

How To Handle a Shipwreck

Ship-Wrecked but Not Dead

Acts 27:9-11 - ⁹ Much time had been lost, and sailing had already become dangerous because by now it was after the Day of Atonement. 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.”

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

- We began this message with Paul advising or telling them not to sail - - -
- How many know We don't always listen to wise counsel?

They didn't listen and they sailed directly into the storm of their lives -They lightened the ship!

There's nothing like a bad storm for realigning priorities.

- Somebody ought to lift your hands right now and say:
- *I'm going to make it!!!*
- I know I'm not everything I should be...
- *But I know I'm moving in the right direction!!!*

You don't even look like you have been through what you've been through.

- *So, Just Keep Walking!*

Acts 28:1-6 - You're going through. After the wreck a viper attached to Paul. The Bible says that Paul shook off the beast.

- Paul shook that viper off into the Fire.
- You need to ask yourself, are you living close enough to the fire?

Somebody listening to me, The devil has sent something out to try and destroy you, but it's not going to kill you because you're turning up the heat.

Somebody listening to this message right now: *You know it should have killed you*, you know if the devil had his way, you'd be dead,

Today I want to share with you from scripture:

Acts 27:13-26 The Storm - Acts 27:27-30 The Shipwreck

When we begin to examine the very rugged life of the great apostle Paul.

Several **things that he endured** come to mind.

- He was beaten, stoned, thrown in jail, mocked, ridiculed, his ministry techniques questioned.
- Two of the more famous: **SNAKEBIT & SHIPWRECKED.**

I can personally say for myself, because **I can't stand snakes...**

- I would rather take my chances on a **shipwreck.**
- ***Though neither of the two sound very inviting.***

In many ways, ***the storm Paul and his companions encountered in Acts 27*** developed along the lines of **what meteorologists consider a perfect storm.**

In recent history, such a storm occurred **in the waters of the North Atlantic.**

In 1991, volatile fronts from the north, the east, the west, and the south converged off the coast of Massachusetts, creating such a threatening combination of hurricane force winds and towering waves that the entire East Coast went scrambling for cover.

- ***Numerous fishing vessels retreated to safer waters.***
- Writer **Sebastien Junger**, in his book **The Perfect Storm**, tells the tale of an ill-fated ship named **Andrea Gail**,
- The **captain & crew *vanished without a trace.***

Junger's dramatic retelling of that **freak combination of weather elements**, in a single storm system **eerily resembles what Luke describes in Acts 27.**

Northeaster – Acts 27:13-14 - ¹³ When a gentle south wind began to blow, they saw their opportunity; so they weighed anchor and sailed along the shore of Crete. ¹⁴ Before very long, a wind of hurricane force, called the **Northeaster**, swept down from the island.

- **What Paul experienced was not on land, but rather on sea.**

Paul's Storm –

- The storm grew so violent in its intensity that they began to throw the cargo overboard.
- Until eventually *they were forced to even throw over the ships tackle*
- Which rendered the vessel helpless, and impossible to control.

To make matters worse, *the thick canopy dark clouds* blocked any view of the constellations, which normally served as a reliable navigational guide.

Survival now in question, especially as the battle against the winds continued relentlessly for days.

Finally, the storm-weary crew caught a ray of hope.

Luke writes: The Shipwreck -

Acts 27:27-30 – ²⁷ On the fourteenth night we were still being driven across the Adriatic Sea, when about midnight the sailors sensed they were approaching land. ²⁸ They took soundings and found that the water was a hundred and twenty feet deep. A short time later they took soundings again and found it was ninety feet deep. ²⁹ Fearing that we would be dashed against the rocks, they dropped four anchors from the stern and prayed for daylight. ³⁰ In an attempt to escape from the ship, the sailors let the lifeboat down into the sea, pretending they were going to lower some anchors from the bow.

- What lesson can we learn from Acts 27?
- Storms will Come – God understands our fear.

We may feel anxious and afraid in our storms, but if we look to God, He will strengthen and encourage us.

His Word is food for our souls in times of fear and darkness, and *He offers His Holy Spirit to guide us*.

Somewhere down the road if you live long enough, you are going to experience some kind of storm in your life. The storm is inevitable.

- At times like Paul, you may even question your own survival.
- Questions and doubt begin to emerge as fear grows within.
- You may even panic.

What are you going to do when you must face your very own Northeaster.

- What do you do? How do you go on?
- *I beg you today to do what Paul, and the crew did in vs 29...*

Acts 27:29 - Fearing that we would be dashed against the rocks, they dropped four anchors from the stern and prayed for daylight.

Notice they threw out four anchors.

- Today I offer you four anchors to help stabilize you in your storm.
 - You will need these anchors when the bad news comes.
 - You need these four anchors to keep you from drifting into despair.
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1. Anchor of Stability - Notice these verses:

Acts 27:20-23 - ²⁰ When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days and the storm continued raging, we finally gave up all hope of being saved. ²¹ After they had gone a long time without food, 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. ²² **But now I urge you to keep up your courage, because not one of you will be lost; only the ship will be destroyed.** ²³ Last night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve stood beside me.

The Anchor of Stability Holds Firm when your Navigation System fails!

- It's easy to lose your bearings in the storm.
- You can't find your way through your circumstances,
- Like Luke records "All hope of being saved is abandoned"
- That is when you must drop the anchor of stability...
- Stability is found in God!!

Facing intense adversity Paul says "Be of good cheer... keep up your courage.

- *I've heard from the Lord!"* I know it doesn't seem like the time to be cheery.
- ²² **Because not one of you will be lost; only the ship will be destroyed.**
- *It is in that Word from the Lord that we must trust and find stability!*

GOD'S WORD NEVER FAILS! HE CANNOT LIE!

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2. Anchor of Unity - Notice these verses- The Shipwreck – Acts 27:30-31

³⁰ In an attempt to escape from the ship, the sailors let the lifeboat down into the sea, pretending they were going to lower some anchors from the bow. ³¹ Then Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, ***“Unless these men stay with the ship, you cannot be saved.”***

The scene shows desperate men under extreme pressure and danger who thought about escaping the ship.

- The temptation was strong to flee the ship.
- But that's no way to survive a storm.
- You can't run from your problems.
- Paul told them, in order to ensure our survival, we must abide in the ship.

Paul knew that they all needed each other to survive the storm.

- When life's storms start blowing....
- Don't let the devil blow apart your marriage and your family.
- Certainly, don't let him keep you out of the house of God....
- **It's in those moments you need to drop the Anchor of Unity!!**
- **Don't jump ship!!**
- **Don't backslid - DROP ANCHOR!!**

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3. Anchor of Renewal - Look at these interesting verses:

Acts 27:33-36 - ³³ Just 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—you haven’t eaten anything. ³⁴ Now I urge you to take some food. You need it to survive. Not one of you will lose a single hair from his head.” ³⁵ After 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. ³⁶ They were all encouraged and ate some food themselves.

Can you imagine fighting a storm for 2 weeks and getting no nourishment?

- That's what **these men** were experiencing.
- **When we get** physically weak, emotionally drained, and unable to sleep.
- **It's time to Drop the Anchor of Renewal.**
- **The anchor of renewal** helps keep us going and alert.

But first he prayed. Can you imagine that scene....

- The storm is raging all around them and **Paul leads 300 men in prayer!!**
 - **Awesome!!** After they pray, they eat....
 - This is a symbol of a great spiritual diet....
 - **A prayer life** and ingesting the preached word of God....
 - I tell you friend that it is an Anchor of Renewal to your soul!!
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4. **Anchor of Reality – Acts 27:41-44** - ⁴¹ But 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. ⁴² The soldiers planned to kill the prisoners to prevent any of them from swimming away and escaping. ⁴³ But the centurion wanted to spare Paul's life and kept them from carrying out their plan. He ordered those who could swim to jump overboard first and get to land. ⁴⁴ The rest were to get there on planks or on other pieces of the ship. ***In this way everyone reached land safely.***

Reality!! *Now was the time to swim to the shore!!*

- **Reality screamed** the ship is literally being broken apart!! It's time to move.
- **The anchor of reality is often dropped in our lap** to remind us of the time we are living in....
- **Reality says** that Jesus is coming back...It's time to get busy!!
- It's time **to do something for God!!**

All the men in the ship began to take action when action needed to be taken!!

- This **should be** in the life of the child of God!!
- **Reality** should cause us to be better soul winners for GOD.

REALITY - God is Faithful – The faithfulness of God means God is unchanging in His nature, true to his Word, has promised salvation to his people, and will keep his promise forever.

He is worthy of eternal trust no matter how unlikely his promises seem.

Let's pause long enough to do the math - ***How many started the voyage? How many were promised they'd make it? How many made it safely to shore?***

Answer 276.

God is faithful!