

Faith Through the Storm

Acts 27:1-26

Icebreaker: *What makes you nervous?*

Starting in chapter 27, Luke joins the journey. We start noticing him using the word “we” regarding Paul’s journey. As you remember from an earlier lesson, Paul appealed to Caesar and now he is on a voyage to Rome.

Acts 27:1-3

What encouragement does Paul receive on his journey to Rome?

- He is allowed to spend some time with the Christians of Sidon.

It is important to note how connected the Christian community was at this time. Paul must have known of their existence and they readily spent time with him and showed him love and kindness.

Is it surprising that the Roman troops allowed Paul to do that?

- Centurions are presented pretty well in the New Testament.
- Paul was probably under guard during that trip.

Acts 27:4-12

Luke notes that it was after the Day of Atonement. That is significant because it shows it was far enough into the fall of the year for these waters to be extremely dangerous.

Hadn’t God promised him he would make it to Rome? Why warn his Roman captors of the coming difficulties?

Many times we compare storms in the Bible to figurative storms we face in life. *Paul knows a storm is coming that will threaten the lives of the people on the ship, what does he do?*

- He gives a warning that something bad is about to happen.
- He let’s them know just how serious it is going to be.

What does that teach us about what to do if we see disaster approaching our lives or the lives of those we know?

- We have to be bold and warn people.

What can make it hard to warn someone about trouble that you can see brewing in their life?

- We fear they won’t listen or they will think we are being nose-y.
- They may have said, “Paul, you aren’t a sailor. What do you know?” But he warned them anyway.

How should we respond to others when they try to warn us?

What things can easily blind us to our own problems?/Why can others sometimes see our problems more clearly than we can?

- Pride, arrogance, selfishness.
- Some times we rationalize our behavior and think of all kinds of reasons it is okay but someone else may see right through it all and try to warn us for our own good.

Acts 27:13-26

It is just a guess but we will probably never be in the middle of a storm in an ancient wooden ship in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea. However, as was said earlier these stories can be object lessons for how we can handle the “storms” that threaten our lives and spiritual well being from time to time. We are not just talking about physical storms like illness and injury. We are also talking about spiritual storms that can threaten us.

What are some spiritual things that can threaten our survival?

- Sin, Satan, selfishness

Notice that when the storm hit the crew did what they could to protect the ship and the passengers. Two of the most significant actions were binding the ship with rope and throwing things overboard.

How could these two things be paralleled in how we deal with trouble?

- Binding the ship—We have to draw close to each other
- Throwing things overboard—We have to remove all obstacles and hindrances that keep us from getting through the storm.

What obstacles slow our progress through the storms of life?

How does God reassure Paul that everything will be okay?

It is reassuring that God sends comfort and courage even in the midst of our storms. God is faithful and he is the only one who can see us through the storms of life. There are no boats big enough to be unsinkable. There are no other captains wise enough to pilot the straights and storms of life. Only with God on our side will we survive the storms of life.

Application:

What things in your life need to be “thrown overboard?”

How could drawing close to other Christians help you through your difficult times?

How can you be an encouragement to others when they are going through their own storms?

Prayer:

Take prayer requests for the storms the members of the group are going through (physical and spiritual). Spend some time praying for those.