

2010ACTS#25CHAPTER27-28 SHIPWRECK AND THANKSGIVING

Acts 27:

Have you heard of

Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day

Alexander knew it was going to be a terrible day
when he woke up with gum in his hair.

And it got worse...

His best friend deserted him.

There was no dessert in his lunch bag.

And, on top of all that,
there were lima beans for dinner
and kissing on TV! Yuk.

I would venture to say that every one of you here today

Has had a bad day. Maybe a very bad day.

Personally I like lima beans.

But we have all had days when we felt like everything was against us.

One woman who had been on a diet was really feeling good about herself,

especially when she was able to fit into a pair of jeans she had outgrown long ago.

Running downstairs to show her husband she shouted "Look, Look, I can wear my old jeans again!"

Her husband looked at her for a long time,

obviously struggling with what to say.

Finally, he just had to say it.

"Darling, I love you, but those are my jeans."

What do we do when a day start out bad

And then turns into one of the worst days of our life.

When the dream shatters and the relationship crumbles

The sickness come and a life ends,

We want to know why would God allow this to happen?

As Christians we are vulnerable to this too.

We may feel abandoned and

Because some have believed that our faith should
exempt us from the problems of life.

We should be getting a reward for our obedience and commitment.

Are we not children of God,

How can we be treated like this?

The Apostle Paul could have felt that way

He had been the target of two assassination plots in Jerusalem.

Argued his case before the Sanhedrin,

Was tried before Herod,

Spent two years in prison,

Tried again before Felix, Festus and Agrippa

A troublemaker, stirring up riots among the Jews all over he world. Acts 24:5

And now if that hadn't been enough.

Even mother nature was out to get him.

It was October AD 60 when he boarded a sailboat
 At the Mediterranean port of Caesarea.
 a prisoner of the Romans,
 Bound with shackles and under military guard.
 He was not going to the Bahamas.
 But he was on his way to Rome for the trial of his life.

When it was decided that we would sail for Italy, Paul and some other prisoners were handed over to a centurion named Julius, who belonged to the Imperial Regiment. ²We boarded a ship from Adramyttium about to sail for ports along the coast of the province of Asia, and we put out to sea. Acts 27:1-2

There's nothing wrong with a boat ride,
 Unless it is in hurricane season.
 And everyone else seemed to know that
 But for some reason the Commander decided to go.
 So Paul and Dr. Luke and Aristarchus went aboard.

But no one could know what their future held.
 Even today with all our technology none of us
 knows what tomorrow holds.
 Will it be a routine journey or ship wreck?
 We all wonder if our new job will be a great career or a tragic disappointment.
 Will our first date, lead to a marriage or a broken relationship?

The only difference for the Christian is that the unknowns of life
 Are tempered by the presence of God.
 The Holy Spirit boarded the ship with the Apostle Paul.
 The Lord of heaven was watching over him.
 Everything else was uncertain,

Well what begins well ends well. Right? Well not always.
 Then the wind switched direction and they had to sail into the wind.
 They landed as quickly as they could at

⁵When we had sailed across the open sea off the coast of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we landed at Myra in Lycia. Acts 27:5

They thought if they just had a bigger ship.
 If you just had a bigger house?
 Better job? Bigger car?

So the centurion moved his prisoners
 To a grain ship from Alexandria Egypt
 Which was making the fast run before winter
 Egypt was then the breadbasket of the Roman Empire.

⁶There the centurion found an Alexandrian ship sailing for Italy and put us on board.⁷We made slow headway for many days and had difficulty arriving off Cnidus. When the wind did not allow us to hold our course, we sailed to the lee of Crete, opposite Salmone. Acts 27:6-7

**This ship was heavy laden,
 It lay low in the water,
 A cumbersome vessel that was**

Unable to move easily into the headwind.

As the days ticked toward November 15, 2010 hurricane season,
The storms were increasing.

Luke writes: "The winds are against us" Acts 27:4

Couldn't those be our words.

The winds are against us.

No matter how hard we try,

we plan, work, pray and hope to get traction,

But we go nowhere.

The winds are against us.

tired and desperate and knocked off course.

Paul and the crew docked at Fair Havens,

⁸We moved along the coast with difficulty and came to a place called Fair Havens, near the town of Lasea. Acts 27:8

But the harbor was unsuitable to winter in

So rather than trusting good common sense they took a vote.

¹²Since the harbor was unsuitable to winter in, the majority decided that we should sail on, hoping to reach Phoenix and winter there. This was a harbor in Crete, facing both southwest and northwest. Acts 27:12

The majority vote is always is always right.

So Paul warned them, ¹⁰"Men, I can see that our voyage is going to be disastrous and bring great loss to ship and cargo, and to our own lives also." Acts 27:10

Paul could say that because he had more

frequent sailor miles than anyone on that ship.

This was at least his eleventh crossing of the Mediterranean,

Which meant more than 3000 miles at sea.

Guided by the Holy Spirit,

He spoke frankly of the potential disaster ahead if they continued.

HOW CAN WE HANDLE LIFE'S STORMS AND SHIPWRECKS?

1. BE REAL ABOUT THE SITUATION (vv. 13-21)

Paul assessed the danger, the Centurion ignored it,

But the centurion, instead of listening to what Paul said, followed the advice of the pilot and of the owner of the ship. Acts 27:11

He decided to make a run for a bigger and better harbor in Crete

Boy isn't that the story of our lives

A little discontent

A little trial and we're always looking for greener pasture, better harbor.

"When a gentle south wind began to blow, they thought they had obtained what they wanted; so they weighed anchor and sailed along the shore of Crete Acts 27:13

It looked like Paul was wrong and everybody else was right.

Most times when you and I stand with God and for the truth

We stand alone.

That is just the reality of being a Christian.

Just because the world may have a few days of peace and tranquility

That doesn't make a boat ride.
 That's why we must trust God every day.
 If we have prayed, asked advice, sought biblical counsel,
 Then set our course,
 We shouldn't make a quick decision to change in the middle
 Just because the going get a little tough
 Or because something better seem to come along.

How many people have planned out their lives
 Have gotten peace about it
 And then because of impatience, or worry, made a quick change
 That put them in financial or personal ruin,
 And then questioned why God doesn't deliver.

Just how prepared are you and I for the storms?
 We go to church and we live our Christian life,
 But we don't pray in earnest.
 We don't read Gods word in earnest
 Like an old college trick we think we can cram for the exam
 And then we find its
 too late to find faith,
 too late to find our refuge,
 too late to find our shelter of spiritual discipline.
 Because we never built it.
 We need to

2. CLING TO THE PROMISES OF GOD (vv. 22-26).

the weather changed
 And they were caught in a hurricane.

¹⁴Before very long, a wind of hurricane force, called the "northeaster," swept down from the island.¹⁵The ship was caught by the storm and could not head into the wind; so we gave way to it and were driven along. Acts 27:14-15

It must have been a living nightmare.
 This isn't just a fire in the engine like that cruise ship had for four days.
 This was life and death.
 They lost all control.
 They abandoned themselves to the wind.
 The sailors were barely able

¹⁶As we passed to the lee of a small island called Cauda, we were hardly able to make the lifeboat secure. Acts 27:16

Fearing the ship was about to fall apart the crew .

¹⁷When the men had hoisted it aboard, they passed ropes under the ship itself to hold it together. Acts 27:17

Afraid they would run aground they
Fearing that they would run aground on the sandbars of Syrtis, they lowered the sea anchor and let the ship be driven along.
Acts 27:17

They didn't know where they were,
 And feaing they were near the North African coast

Where so many ships had been sunk by the sandbars and rocks.

¹⁸We took such a violent battering from the storm that the next day they began to throw the cargo overboard. Acts 27:18

Then in total desperation they threw out

On the third day, they threw the ship's tackle overboard with their own hands Acts 27:19

Finally they

When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days and the storm continued raging, we finally gave up all hope of being saved. Acts 27:20

Those are words none of us want to hear or experience.

Like the sailors on the boat with Jonah to Nineveh,

They were in complete despair,

With no hope of being saved.

But don't give up.

3. RESOLVE TO ACT IN FAITH (vv. 27-34)

Our Christian LIFE IS DETERMINED BY OUR ATTITUDE

Listen to the attitude of "Ships and Souls,"

Ships sail east and ships sail west

While the self same breezes blow:

It's the set of the sails and not the gales

That determines the way they go.

Like the winds of the sea is the way of fate

As we journey along through life.

It's the set of the soul that determines the goal

And not the calm or the strife.

- Anonymous

It's the set of the soul... that determines the goal.

The world need people who have the set of the soul.

The Fortitude of a faith in God to face all odds.

David Livingstone charted great paths for missions in Africa. One time a missionary society wrote him a letter saying, "We have some people who would like to join you. Do you have some easy access roads to where you are?" Dr. Livingstone wrote back, "If you have men who will come only if there are good roads, I don't want them. I want men who will come even if there is no road at all."

The men were weak, cold, wet, without a shred of hope.

²¹After the men had gone a long time without food, Acts 27:21

Then Paul steps up. The man of faith.

Paul stood up before them and said: "Men, you should have taken my advice not to sail from Crete; then you would have spared yourselves this damage and loss. ²²But now I urge you to keep up your courage, because not one of you will be lost; only the ship will be destroyed. Acts 27:21-22

Don't we all like to be around someone who has a confident faith.

Not an arrogant one.

Paul never lost his touch with his God in the midst of the storm.

That's the lesson for us as well.

Maintain your relationship with God,

And He will maintain your life.

²³Last night an angel of the God whose I am and whom I serve stood beside me ²⁴and said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand trial before Caesar; and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you.' Acts 27:23-24

Paul's confidence and trust was in a living God.
That is what he turned to to sustain them in the trial.

4. GIVE BOLD THANKS TO GOD (v. 35a)

In the midst of the crises Paul stops to thank God.

³³Just before dawn Paul urged them all to eat. "For the last fourteen days," he said, "you have been in constant suspense and have gone without food. ³⁴Now I urge you to take some food. Not one of you will lose a single hair from his head."

³⁵After he said this, he took some bread and gave thanks to God in front of them all. Then he broke it and began to eat. Acts 27:33-35

Paul was convinced that God had a purpose for his life.
And God would save him from the storm,

Even though things might look bleak.

There comes a time when the safest course is surrender,
but not the kind of surrender that allows life to careen out of control.

But to surrender to the God, who is in control of the sea,

It's the advice of the prophet Eli to young Samuel

when God spoke to him at night.

It is the Lord; let him do what seems good to him." I Samueal 3:18

Sometimes we have to turn to the Lord in the middle of the night,
In the middle of our struggles and yield to him.

5. REST CONFIDENTLY IN GOD'S CARE (vv. 35b-38).

²⁵So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me. ²⁶Nevertheless, we must run aground on some island." Acts 27:25-26

We must trust God with our lives.

No matter how violent, hurtful, or destructive life becomes.

Because God plan for your life will come to pass.

⁴¹But the ship struck a sandbar and ran aground. The bow stuck fast and would not move, and the stern was broken to pieces by the pounding of the surf. Acts 27:41

Sometime we can't save the ship,

But God can always save the sailor.

We may pray for healing of loved ones,

but they die anyway.

We may work to save a marriage,

but it fails anyway.

We may try our best to help our children,

but they make a mess of their lives anyway.

Do we give up?

No because we look at life from eternity's view.

Paul did and all 276 lives were saved.

They got wet but they got saved.

The rest were to get there on planks or on pieces of the ship. In this way everyone reached land in safety. Acts 27:44

Perhaps as you look at your life,
You have been living on the edge of panic too long.
You feel like the sailors rather than Paul.
Scared for your life.
Holding on with your fingernails.

Don't be surprised by pain, problems,
Difficulty or disappointment or
Even hurricane force winds.
This Thanksgiving week, take courage and hold on to hope.
God has a plan for you.
Even when your pitching helpless in the sea of trouble.
trust God.
Start a renewed relationship with him.
Pick up your Bible and began to read it.
Let the Holy Spirit walk with you down the gangplank
And out of the storm.

**Its really up to you
And you will be amazed at what
Your resolve, thanks and confidence can do.**

May God bless you this Thanksgiving Season