

A Storm Brewing - Acts 27:1-44

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[0:00] All right, we turn to Acts 27, and we are going to attempt to do the whole chapter. And then we'll have one chapter left. Is that crazy?

All right, so Acts 27, we have left Paul, we've come through, he's been over like three years on trial as a prisoner of Rome or some iteration of Rome. And he's gone through three different major trials, not like trials of life, but actual courtroom appearance trials.

And he has, due to the fact of the injustice of the world, he has had to exercise his right as a Roman citizen and said, I appeal to Caesar. And so they said, well, to Caesar he will go.

And in Acts 27, we're going to see his journey there. We're going to move through it pretty quick, obviously, since there's 44 verses. This could easily have been two or three sessions, but the Lord just kind of put a bunch of stuff before me that we're just going to kind of move through.

So I'm not going to, I'm going to try not to bog down too greatly in one spot. So my message is, oh, it did work. The title is A Storm Brewing As Paul Enters Into a Storm. And we think of it like, oh, this is Paul when he was in the shipwreck, when he was in the storm. But he tells us he was, he was shipwrecked like two or three times already. We're going to look at that scripture.

[1:19] So it's not something new for Paul. If you remember where we're at in Paul's life, it's probably about 62 AD. Oh, I'm going to turn off that background. That'd be distracting.

There at the bottom, you know, it says about 80, 60, probably a little further along between his arrest in Jerusalem. There's about three years he's been there in Caesarea. And now we're moving into this area where he's at the shipwreck, which is, this is going to cover, I mean, this chapter covers a matter of a couple of weeks. It's not that much time.

We're going to see Paul's journey here to Rome. Up until where he gets to Crete, it's kind of all planned. And then that straight line that goes from Crete to Malta wasn't a straight line. That was two weeks in the Mediterranean, just not knowing if they were going to survive or not. So our outline is kind of, it's kind of broken apart, almost like the points along the chapter where Paul kind of speaks out and kind of changes direction a little bit because of that. Verses one through eight is smooth sailing. They leave from Caesarea.

Everything seems great. It's good weather. Verses nine through 20, a dark foreboding. That's where Paul kind of says, hey, I see storm clouds on the horizon, guys. If we go, it's not going to be good. And then they end up going. Verses 21 through 32 is the next time we see Paul speak in the middle of this storm, this hurricane or whatever it is. And he kind of throws out a line of hope. He says, hey, the Lord stood by me tonight. We're going to make it. And then verses 33 through 41, anchors away.

That doesn't mean they're throwing in their anchors. It means their anchors are going away. They let loose the anchors and they kind of make a run for the shore. And then 42 through 44, run aground in purpose.

[3 : 04] Not run aground on purpose, but they've run aground in purpose, in God's purpose. So we saw last time as we ended kind of this series of Paul's courtroom appearances that there are no might-have-beens with God, right? Because at the end there, I think it was Agrippa said that this man might have been set at liberty if he had not appealed unto Caesar. But with God, there's no might-have-beens.

God had a plan in this. Paul was going to Rome, and this was the means by which he was going to do that. We know Romans 8, 28, that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose. All things, even storms, even trials, even shipwrecks.

Let's jump into verse 1. And when it was determined that we should sail into Italy, they delivered Paul and certain others' prisoners unto one named Julius, a centurion of Augustus' band. So we see the narrative here changes back to we. Up until then, it's been Paul, he, Paul, he, they, them. So now Luke is back.

So Luke must have got the story from Paul about all that was happening during Paul's trials in Caesarea, and now it's back to we. Luke is not a prisoner, but he's going to go with Paul and join in with him.

It says they delivered Paul. That word means they delivered him into custody. So it's not just like, well, Paul here, we're going to put you on this, you know, Uber ship to Rome. This is, he's being delivered as a prisoner. Paul's circumstances presented numerous reasons for discouragement here.

[4 : 39] He's been in custody for three years, and after three years on trial, there's been no change. He's being treated as a common prisoner, and he's going to have to meet the church in Rome as a prisoner. You know, you want to come in, it's like, yes, you know, we're having, we're having a special guest speak tonight. Well, who is it? I don't know. They're delivering him off the prison barge as we speak. You know, oh, okay, you know. But there's also reasons for encouragement. Paul's reasons for encouragement was he was moving in the direction of God's word and will. God had said, Paul, you're going to get to Rome. So he's moving in that direction, and he was not alone. He had Luke with him, and we're going to see he had Aristarchus with him as well from Thessalonica, and he was assured of his destination. Paul's going to get on this boat, knowing that whatever happens in between, he's going to get there. There's going to be a lot of detours in between, but he's going to get there. We have the same thing, right? We can be discouraged because maybe things haven't changed for years we've expected to change. Maybe we're being treated in a way that just isn't right. Man, I'm being treated as a common prisoner. And maybe our reputation before other people isn't what we would hope it would be. But we can be just as assured if we move in God's direction, the direction of his will, that we're going to get to that destination.

And entering into a ship of Adramedium, we launched, meaning to sail by the coasts of Asia. And one Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, being with us. So the ship of Adramedium, Adramedium means I shall abide in death. So it's like, hey, good ship lollipop? No, it's the good ship. I shall abide in death. Come on, Paul. We're going to go to Rome.

So Aristarchus is there too. Aristarchus, his name means the best ruler. He's a good guy. He's mentioned a couple of times in Acts, if you remember in Ephesus, when they're all crying out, great is Diana of the Ephesians. They grab Aristarchus. He's one of the ones they drag in there before the magistrate. And that's when the magistrate kind of puts them in their place and says, look, guys, you've brought nothing here that's worthy of a criminal act. And the whole thing falls apart. But that's that Aristarchus. Paul mentions him in Colossians chapter four, verse 10. He says, Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner salutes you and Marcus, sister, son to Barnabas.

And so Aristarchus was a traveling companion of Paul. It was one of those who was faithful to be right there alongside Paul with Luke. And so they leave. They're planning to go along the coast of Asia, right? Asia, not like we think of Asia, that where it says Mira up there. That's Asia, Asia Minor, but by the Aegean Sea. So the idea is, just as they do, they're going to kind of curve up along the coast. You didn't want to be outside of land too long. It wasn't like they just took a straight line through the Mediterranean. They bounced in and out of ports because that was the safest way.

And so the next day we touched at Sidon, and Julius courteously entreated Paul and gave him liberty to go unto his friends to refresh himself. So they didn't go very far. They just went from Caesarea to Sidon. And he courteously entreated him. That means to be philanthropic or humane.

[7 : 45] Julius understood that Paul was more than just a prisoner, right? He was a person, but he was also a Roman. So he's on this ship with all these other prisoners. Paul's a little different, but it's interesting here how Julius notices that. And he allows Paul to go and to meet with his friends, to refresh himself. Refresh means to cure or give attention to. So Paul's fellowship, it was like, oh, it's like his cure. He's like, I'm going to be refreshed. I need to give attention to this.

I had meetings all morning. I was meeting with people in the world. And multiple times throughout that I thought, I can't wait till tonight's meeting. Meeting together with the body. Meeting for something different than just talking about, you know, the next process for the next plan, for the next week, for the next month. It's just, I was looking so forward to it.

Fellowship refreshes the soul. Paul says in 2 Timothy, in chapter 1, beginning in verse 16, he says, When Paul writes the epistle called Philemon, he's writing to Onesiphorus about his slave Philemon.

He off refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chain. But when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently and found me. So as Paul's going to arrive in Rome as a prisoner, this one guy is like, I don't care what the state is that you're in. I want a fellowship.

And when we had launched from thence, we sailed under Cyprus because the winds were contrary. Or the word contrary literally means to be opposed, against, or hostile. Or you see the term winds come up multiple times here. And they're contrary. They're pushing back against these guys. So they came up under the coast, under Cyprus, up there. In Matthew 14, Jesus has sent the disciples into the sea of Galilee. He said, go to the other side, boys. And he stayed back and dismissed the crowds. And it says, When the ship was in the midst of the sea, it was tossed with waves, for the wind was contrary.

[10 : 03] Same thing. It was against them. And whenever we move forward in God's will, we will always encounter resistance. But that resistance is never sent to break us. It's sent to make us. Right?

It may be used to break some things in our lives, but it will never break us. As soon as we decide to move forward in God's will, we will encounter resistance. You make another night of the week a priority to be like, hey, I'm going to be with God's people. I'm going to be, you know, in fellowship and in study. You will encounter resistance. If you make a decision in your life, like, you know what? I'm going to cut that area of the flesh out of my life. You're going to find resistance.

And when we had sailed over the sea of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to Myra, a city of Lycia. And there the centurion found a ship of Alexandria. That'd be from Alexandria, Egypt, sailing into Italy. So he's like, all right. So they're up there on the coast of Asia. He's like, okay, we found a ship. Let's make our layover and let's get on board. And when we sailed slowly, many days, and scarce were come over against Sinaitis, the wind not suffering us, we sailed under Crete over against Salmon. So they find this ship. It's going into Italy, but they can't make it to Italy because the wind is so against them. So they take this detour south and they head to Crete.

The further they persist in God's will, the greater the resistance that builds. And hardly passing it, in verse 8, it came unto a place which is called the Fair Havens. So they come to the Fair Havens on Crete. Nigh whereunto was the city of Lycia. Now when much time was spent, and when sailing was now dangerous, because the fast was now already passed, Paul admonished them. What does all that mean? Why did it become dangerous? Why was there a long time? Well, they were waiting for the correct wind to take them up into Italy to get to Rome. There was a season between September 14th and November 11th of our seasons over there, where it's very dangerous to sail. And then anytime after that, they just wouldn't in the winter. But the fast, Paul is talking about, he's giving us a date stamp.

He's talking about the Day of Atonement, which would be in like the winter time. So he's saying it had become, it had got to the point where nobody would really sail at this point. And now Paul does something interesting. Paul admonishes them. It means to exhort. It's the same word that we're going to see in verse 22. We're going to see that same word again. In 2 Timothy chapter 4, Paul tells Timothy to preach the word. He says to be instant, in season, and out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering, and doctrine. That's two negatives and a positive. Reprove, rebuke, and exhort.

[12 : 52] So when you're reading the word, or you're studying yourself, or the word's being taught, and you kind of feel like, oh, oh, that kind of hurt. That kind of hit me. Know that God's word, it cuts deep. And sometimes it has to cut off the negative before we can get to the positive, right?

But Paul stands forth and he admonishes them. And he says unto them, sirs, I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only of the lading, or the cargo and the ship, but also of our lives. So here's Paul. Paul is this old Jewish guy. He's a scholar, right? And he comes and he kind of tugs on the arm of the centurion and the sailor, the captain. He's like, hey guys, we don't want to sail right now. What do you know? Right? But he comes and it's not an easy thing to say. It's not easy always to be the one to admonish, to say the hard thing. We should always be negatively positive, but never positively negative. I'm sure that made sense. We'll move on. What does that mean? We should always be negatively positive. That no matter how bad it is, there's always a positive. Because we're in Christ. There's always hope in Jesus. No matter how bad it is. Guys, you're going to lose the boat, you're going to lose your cargo, and we're going to lose our lives. But hey, guess what? We have Jesus.

So we're going to heaven. We should never be, or we should always be negatively positive. In our negativity, there's positivity. But never positively negative. Never just out and out negative. It's over, it's done, kaput. So when we are called by God to be in a position where we have to admonish, to be the one to speak the hard truth, we do that, but we can do it in love. And we can do it without crushing someone. And so Paul says, I perceive, that means to look or behold, I perceive that this voyage is going to be with her. Was this the Lord speaking to Paul? Paul had traveled over 3,500 miles by sea in his lifetime. That's a lot of traveling. He knew a few things about the sea.

In 2 Corinthians 11, 25, he would have written this from Ephesus a number of years sooner. He says to them, three times was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, and three times I suffered shipwreck. A night and a day I've been in the deep. A night and a day just floating on something. So Paul's like, look, I've been shipwrecked three times. This is going to be his fourth time. He's like, I know a few things about this. Orpah and the Lord gave him discernment. He gave him perception to see this. The interesting thing is Paul's perception here, he says, but we will also lose our lives, guys. We're not going to make it out of this. But when we get later on, when God comes and speaks to him, Paul then comes back to them and says, God has promised that we will not lose our lives. God's grace has superseded Paul's perception. Was Paul wrong at that moment to say that? No, not at all. But God's grace supersedes what is perceived as a really bad situation.

In Colossians 2, 13, we read the same thing, essentially. And you being dead in your sins, in the uncircumcision of your flesh, that's a bad perception where we're at.

[16 : 08] God's grace supersedes our perception.

Nevertheless, the centurion believed the master, my version says, or the captain, and the owner of the ship more than those things which were spoken by Paul. Never place man's wisdom above God's revelation, no matter how unlikely the messenger. Paul did not look like someone who would know more than the captain and the owner of the ship. I mean, the centurion's like Paul. I mean, you're a nice guy.

I really like you. You know, I don't even know why you're unchanged, but you're not a sailor, bro. So just sit there and hold tight. And because the haven was not commodious to winter in, the more part advised to depart thence also, if by any means they might attain to Phenix and there to winter, which is a haven of Crete and lies toward the southwest and northwest. In other words, that wasn't a great place to be when the winter winds hit. Straight south. They wanted to swing around. It says Phoenix, but that's the same word for Phenix. They wanted to swing around the corner, just around, just a little journey. It's not too far, a little short. They wanted to go to a different haven. But there is no haven safer than God's will, is there? Psalm 46.1 says, God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Never place man's wisdom above God's revelation, no matter how unlikely the messenger and no matter how many voices oppose God's will. Everybody said, no, no, Paul, we need to go here. This is the better place.

And when the south wind blew softly, supposing that they obtained their purpose, they loosed from thence and they sailed close by Crete. Supposing they obtained their purpose, that is, they supposed they had power over their own decisions. Obtained means to have power. They thought they could control their own destiny. Their natural senses told them that they had power over their own destiny.

They said, hey, you know what? This looks like a good situation for us. Never judge spiritual danger by natural perception. What does that mean? Well, you know what? I've watched that type of show for years, and it's never affected me. I've listened to that type of music for years. It doesn't affect me.

[18 : 49] I don't see what's wrong with that. Hebrews 11.25, we're told something interesting about sin, speaking of Moses, that Moses chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God when he went down and joined them, joined his brothers in Egypt, left the palace. He chose rather to suffer the affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, i.e. sin looks good.

Natural perception says, I don't see anything wrong with that. This looks like a really good season, and it is pleasurable for a season, but the wages of sin is death. Good job. And if we sow to the flesh, we shall of the flesh reap corruption.

But not long after, there arose against it, against the ship, a tempestuous wind called Euroclean. So like, I mean, Crete's not that big. How far out from the dock were they? And all of a sudden, this wind just whoosh and takes them. Tempestuous means whirling, and Euroclean means agitation. God had used a whirling agitation to remove their fate from their own hands.

And many storms come that bring whirling agitation to our lives. And when the ship was caught and could not bear up into the wind, man, we let her drive. So we're going to look at a number of life principles in a storm. We're also going to look at five specific steps you must take in every storm.

The first life principle in a storm, storms remove the last vestige of self-effort. When they couldn't hold it, they just let it drive. And the third day, we cast out with our own hands the tackling of the ship. So their last self-effort, their last ability to control this, the storm had removed that. And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away. Luke is writing this. He's writing about everybody in the ship. Paul, Luke, all of them. Paul was probably like, guys, I'm good.

[20 : 56] I told you we're going to die. You know? And he's just like singing over there, glory to the Lord. And you're like, what's wrong with that guy? So they're throwing everything over. All hope was taken away that they should be saved. Taken away means to cast off or feel exposed. They just feel like they're completely exposed to the elements and to this storm. Our next life principle in a storm, storms remove all other hope so that God might become our only hope. When we find ourselves in a storm, it's not to discourage us. It's so that God might refocus us back upon him as our refuge in our hope. But after a long abstinence, Paul stood forth in the midst of them. We don't know how long this is. We're going to find out eventually that he's going to say it's the 14th day later on. So we know they're going to be two weeks total floating around the Mediterranean, being driven by the storm.

But after a long abstinence, like none of them have eaten, they're just probably getting very discouraged. Paul stands forth in the midst of them. The ship's rocking. He's holding on to the mast. He's like, sirs, you should have hearkened unto me. Told you so. And not have loosed from Crete and to have gained this harm and loss. Was Paul gloating? Was Paul like, ha ha, does that seem like his character as we've gone through Acts? I don't think so. Paul is not gloating, but simply establishing himself as qualified to speak. How so? How is Paul establishing himself as one qualified to speak?

Because Paul's honesty in the past regarding hard truth qualified him now for future truth. They're willing to listen to him. You know what, Paul? You spoke this before. You weren't afraid to speak up, even when we didn't agree with you. And now that we're in this situation and you're speaking again truth, I think we're going to listen to you this time. There are five steps that must be taken in every storm. There's a bunch of principles and life application we're going to see from it, but there are five steps that must be taken in every storm. The first one is be fully honest about your situation. When we enter a storm, when God brings a storm, when we feel that resistance, when something's going on that's just bringing agitation to our life, we have to be fully honest about our situation.

Is this because of sin? Is this because, God, you're trying to get my attention over something? What is this? The source of the problem was not the storm, but it was that they did not heed God's direction. That was their issue. And now I exhort you, as Paul stands up, and there's our word exhort again, to be of good cheer, for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship.

He's like, guess what? We're not going to die. We're going to make it. Be of good cheer, but we're going to lose the ship. Step number two that you must take in every storm. You must believe that God's word is sufficient for deliverance. Paul says, man, the Lord stood by me. Be of good cheer. God has stood by me. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am and whom I serve. We must believe God's word is sufficient, even when the situation appears to get worse before it gets better. This is going to get a lot worse before it gets any better. Life principle, our next life principle in a storm. Choose courage. Paul says to them, be of good cheer. That literally means be courageous.

[24 : 16] Courage is the quality of mind which enables men to encounter danger and difficulties with firmness. It means standing firm in the face of danger, and not just standing firm, but knowingly walking into danger. Standing firm in the face of it and approaching danger with firmness. In a storm, choose courage. And where's our courage anchored? Anchored in the Lord. God's promise of deliverance is sure, even when the means of deliverance appears to be removed. So right now their hope has been this ship. And Paul just said to them, you're going to lose the ship. Like, well, that's our hope for deliverance. That's the means by what we're going to be delivered. But God's promise of deliverance is sure, even when it appears that the means have been removed. Paul then said, there stood by me, and we're in Acts 27, verse 23, there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am and whom I serve. In a storm, remember whose you are and who you serve. We're going to see these guys get so distracted by their terror and by the situation, they stop eating. But don't forget whose you are and who you serve, no matter how bad it gets. And the Lord stood by Paul in verse 24 and said, fear not, Paul. Thou must be brought before Caesar. Why, Paul? Why must Paul be brought before Caesar?

Because God said it. God said, Paul, you are going to stand before Caesar. Paul had a ticket that was punched long before this voyage and long before he ever stood trial in Caesarea. He knew where he was going to end up. We have the same hope, guys. God has punched our ticket. He knows the course of our life. We don't have to fear. We're going to live out the purposes and callings and plans that he has for us. Nothing's going to stop that. Now, he may interrupt that. His grace may supersede that, and that's called the rapture, where he takes us home, the resurrection. Hopefully it does. But if not, nothing is going to stop God's plan from being worked out in our lives. If we choose to follow it, it will come about. He stood by Paul saying, fear not, Paul. You must be brought before Caesar. And lo, God has given you all them that sail with you. All of them. Well, that seems like Paul must have been asking for them. Because we have the Lord saying, Paul, God has given you all them that sail with you.

Was Paul praying for them? In the midst of the storm, Paul is praying for those in the storm with him? In a storm, focus outward. Focus outward. Focus on others. Focus on serving others. Praying for others. Don't be so introspective and just focusing on the situation you're in. Can they do anything about this situation? They're just out there floating, you know, like a leaf tossed in the storm.

There's nothing they can do about this. Worrying isn't going to help them. Their self-effort isn't going to help them. The best thing they could do, Paul did the only thing he could do, which was to pray. And also, in a storm, fear is real, but so is faith.

Verse 25, Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer, for I believe God that it shall be even as it was told me. In a storm, God's word is not in question, but my response to it is. And in a storm, God's word is the source of comfort and hope. God's word's not in question. What is my response going to be? Paul says to them, choose courage. Choose to be of good cheer. For I believe God it shall be even as it was told me. You know, John 3, 16, we can all quote it, right? For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever should believe in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. Those are all present tense words. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believes on him presently shall have presently, shall not perish presently, and shall have presently everlasting life. We presently experience eternal life.

[28 : 17] If it's eternal, it can't end, because then it's not eternal, right? By definition. We can be sure of God's word. It will be even as it was told us. We don't have to question and wonder if we'll make it. But then he says in verse 26, how be it we must be cast upon a certain island.

We will survive, but God has shown Paul that, hey, Paul, I have a certain place I need you to be. We must be cast on a certain island. We must because God, no storm can prevent God's purpose.

God's like, Paul, I need you to go to, was it Malta? I think. I need you to go to Malta, because there are people there who are hungry for my word. They'll believe the truth, and I'm going to send someone to speak to them. No storm can prevent God's purpose. Paul would write to the Philippians in Philippians 1 verse 12, and he would say, but I would have you understand, brethren, that the things which have happened unto me, the horrible things, the beatings, the shipwrecks, all of that, they have fallen out rather under the furtherance of the gospel. God's purpose couldn't be thwarted. Verse 27, but when the 14th night was come, so there are two weeks now floating around out there, as we were driven up and down in Adria, that's what they called the Mediterranean, about midnight, the shipmen deemed they drew near to some country, and they sounded, they put like a rope out with a rock with knots on it to figure out how deep it was, and they found it 20 fathoms, or 120 feet, and when they'd gone a little further, they sounded again, and they found it 15 fathoms, or 90 feet, so there we lose, excuse me, 30 feet, and this seems to really scare them. Then fearing lest we should have fallen upon rocks, they cast four anchors out of the stern and wished for day. Oh, if only we could see if there's rocks. I think there's rocks out there. If there's rocks, if we hit them, we'll all be dead, right? They think there's rocks, but they don't know. They're afraid. In a storm, the fulfillment of God's word seems impossible. Paul has just said, guys, we're going to make it, and now they're like, but there's rocks, Paul, but we're getting closer to shore. It just seems impossible, and in a storm, fear seems more real than faith, but it's interesting. What they feared wasn't actually there, was it?

They thought maybe there could be possibly rocks. I mean, so it got a little shallower. They thought maybe they heard rocks. The thing they feared never actually ended up being there in the storm, and as the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship, so this kind of does it for the sailors.

They're out. We're going to find out eventually that there is, I think, 120 people in this slave galley. The sailors now are ready to jump ship, and when they had let down the boat into the sea, or the little dinghy they pulled behind them to get from shore back to their ship when it was anchored in harbor, when they let down the boat into the sea under color as though they would have cast anchors out of the foreship, so they're like, hey, you know, we're just going to put some more anchors out front.

[31 : 27] Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, except these abided the ship, you cannot be saved. In a storm, we must choose our motivation. These men were motivated by their fear, by their ability to what they thought, their own ability to preserve their life. We must choose what our motivation is. Fear will always result in a shortcut. It'll offer up to us a shortcut to deliverance.

Say, you know what? God promised this, but here's a way out. Here's a shortcut, how you can deliver yourself. Fear always points to the shortcut, where faith stands fast. And Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, except these abide in the ship, you shall not be saved. And then the soldiers cut off the ropes of the boat and let her fall off. Our third step that we must obey in every storm. We must obey God's word to the fullest, to the fullest.

We can never compromise our way out of a storm. Well, we're kind of still in the boat. It's a boat. We're just going to let down this little boat and get out of here. We have to obey God's word to the fullest. And then the soldiers, they cut off the ropes of the boat and they let her fall.

Paul's faith and courage in this situation was very courageous because we see that the soldiers, or probably Julius, I think that was his name, right? The centurion. There he is.

When Paul said to him, except they abide in the ship, you cannot be saved. And then they cut off the ropes and let her fall. Paul's faith and courage were contagious. But these men were like, yes, we're going to stick with this. We're going to stay together and we're going to follow God's word.

[33 : 08] And while the day was coming, verse 33, Paul besought them all to take meat or to eat, saying, this day is the 14th day and you have tarried and continued fasting, having taken nothing. They were so concerned, so worried, so anxious about their situation. They haven't eaten anything.

Wherefore, I pray you, take some food, for this is for your health, for there shall not a hair fall from the head of any of you. Our next life principle in a storm. A storm does not prevent God from caring for the seemingly smallest of my needs. The things they had neglected, the things that seem so unimportant to them. In Matthew chapter 10, verse 29, it says, there are not two sparrows sold for a farthing, and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear you not, therefore, you are of more value than many sparrows. Sparrows were not of any value back then.

And yet they were such value to God that he didn't, he didn't lose track of any of them. He says, I'm not losing track of a hair on your head, I'm not losing track of a sparrow, and I'm not going to lose track of you. A storm does not prevent God from caring for the seemingly smallest of my needs. God still cares, even when it feels like he doesn't.

And when he had thus spoken, he took bread and he gave thanks to God in the presence of them all. And when he had broken it, he began to eat. So Paul leads by example here, he's standing up, you know, he breaks the bread, and he begins to eat.

I like where it says, and he gave thanks to God. Prayer and praise. In the middle of this storm, what does Paul do? Man, he praises God. He says, thank you, God. He's speaking to God. He's praying. Our next step, step number four that we must do in every storm, we must give thanks in all circumstances. There's no storm that we cannot give thanks to God. No storm that we cannot pray and praise. No situation where God is not worthy and God doesn't hear us. In a storm, never be afraid to let others see your courageous faith, even when you're terrified, right? Courage isn't a lack of fear, but it's standing fast in the face of fear. And so here's Paul, he's like, I'm going to lead by example. I'm going to stand upon God's word, whether I'm terrified or feel like it or not. And same with us, that we should let others see that our faith is still courageous. And then were they all of good cheer, and they also took some meat. Paul's praise to God had a greater effect on them than this food.

[35 : 39] It says, first they were of good cheer, then they ate. And in Job 23, Job says essentially the same thing. In verse 12, he says, neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips, speaking of God, speaking to his friends, saying, I haven't rejected God's commandment. I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food. Life principle, our next life principle in a storm, make sure to eat.

Make sure to eat. Yes, food. Don't neglect the simple things, but man, make sure to be eating. Make sure to be taking in God's word. Don't be so distracted by, but I gotta, I gotta get this, the sale's about to rip off, but the anchor, but I mean, someone's got to man the tiller that you're neglecting the necessary food that God has given you. And we were in all, and we were in all the ship, 203 score and 16 souls. That's 176 people in that ship.

That's a lot of people. I'm sorry, 276. 203 score and 16 souls. 276 people on board. Each man aboard that ship was not just another number or a prisoner. To Rome, they might have been worthless. They might've just been prisoners or slaves, but to God, they were a soul. They were a precious soul in his sight. And when they'd eaten enough, they lightened the ship and cast out the wheat into the sea. Life principle in a storm. There's a time for prayer. There's a time for provision. And there's a time for preparation. They'd eaten, they'd prayed, and like, now it's time to prepare. They threw it all out because God is going to deliver us. And when it was day, they knew not the land, but they discovered a certain creek with a shore into the which they were minded, if it were possible, to thrust in the ship. Remember, they were longing for day.

They were hoping for day. Day comes, and here comes their deliverance. But I would say their deliverance came first because they had turned to God and put their trust in his word. And that's where we see they're all the way over now to Malta, two-week, tumultuous journey to get to Malta.

Psalm 30, verse 5 says, Our next life principle in a storm, simply take the next step placed in front of you. You don't know what's next. You can't see it. Just do the next thing. Do the next thing placed in front of you.

[37 : 58] The day had revealed the next step, and they thought, okay, we're gonna do the next thing, which is to head for that little creek. And when they had taken up the anchors, they committed themselves unto the sea, and they loosed the rudder bands and hoist up the mainsail to the wind and made for shore. What did they do? They cut the ropes for the anchors. The anchors fall away.

The rudder has been strapped to the back of the boat so that it's not ripped off in the storm, and they've just probably had a small sail that would keep them pointing in the right direction as the wind drove them. So now they hoist the mainsail to grab all the wind they can. They loose the rudder, and they're heading for it. They were completely committed, 100% committed to this task in front of them. And that which once held them back, the thing that was giving them all that resistance that was pushing back on them, the wind, is now the thing moving them forward. The storm was no longer a resistance. It was now the thing that was driving them forward.

And falling into a place where two seas met, it means like there's a reef, they ran the ship aground, and the forepart stuck fast and remained unmovable, but the hindered part was broken with the violence of the waves. Oh, they thought they were going to make it. They had a great plan. They just threw out all their food. They're heading for it, and they stuck fast. The storm could take them no further.

It had done its work. It had brought them where they needed to be. The storm's ability to progress them forward, it had run its course. But where did it stop? It stopped at that shore, that place of purpose that God had called them to. And the soldier's counsel was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim out and escape. So what seemed like we're all in this together, now they realize we've got a big problem on our hands. In Rome, if you were to lose one of your prisoners, you suffer the same fate. And they've got 276 prisoners, or well, 276 people, a lot of prisoners.

And Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, except these abide in the ship, you cannot be saved.

[40 : 10] I'm sorry, that was Acts 27, 31. When Paul had said to them in 31, he said, except these abide in the ship, you cannot be saved. So it's kind of logical that they said, hey, you know what? We're not letting any of these get away. One, we don't want to escape. And two, Paul had said, if they don't stay in the ship, we can't be saved. So technically they'll be in the ship. We'll just kill them all.

Our next life principle in a storm. In a storm, the worst ideas may seem like a plausible situation. When we're desperate, when we're pressed on every side, when we can't see a way out, the worst idea may all of a sudden seem very plausible. I mean, you hear stories about that with people all the time. They make decisions they regret, because in a moment, what looked like the only solution, the only plausible option, was really a really bad idea. And our fifth and last step that must be taken in every storm, stand fast and hold tight. But the centurion, willing to save Paul, kept them from their purpose and commanded that they which could swim should cast themselves first into the sea and get to land. And the rest, some on boards and some on broken pieces of the ship.

So it came to pass that they all escaped, all safe to land. He stood fast in the face of opposition. It wasn't coming from the storm anymore. Now it's coming from the people around him, that pushback. In a storm, always expect deliverance, even if the method is unexpected.

In Christ, we're going to face a lot of storms. We don't have the promise that just because we're believers, we're going to escape storms. But we have the promise that he'll be with us in all of them. And we have the promise that, well, there will always be deliverance. God's never going to leave us without deliverance. But it may be an unexpected place that that deliverance comes from. It may be a place that we wouldn't have expected, we wouldn't have looked for, and we may even have a tendency to be like, I'm not doing that. Jump in. I can't swim. Grab a board. What if I don't find a board?

God has promised. Jump in. He's got this. And in a storm, a shipwreck is not the end. It's not the end. We will not end up with shipwrecked faith. Why? Because we just looked at it. John 3, 16. That we have presently eternal life. If we could lose it, it's not eternal.

[42 : 27] Right? Very simple logic. We will not be shipwrecked. Now we may go through shipwrecks, but we will end up on that shore. And then we see here, for the sake of one man, all the rest of these lives were spared. One man was kept alive. The centurion said, I don't want to lose Paul. So the rest of you are as well.

Romans 5, 19. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. That as sin has reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. For the sake of one man, many were saved.

storms give us an opportunity to be like Jesus. It gives us a unique opportunity where we can be like Jesus. Where we can be that person to reach out to someone else, even though we're in the middle of a storm, and we can look and see they're in the middle of a storm, and we can be like Jesus, and be other-centered, and others-focused, and give our lives. And no storm or shipwreck would prevent Paul from reaching the shore of God's purpose, right? He arrived at the place God intended. Maybe not the method Paul would have liked, but he made it. The means and process by which we reach the haven of God's shore is immaterial. So the means we get there, the process, that's immaterial. We're all going to have a different process. However, our response to that process will determine the type of journey we will experience. How many of those people on that ship from Alexandria made it alive to Malta? All of them. How many traveled in faith? How many traveled in fear? How many traveled seasick? Right? Our response to the process will determine the type of journey, but we're still going to get there. I can choose to walk in God's will. I can choose to be a part of what he's doing, or I can reject that, but we're still all going to get there if we're in

Christ. If we're outside of Christ, then we're already shipwrecked. We are shipwrecked in a way that there is no salvation for, except we enter into the refuge that is God. God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. And then Deuteronomy 33, 27 says, the eternal God, I love that, is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. Does God's arms ever get tired of catching you? They're everlasting. He's got this. They undergirded the ship. That meant to take ropes and kind of like, you take it and you throw the rope. One guy's on one side and you throw it off the bow. You kind of let it out and you walk back to the stern. Then you cinch it up and you do that again and again and again until you essentially, you know, made this rope net under the ship to try and hold the boards tight. Under us are God's everlasting arms. He is our refuge, a very present help in trouble. So in these storms, we must be fully honest about our situation. We must believe that

God's word is sufficient for deliverance. We must obey God's word to the fullest. We must give thanks in all circumstances. We must pray and praise. We must stand fast and hold tight when everything's against us, even the means of deliverance that we so thought God was going to use. Let's pray.

[45 : 45] Thank you, Lord, for this awesome passage of scripture, Lord. The Lord has a special place in my heart and life. And I thank you, Lord. We could have spent four weeks digging in, Lord. There's 20, 23 life principles in a storm we pulled out. And I think there's probably three times as many.

Thank you, Lord, for your word. Thank you for loving us eternally. Thank you for loving us completely. Thank you for your arms that embrace us and hold us. Thank you that we will meet the desired haven, Lord. We will meet the, we will, we will end on the shore of your grace and your glory.

And I can't wait for that day because Jesus is going to be the one there waiting for me. Lord, I pray that we would put our trust in you, that we trust your word to the fullest, we'd obey it to the fullest, that no matter the storm, no matter the resistance, no matter how much it seems like life is breaking apart around us, even when it seems like we've been shipwrecked, when it seems like we're barely clinging, barely staying afloat, barely holding on, that we would strap on the life preserver of your word. And remember that God is our refuge, a very present help in time of need.

Lord, I pray that you'd be our help this week as we finish out this week, that we would walk by faith according to your word and not by sight. And that, Lord, we would not let the enemy or circumstances ever cause us to doubt that you would ever let us go and that you would never be right there to rescue us.

Thank you, Jesus. We love you. We love your word. We love your people. In Jesus' name, amen.