more port
1)IMPATIENCE can get us in a world of trouble

C)These sailors motivated by impatience press ignore Paul's warning – Press forward

When the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained their desire, putting out to sea, they sailed close by Crete.

But not long after, a tempestuous head wind arose, called Euroclydon. Typhoon winds So when the ship was caught, and could not head into the wind, we let her drive. And running under the shelter of an island called Clauda, we secured the skiff with difficulty. When they had taken it on board, they used cables to undergird the ship; and fearing lest they should run aground on the Syrtis Sands, they struck sail and so were driven. And because we were exceedingly tempest-tossed, the next day they lightened the ship. On the third day we threw the ship's tackle overboard with our own hands. Now when neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small tempest beat on us, all hope that we would be saved was finally given up.

When All hope was gone – that is when God gives the 2nd means by which he encourages His children in the midst of the Storm.

21 But after long abstinence from food, then Paul stood in the midst of them and said, "Men, you should have listened to me, and not have sailed from Crete and incurred this disaster and loss. 22 And now I urge you to take heart, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. 23 For there stood by me this night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve, 24 saying, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must be brought before Caesar; and indeed God has granted you all those who sail with you.' 25 Therefore take heart, men, for I believe God that it will be just as it was told me. 26 However, we must run aground on a certain island."

#2 Means of encouragement: The Encouragement of the promise of God's presence. V.23

A) 23 For there stood by me this night an angel of the God

**B)Seen this before – Remember Corinth
(Acts 18:9-10 NKJV) *He was afraid***

Now the Lord spoke to Paul in the night by a vision, "Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent; {10} "for I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city."

(Acts 23:11 NKJV)

But the following night the Lord stood by him and said, "Be of good cheer, Paul; for as you have testified for Me in Jerusalem, so you must also bear witness at Rome."

C)Later in Paul's journey he will be held alone in prison in Rome, Paul will pen these words: "At my first defense no one stood with me. . . But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me" (2 Timothy 4:16,17).

D)Time and again God reminded Paul of His presence, no doubt when he needed it most.

1)He knew when Paul could use extra assurance.

E)God stood by Paul's side in the storm/ In the same way, Know this: God is beside you in your storms.

You can take heart in the face of danger uncertainty because of your awareness of God's presence!

A)When your employer says, "I'm sorry, but I'm going to have to let you go";

B))When the telephone rings and someone says, "There's been an accident";

C)It is hard and crushing – but at the same time there is this overwhelming sense of God's presence.

It is in those times especially that we need to remember & The Lord is with You.

A)You are not alone. He is standing there by your side.

**B)He will stand by your side just as He stood by Paul.
1)Disciples in the boat / Shad..... in the fire !**

C)Notice Paul's words in V.23 - v. 23 ... the God to whom I belong.

D)Paul took comfort in knowing that God wasn't just with him – he belonged to him!

E)JESUS has a vested interest in His CHILDREN and His SERVANTS.

***Anyone who harms you harms my most precious possession.* (Zechariah 2:8 NLT)**

#3 The trustworthiness of God's Character.

25 Therefore take heart, men, for I believe God that it will be just as it was told me.

A)God's promises speaks to us in the midst of trials.

B)It is CRUCIAL that we KNOW what precious promises belong to us in the Word.

C)It is even more CRUCIAL for us to realize that the Lord wants to SPEAK to us in very personal and specific ways in the midst of the storms of life.

Isaiah 41:10

**"Fear not, for I am with you;
Be not dismayed, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you,
Yes, I will help you,**

I will uphold you with My righteous right hand."

Isaiah 43:1-3

**3 But now, thus says the Lord, who created you, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel:
"Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called
you by your name; You are Mine.**

**2 When you pass through the waters, I will be with
you; And through the rivers, they shall not
overflow you. When you walk through the fire,
you shall not be burned, Nor shall the flame
scorch you. 3 For I am the Lord your God, The
Holy One of Israel, your Savior;**

D)Put ourselves in the place to hear Him!

#4— Throw away the escape Routes! V.27-38

Now when the fourteenth night had come, as we were driven up and down in the Adriatic Sea, about midnight the sailors sensed that they were drawing near some land. And they took soundings and found it to be twenty fathoms; and when they had gone a little farther, they took soundings again and found it to be fifteen fathoms. Then, fearing lest we should run aground on the rocks, they dropped four anchors from the stern, and prayed for day to come. And as the sailors were seeking to escape from the ship, when they had let down the skiff into the sea, under pretense of putting out

anchors from the prow, Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, "Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved." Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the skiff and let it fall off.

During these final two weeks they had been at sea, the ship had been driven over 500 miles off course and was now adrift in the Adriatic Sea.

A)These seasoned sailors knew things were not looking good- heading for disaster –

B)They started thinking of survival for themselves

1)They were thinking of escaping from the ship – let down a skiff

C)But in v.24 Paul had told everybody God's promise that He would keep all those safe who sailed with him on the voyage/ **Only the boat would be lost.**

Key insight Whether these men knew it, or not, the ship was the SAFEST place to be.

A)Even though - Every natural instinct said that it wasn't

B)These guys were Sailors – they understood the sea

**They knew that with each sounding – losing depth
1)They would soon run into Rocks –**

C)Everything in them said – We are headed for trouble.

D)But being in the ship in the storm was being in God's perfect will for them.

The same is true for us – the storm is often the safest place to be.

A) Just as resistance in the gym makes your muscles grow stronger.

B)Resistance in life strengthens your faith in God

C)When there is resistance – fight against the urge to bail – Trust in the Lord!

1)Trust his word

D)Storm in your marriage – storm in your Job

1)Storm in your ministry.

Paul said, “If you jump ship, you’ll lose your life.”

A) And the centurion, knowing how tempting it would be for the sailors to bail out, to jump ship, to give up,

B) ordered the soldiers to cut the lines so there would be no possibility of escape.

C) I know there are some who are saying, “I haven’t jumped ship. I’ve only lowered a lifeboat over the side.

D) I’ll give it three more months, or two more weeks, or one more year.”

1) But if you keep an escape option open in your mind, the chances are great you will end up using it.

E) You are going to lose! – Might not lose your life but you are going to lose something

1) Lose the opportunity of experiencing God’s abounding Grace!

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) God wants us to know though that his grace is sufficient and his power is made perfect in weakness

1) Just don’t bail –

V.33 **And as day was about to dawn, Paul implored them all to take food, saying, “Today is the fourteenth day you have waited and continued without food, and eaten nothing.**

The crew was sick to their stomachs and not eating Therefore I urge you to take nourishment, for this is for your survival, since not a hair will fall from the head of any of you.” And when he had said these things, he took bread and gave thanks to God in the presence of them all; and when he had broken it he began to eat. Then they were all encouraged, and also took food themselves.

In difficult times when we can point people to Hope in Jesus – often times the result of that is their hearts are encouraged.

And in all we were two hundred and seventy-six persons on the ship. So when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship and threw out the wheat into the sea. When it was day, they did not recognize the land; but they observed a bay with a beach, onto which they planned to run the ship if possible. And they let go the anchors and left them in the sea, meanwhile loosing the rudder ropes; and they hoisted the mainsail to the wind and made for shore. But striking a place where two seas met, they ran the ship aground; and the prow stuck fast and remained immovable, but the stern was being broken up by the violence of the waves.

They did not know it at first, but they came to an island called Malta.

A) The place where the ship came aground is now called St. Paul’s Bay.

B) “If they missed Malta, the next land spot was 200 miles away – never would have made it!

And the soldiers’ plan was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim away and escape. But the centurion, wanting to save Paul, kept them from their purpose, and commanded that those who could swim should jump overboard first and get to land, and the rest, some on boards and some on parts of the ship. And so it was that they all escaped safely to land.

Even in this we will see the Lord’s hand – next time as the Lord will use their presence there to bring the natives to Christ!

How do we survive the Storms

#1 Good friends

#2 The Promise of God’s Presence

#3 The trustworthiness of God’s Character

#4 Cut away the escape routes