

# Navigating the Storms

Paul is in custody on a ship headed for Rome to appear before the Emperor Nero.

*Acts 27:7-10*

Our life is like a voyage where we experience storms and crisis.

How can we remain calm in a time of crisis?

**Paul teaches some practical lessons of how to remain calm in a crisis.**

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

- **The storms of life can cause us to be IMPATIENT.**

Guarding against impatient decision making.

**WEIGH up advice.**

The cheapest thing in life is advice and everybody has some to give!

Weigh up advice against Scripture and the witness of the Holy Spirit to assess if it is helpful or not.

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

## **The majority is not always RIGHT!**

What is God's view and direction?

We need the wisdom of God to know what to do and then His courage to act!

*13: 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.*

## **Don't only RELY on circumstances.**

Circumstances can appear good, and even right, but they may lead us right into a storm.

It is unwise to ignore what God says to do even if circumstances contradict His guidance.

*14: Before very long a wind of hurricane force called the Northeaster swept down from the island and 15: the ship was caught in the storm and could not head into the wind so we gave way to it and were driven along. 16: We sailed along the sheltered side of a small island named Cauda, where with great difficulty we hoisted aboard the lifeboat being towed behind us. 17: When the men had hoisted it aboard, they passed ropes under the ship itself*

*to hold it together. Fearing that they would run aground on the sandbars of Syrtis, they lowered the sea anchor and let the ship be driven along.*

- **The storms of life can cause us to DRIFT.**

Relentless adversity can knock us to the point where we lose hope of a better future.

*18: So we took such a violent battering from the storm that the next day they began to throw the cargo overboard. 19: And on the third day, they threw the ship's tackle overboard.*

- **The storms of life can cause us to LOSE sight of what is important.**
- **The storms of life can drive us to the point of DESPAIR.**

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

Paul's response: He was calm.

*22: But I urge you to keep up your courage because not one of you will be lost, only the ship will be destroyed.*

The test of our faith is how we handle the constant waves of adversity when they roll in and crash in on us.

## **Our character is revealed in a crisis.**

The strength of our relationship with God is revealed in a crisis.

## **What can we do when we are being beat up by life's problems?**

The safest thing to do when we get into a storm is to drop our anchor.

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

*Psalm 125:1 (cev) Everyone who trusts the LORD is like Mount Zion that cannot be shaken and will stand forever.*

## **In a crisis, we need to put down some anchors for stability.**

**1<sup>st</sup> anchor in a crisis is to know that God is PRESENT.**

*23: Last night, when an angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, stood beside me.*

Wherever we are, there God IS!

God promises, "*I will never leave you or forsake you. ... I am with you always. ... I will send you a comforter.*"

## **2<sup>nd</sup> anchor in a crisis is to remember the PURPOSE of God.**

*24: ...he said, `Don't be afraid, Paul, for you will surely stand trial before Caesar! What's more, God in His goodness has granted safety to everyone sailing with you.*

God has a purpose and a plan for every individual person. Storms are temporary setbacks to fulfilling that purpose.

Once we start focusing only on our problems, we will start drifting and we'll lose sight of the bigger purpose God has for our lives.

## **3<sup>rd</sup> anchor in a crisis is to know God's PROMISE.**

*25: So, keep up your courage men, For I have faith in God that it will happen just as He told me.*

What do we do while waiting for God to fulfill His promise?

*29: Fearing that we would be dashed against the rocks they dropped four anchors from the stern. And they prayed for daylight.*

Keep praying and believing until it eventuates.

**39-44** (msg) *At daybreak, no one recognized the land - but then they did notice a bay with a nice beach. They decided to try to run the ship up on the beach. 40: They cut the anchors, loosed the tiller, raised the sail, and ran before the wind toward the beach. 41: But we didn't make it. Still far from shore, we hit a reef and the ship began to break up. 42: The soldiers decided to kill the prisoners, so none could escape by swimming, 43: but the centurion, determined to save Paul, stopped them. He gave orders for anyone who could swim to dive in and go for it, 44: and for the rest to grab a plank. Everyone made it to shore safely.*

God gave them a promise of safety, and everyone made it safely to shore.

**Deuteronomy 31:8** *The LORD Himself goes before you and will be with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.*

**Psalm 46:1** *God is our refuge and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble.*

**Hebrews 6:19** *Hope is the anchor of the soul.*

Where do we get that kind of hope?

Jesus injects hope into our hopeless situation!