

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

THE SHIP (ACTS 27:1-12)

Paul is accompanied by Luke and describes some of those with him. He mentions a centurion named, Julius. This guy is assigned to get Paul to Rome. And a man named, Aristarchus. This is the first time we've heard of him as a traveling companion. Julius probably thought he was Paul's servant.

- Their first stop which was Sidon, Julius allows Paul to visit some of his friends. We assume these are other Christians. The church has grown to this vicinity even though there's no mention of Paul ever being there.
- They set sail again and arrive at Myra in Lycia. This part of the sailing is now beginning to get difficult so they change ships. They get on an Alexandrian ship and head out for Italy. This was a huge ship in those days. They were usually grain ships so they had a lot of weight which would offer stability. This ship was probably in the neighborhood of 1,000 tons and over 100 feet long.

SETTING SAIL

At this point Paul knows too much time has passed and moving forward is dangerous. He tells them in vs. 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." But the centurion wouldn't listen. He gets impatient. Three things I want to point out really quickly when we have decisions to make.

1. Sometimes impatience leads to bad decisions. When we get impatient we can sometimes rush ahead and disobey the will of God. There is a difference in moving forward with confidence versus impatience. As followers of Jesus we're supposed to stay in step with the Spirit. Gal. 5 says, "Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit."
2. Second thing we do is look for advice from others or so-called experts. The centurion had faith – but it was in the wrong people. We need to make sure we're allowing the right people to speak into our lives.
3. Lastly, just because we take a vote and the majority rules doesn't mean they made the right decision. Guys, we all make mistakes. I always want to make sure I'm speaking truth but sometimes I miss the mark. Always check with scripture.

THE STORM (ACTS 27:13-26)

They head out when things look good and before long things get really ugly. Soon enough they're trying to save the ship. They bring aboard the lifeboat normally pulled behind the ship.

- Things are getting really bad, going from bad to worse. The next two weeks must have been awful! The storm is getting stronger and now days are passing where they're fighting for their lives.
- They begin throwing things overboard to lighten the ship. They throw the cargo overboard. A few days later they throw the tackle overboard. At this point they are fearing for their lives!
- Paul finally steps up and gives his speech but it's an, "I told you so" speech. Not really the thing you want to hear at this point. He warned them earlier there would be much loss and maybe to their lives also.

STORMS HAVE A WAY OF GETTING OUR ATTENTION

When things go well we tend to forget our need of God.

- Paul knows that the coming trials.
- Storms wreck us if we're not willing to give up things that will burden us or hold us back.

Our security doesn't come through the things we own, our position in life or achievements. In a storm, those things can be lost in a moment. Our security comes in knowing God is walking with us. God doesn't promise smooth sailing at all times, but he does promise to be with us.

- *"God is close to the broken-hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit."* **Psalms 34:18** *"Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."* **Matthew 6:34** Paul shares some great news! But there's a problem...

THE SHIPWRECK (ACTS 27:27-44)

After 14 long days they finally think they're catching a break. Some of the sailors hear breakers and know they're getting close to land.

- Both good and bad. Finally, land is near, but if they run aground at this speed they'll be dashed against the rocks and all be killed.
- Paul sees some trying to escape. He tells the centurion and soldiers that they have to stay or they'll be killed.

For the first time in 2 weeks, now they actually see light at the end of the tunnel and Paul tells them they need to eat. Paul brings this quiet confidence encouraging them to eat.

- They ate and felt better about what was ahead and Luke gets a count of everyone on board.

TAKEAWAYS

- We have assurance in God's promises.
- God always comes through on a promise
- God is aware of you: He sees you and knows you
- He is Sovereign and He provides. **Even if disaster awaits, we have hope in Jesus Christ**
- When fear gets ahold of you, where do you go? What do you do?
- Trust God's plan
- Stay in the Word
- Get counsel from Godly people
- What do we do when we are at our most helpless and hopeless state?
- Don't make rash decisions and then expect God to bail you out
- Don't give up hope
- With God you are **NEVER** in a helpless or hopeless state