

**Today we Take** - to the **High Seas**

**It's said** that in **ALL** of **ancient literature** - there is **nothing** written that **gives** as **much info** about **1st Century Shipping** as **Acts 27**

**PLUS** - It's an **incredible Drama**

It is **Adventure** on **the high seas** - at its **BEST**

& **IN** it - we see a **picture or two** - about **OUR OWN LIVES**

**Paul** is **going thru** one **Granddaddy** of a **Storm** here  
- - it is the **storm of his life**

& **some of us** may be **going thru**  
a **Granddaddy** of a **Storm** in **OUR Lives** right now

**Or maybe** we're going thru a **Smaller Storm**

**Or maybe** what seems like a **Never Ending Storm**

But **there are things** we can **learn** from **the Storm**  
**that** we can **learn NO other way**

& **altho Acts 27** reads like a **great movie script** -  
**there** are many **great lessons** here - for **each** of us

**So Let's Pray** - that we **HEAR** - the Lesson God wants us - to **HEAR**

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**Let me start** by giving you the **FOUR Lessons**  
that I **personally see** in this Ch - *then I'll **point them out** as we go*

**# 1** - We Need Good Christian Friends  
**Before** we get into the Storm

**# 2** - We Need to Listen to God's Counsel  
to **Not Create** our own Storms

**# 3** - We Need to **Trust** God to **DO** what He Said He would Do  
No Matter What our circumstances look like

**#4** - We Need to **Thank God** for His Provision,  
& **Encourage** those in the Storm with us

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**One more request** - Please **allow me** to again **use the NLT** today  
**we've got** another **MASSIVE text** again this week

## **So - Lesson #1**

We Need Good Christian Friends **BEFORE** we get into the Storm

**That's** what **Paul has** here  
& **that's** exactly **what** we need - in **our Lives**

We **can't wait** till we're **IN** the Storm -  
we **gotta** make sure we **have** those relationships **NOW**

So that **WHEN** we **DO get** into the **Storm** -  
**We'll have** those brothers/sisters to **STAND** with us

## **Acts 27:1-3 (NLT)**

*1 When the time came (to leave Caesarea), **we** (that's Luke) **set sail**  
**for Italy. Paul and several other prisoners were placed in the***

*custody of a Roman officer named Julius, a captain of the Imperial Regiment.*

**2 Aristarchus** (friend #2), *a Macedonian from Thessalonica, was also with us. We left on a ship whose home port was Adramyttium [Audra-meet-tium] on the northwest coast of the province of Asia; it was scheduled to make several stops at ports along the coast of the province.*

**3** *The next day when we docked at Sidon (just above Galilee), Julius was very kind to Paul (a ‘type’ of a friend) and let him go ashore to visit with friends (more friends) so they could provide for his needs.*

**Luke** has been a constant friend thru ALL of **Paul’s** Journey’s & **Aristarchus** has been with **Paul** at least 6 years or more

**AND BOTH** these friends will be with Paul in **Rome** until the very end of his life

**God** sends two of Paul’s closest friends **INTO** this storm with him

**God** gives Paul a Roman Centurion with a **HEART** like a Friend

**God** provides friends in SIDON to provide for Paul’s needs

**Don’t** take your “Discipling Relationships” for Granted because God will USE them - to Carry you thru the Storm

**SO TAKE CARE** of the Relationships God gives you

That’s Lesson #1 - We Need Good Christian Friends **BEFORE** we get into the Storm

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**OK - Now, Lesson # 2**

## We Need to Listen to God's Counsel to Not Create our own Storms

It was Fall - - the very end of the sailing season -  
& the later it gets in the fall - the more Dangerous the sailing

& Every Decision Made right now  
Either moves a ship TOWARD a Storm - Or - AWAY from it  
*kinda like OUR lives*

Here's how it all started for Paul and his Friends

### Acts 27:4-5 - [SHOW TWO MAPS - 1 after the other] - (NLT)

*4 Putting out to sea from there (Sidon, above Galilee), we encountered strong headwinds that made it difficult to keep the ship on course, so we sailed north of Cyprus between the island and the mainland.*

*5 Keeping to the open sea, we passed along the coast of Cilicia and Pamphylia, landing at Myra, in the province of Lycia.*

This is the coastal area from Paul's 1st Missionary Journey  
passing by his home town of Tarsus

But the problem was - this was a coastal boat  
not made for the open seas - especially in the Fall

So Paul is going to get TRANSFERRED to a HUGE Freighter

### Acts 27:6 (NLT)

*6 There (Myra) the commanding officer found an Egyptian ship from Alexandria that was bound for Italy, and he put us on board.*

This ship was Large Enough for almost 300 hundred people  
AND a cargo of Grain

**Most scholars** agree - it would've been at least **140 ft long**  
& it's **DRAFT** would've been **over 30 feet**

It was a **Massive Ship** - The **Freighter** of **the day**

But **because** of its **SIZE** - It **could NOT** Sail **against** the wind  
**which would** prove **DISASTROUS** on this trip

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### **Acts 27:7-8 - [SHOW MAP] - (NLT)**

*7 We had several days of slow sailing, and after great difficulty we finally neared Cnidus [Ka-needus]. But the wind was against us, so we sailed across to Crete and along the sheltered coast of the island, past the cape of Salmone [Sal-mo-nae].*

*8 We struggled along the coast with great difficulty and finally arrived at Fair Havens, near the town of Lasea [Law-si-a].*

**This ship** couldn't "**TACK**" into the Wind (it was **Too Big**)  
& it was **getting later & later** in the **NO SAIL** time of the year

**The wind** was already **blowing AGAINST** them (wrong direction)

So they ran to the **LEE side** of the island of **Crete**  
**where** the **island** would **shield** them **against** the wind

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**& Now - right here** - God **OFFERS** to Use **Paul**  
**for the good** of **all those** on the ship

I say **OFFERS** - Because we must **LISTEN** - to **Stay out** of the **Storm**

**Acts 27:9-10 (NLT) → →**

## **Acts 27:9-10 (NLT)**

**9 We had lost a lot of time. The weather was becoming dangerous for sea travel because it was so late in the fall, and Paul spoke to the ship's officers about it. (a prisoner speaking to the officers)**

**10 "Men," he said, "I believe there is trouble ahead if we go on—shipwreck, loss of cargo, and danger to our lives as well."**

**These are Wise words - & they are From the Lord**

**But those in charge are NOT going to Heed them  
to their own Detriment**

**God gave Paul this Warning - FOR the benefit of the Ship**

But it **turned out** to be a **Prophecy** - **Because** the **Officers**  
**would not listen** - to the **Warning** from God

**I see that a LOT** - The **WARNINGS** of God's Word  
**Turn** out to be **PROPHECIES** - if we **REFUSE** to **HEAR** them

## **Acts 27:11-12 - [SHOW MAP] - (NLT)**

**11 But the officer in charge of the prisoners listened more to the ship's captain and the owner than to Paul.**

**12 And since Fair Havens was an exposed harbor—a poor place to spend the winter—most of the crew (the Majority) wanted to go on to Phoenix, farther up the coast of Crete, and spend the winter there. Phoenix was a good harbor with only a southwest and northwest exposure.**

**They had made it to - "Fair Havens"  
& thru Paul - God **WARNED** them to **STAY there****

**But v.12 says - "MOST of the crew wanted to go on"**

**AHHHH** - it's the old "**Majority Rules**" decision making process

**How** has that "**Majority Rules**" approach  
worked out for God's People?

Well - In **EXODUS** - The **MAJORITY** wanted to go back to **EGYPT**

In **NUMBERS** - The **MAJORITY Refused** to enter the **Promised Land**

In **1SAM** - The **MAJORITY** wanted **King SAUL**  
When God wanted **King DAVID**

In **THE GOSPELS** - The **MAJORITY** wanted **Barabbas RELEASED**  
& the Majority wanted **Jesus CRUCIFIED**

& here - **The MAJORITY wanted to sail**  
When God was saying - "**STAY PUT**"

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**Have you ever known** someone who **Blamed** God  
for the **Consequences** of their **own decisions** ??

*Oh God, WHY did you PUT me in this Storm*  
*Oh God, WHY are you doing this to me ??*

**Listen** guys - If God has told you **NOT to do** something  
& you **DO IT anyway** - & end up in a **STORM**

**Don't Blame** God - He **TOLD** you **HOW** to **AVOID** the Storm

**The Amazing thing is** - God **STAYS with us**  
**THRU** the Storms that we put ourselves in

**The Amazing this is** - God is still **at work** for our **Ultimate Good** -  
**EVEN in the midst** of our Rebellious **Choices**

**The Amazing is** - God will even **BRING US THRU** a Storm that **we created** ourselves

**DON'T Blame him** for your **SELF-Created** Storm  
**THANK HIM** for **never leaving** you or **forsaking** you

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So - **Here comes** the Result - of **NOT listening** to God's Warning

### **Acts 27:13-14 - [SHOW MAP] - (NLT)**

***13 When a light wind began blowing from the south, the sailors thought they could make it. So they pulled up anchor and sailed close to the shore of Crete. (just trying to get to Phoenix - <40 mi's)***

***14 But the weather changed abruptly, and a wind of typhoon strength (called a "northeaster") burst across the island and blew us out to sea.***

**We felt like** things were going in "**Our Direction**"

**We thought** it was our opportunity to **DO** what **WE wanted**

& **so** - we **WENT** for it . . .

**Unfortunately** - it was a **FALLACY**, a Mis-Leading **TEMPTATION**  
a **MIRAGE** - a "**FAKE-OUT**"

There was actually a **Great Nor'Easter** (a typhoon) **WAITING** for us  
**right where** we thought our **Own Plan** was **Unfolding** Perfectly

& now we are **IN the Storm** - - & it is **gonna go bad - FAST**

### **Acts 27:15-17 (NLT)**

***15 The sailors couldn't turn the ship into the wind, so they gave up and let it run before the gale.***

**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 Then the sailors bound ropes around the hull of the ship to strengthen it. They were afraid of being driven across to the sandbars of Syrtis [Ser-tees] off the African coast, so they lowered the sea anchor to slow the ship and were driven before the wind.**

**This Ship is now - in a Full-Scale Storm  
in the middle of the Great Adriatic Sea**

**They are Headed in the Wrong direction - & SCARED for their lives -  
ALL - by their OWN Choosing**

**Lesson # 2 - We Need to Listen to God's Counsel  
to not Create our own Storms**

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**But . . . Paul was just ALONG for the ride  
These events aren't the result of HIS choices**

**Paul could've easily seen himself as a VICTIM here  
in a storm caused by other people's Decisions**

& in a sense he WAS a Victim - but he's Not Wallowing in that -  
He's Not Begrudging it - & he's NOT Blaming God

**Instead, Paul is Trusting - that God is going To Do what He Said  
No Matter WHAT the circumstances look like**

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**& THAT is our Lesson # 3 → →**

We Need to Trust God To Do what He Said He would Do  
No Matter What our circumstances look like

& we're going to SEE Paul DO THAT -  
BUT FIRST - the Storm MUST Continue - Until all Hope is GONE

### Acts 27:18-20 (NLT)

*18 The next day, as gale-force winds continued to batter the ship, the crew began throwing the cargo overboard.*

(Paul told them that would happen)

*19 The following day they even took some of the ship's gear and threw it overboard.* (Paul told them that would happen)

*20 The terrible storm raged for many days, blotting out the sun and the stars, until at last all hope was gone.*

Have you been there ??

Many of us - HAVE been there

The Storm has RAGED for so long, & it's been so HEAVY  
that it's BLOTTED out the sun & the stars

We can't see the Light of Day  
we can't See Anything but the Storm

### ALL HOPE IS LOST !!

& often - THAT is exactly where God needs us !!

It's NOT God that Needs to get to that point - Often - It's US  
especially if the Storm is a Result of OUR choices & OUR will

So often - we won't surrender our OWN Messed Up Control  
until we reach the end of our OWN ROPE

& so My Encouragement is - GET THERE QUICK !!  
Get to the end of your own rope - QUICK

Because the quicker you get there - the quicker you'll stop messing everything up & surrender control - to God

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The CREW of THIS Ship Has:

- \* Rejected God's Counsel
- \* They've done things their OWN WAY
- \* They're experiencing the CONSEQUENCES

But It seems like they're Finally READY - to HEAR from God

Acts 27:21 (NLT)

*21 No one had eaten for a long time. Finally, Paul called the crew together (the Godly prisoner becomes the leader) and said, "Men, you should have listened to me in the first place and not left Crete. You would have avoided all this damage and loss.*

This is NOT an "*I told you so*" - This is a "*GOD told you so*"

& it's important for Paul to POINT this OUT  
to HELP them get READY to Hear from God

So 1st Paul says - You should've Listened to Godly Counsel

But now - He's going to tell them that:

God is WITH THEM  
God is AT WORK - &  
God's Plan - WILL PREVAIL

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& We are gonna see - that God's PROMISE made to Paul  
Remains Steadfast & Unshakable - in the midst of the Storm

**Acts 27:22-23 (Paul talking to the Crew) - (NLT)**

***22 But take courage! None of you will lose your lives, even though the ship will go down.***

***23 For last night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve stood beside me,***

The **First Thing** we **need to see** here - is this:

**In the midst** of the **Raging Storm**

**When** all those around us have **LOST ALL HOPE**

**Right THERE** - God **will** make Himself **KNOWN** to us

**Right THERE** - God **will** send us **A MESSENGER**

**Right THERE** - we can **Know** God is **WITH US**

**NOT** because our **circumstances** have **changed**

**NOT** because God has **FIXED** anything (**yet**) . . .

But because **God** has **REVEALED** Himself to us

**IN THE MIDST** of the **Storm** !

& **WHEN** we meet Him **IN THE MIDST** of the **Storm**

We will **KNOW** He is **WITH** us - & He is going to **CARRY** us thru

& **time & time again** - All **thru Acts**

this is **Exactly HOW God** has Met **Paul**

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& Right Here - in the **MIDST of THIS Storm**

Paul is again **ASSURED** - that **God's Plan** & **God's Purpose** for him  
**WILL COME TO PASS !!**

**Acts 27:24 (still speaking to the crew) - (NLT)**

***24 and he (the angel) 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.'***

Back in **Acts 23:11 - The Lord HIMSELF Stood by Paul** & told him  
***"you must go testify also in Rome."***

& here - **the Lord** sends a **Messenger** - to **Remind** Paul  
that **God** has **NOT** changed His **MIND** - Or His **PLAN**

Guys - it was **AFTER this Storm**, & **AFTER this Shipwreck**  
& **AFTER** Paul **GOT** to **ROME** . . .

**That he wrote in - Philippians 1:6 (ESV)**

***6 And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.***

**Right HERE** - in the **Midst** of a **Death Defying** Storm  
**God** sends Paul a **Message** . . .

**Everything** is under control - My **PLAN** for you Has **NOT CHANGED**

**Guys - Do YOU need to hear that today ??**

God is **WITH YOU**

Everything is **UNDER CONTROL**

God's plan **HAS NOT CHANGED** !!

**The Question is;**

Will you **HOLD ON** to Him

Will you **TRUST** Him

Will you **CLING** to His Promises - **INSTEAD** of your **Fears**

**THAT** - is what **Paul is doing** in the **Midst of this Storm**  
& **THAT** - is the **ONLY thing** that **Works**

**Acts 27:25-26 - Paul still talking to the Crew - (NLT)**

***25 So take courage! For I believe God. It will be just as he said.***

***26 But we will be shipwrecked on an island.”***

**LESSON # 3**

**We Need to Trust God to DO what He Said He would Do  
No Matter What your circumstances look like**

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Paul **HAD** that **CONFIDENCE** - Because He **BELIEVED GOD**  
**AND** - Because He had **MET GOD** in the **Midst of the Storm**

**BUT** . . . that **DID NOT mean** the Storm was **OVER**

**Acts 27:27-29 (NLT)**

***27 About midnight on the fourteenth night of the storm (that seems like forever), as we were being driven across the Sea of Adria, the sailors sensed land was near.***

***28 They dropped a weighted line and found that the water was 120 feet deep. But a little later they measured again and found it was only 90 feet deep.***

***29 At this rate they were afraid we would soon be driven against the rocks along the shore, so they threw out four anchors from the back of the ship and prayed for daylight.***

**In the blackness** of the Storm - they **Couldn't see a THING**

**Without the stars** in the sky  
they had **NO IDEA** where they were **going**

but they **figured out** the ocean **was** getting shallower  
So they threw **FOUR Anchors** off the back of the Ship  
& **PRAYED** for Daylight

**Which means** maybe they we're **starting to catch**  
**some** of what **Paul** was **sharing** with them

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There 's a **very interesting** thing here about **these Anchors**

In the **late 1960's** Fisherman dug up **4 Anchors** in **90ft of Water**  
**outside a Bay** on the island of **Malta**

**But** for many generations **the island** (98% Catholic) had **firmly held**  
that Paul had been **shipwrecked** in a **heavy tourist spot**  
they call "**St Paul's Cove**"

But **These anchors** were found at **the mouth** of **another** bay

**One** that was **Much HARDER** for **Tourists** to get to -  
**but one** that actually **met** the **Biblical description** much better

& **so** (assumedly **because** of the **tourist** trade) - the **Island of Malta**  
**put** these 4 anchors in a **museum** marked as  
***"Various Roman Anchors"***

But **many believe** these **ARE** actually the **4 anchors** Luke refers to -  
Yet possibly **Covered-Up** - for the **tourist industry**

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**BUT** - - - **BACK** to our Story

**Cont'g** in the storm - **after throwing out** these **4 Anchors**

**Acts 27:30-32 (NLT)**

***30 Then the sailors tried to abandon the ship; they lowered the lifeboat as though they were going to put out anchors from the front of the ship.***

***31 But Paul said to the commanding officer and the soldiers, "You will all die unless the sailors stay aboard." → →***

**32 So the soldiers cut the ropes to the lifeboat and let it drift away.**

This is such a **GREAT Movie Script**

Some **Scaliwaq Sailors** were trying to **Save THEMSELVES**  
**pretending** to be **lowering** more **Anchors**

& **you're thinking** - they're going to **GET AWAY**  
- - - then **the Hero** spots them

**HE calls out** a **Warning** to the Roman **Soldiers** -  
***"You will all die unless the sailors stay aboard."***

And - **Trusting Paul** - the **Soldiers** Draw the **SWORDS**  
& with **ONE SWOOP** - **CUT** the ropes

& the **Life boat** falls , & **drifts way** into the **DARKNESS** - -  
**& you just know** somehow - this is **NOT a Good turn** of events

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But Paul **now emerges** - **NOT** as the **Prisoner**  
But **Clearly** as **God's Leader** - to **get these people** thru this storm

& **HERE** - is our **FOURTH (& final) LESSON**

**We Need to Thank God for His Provision, & Encourage  
those in the Storm with us**

**Acts 27:33-38 (NLT)**

***33 Just as day was dawning, Paul urged everyone to eat. "You have been so worried that you haven't touched food for two weeks," he said.***

**34 "Please eat something now for your own good. For not a hair of your heads will perish."**

**35 Then he took some bread, gave thanks to God before them all, and broke off a piece and ate it.**

**36 Then everyone was encouraged and began to eat**

**37 - all 276 of us who were on board.**

**38 After eating, the crew lightened the ship further by throwing the cargo of wheat overboard.**

They were finally listening to Paul

Beginning to Trust God - By beginning to Trust Paul

In the Midst of a Storm that was about to TAKE their lives

Paul stands up - & gives THANKS to God for his Daily Bread  
& he gets all 276 passengers Encouraged - & Eating

It's AMAZING how God can use ONE Faithful Witness  
in a boat full of unfaithful & scared people

We need to Be THAT person - in the Midst of OUR storm

THAT person - who stands up & GIVES THANKS to God  
for His Good Provision & His Blessing - - - Let's BE that Person

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Paul Gave THANKS - & Encouraged those in the Storm with him  
But . . . the Storm STILL wasn't OVER

**Acts 27:39 - (NLT)**

**39 When morning dawned, they didn't recognize the coastline, but they saw a bay with a beach and wondered if they could get to shore by running the ship aground.**

**40 So they cut off the anchors and left them in the sea.** (the 4 anchors) **Then they lowered the rudders, raised the foresail, and headed toward shore.** (making a running dive for the shore)  
**41 But they hit a shoal (reef) and ran the ship aground too soon. The bow of the ship stuck fast, while the stern was repeatedly smashed by the force of the waves and began to break apart.**

Those 4 anchors I talked about - were found near a dangerous sandbar called Muxnar Reef - that fits this description perfectly

Underneath the sand of this REEF - near where the anchors were found - is a thick, CLAY type of Mud

Where a ship this size could easily get stuck

& the Bow of this ship DID get stuck  
& the Stern was being SMASHED by the Waves

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It was - "DO OR DIE" time - & the Soldiers decided it was best for the Prisoners - to DIE

### Acts 27:42 (NLT)

**42 The soldiers wanted to kill the prisoners to make sure they didn't swim ashore and escape.**

But Wait a minute - Back in V.24 - the angel told Paul God had granted safety to ALL on-board

**BUM, BUM, BUMPPPPP . . .**

Enter - God's HAND - & God's PLAN

**Acts 27:43-44 (NLT)**

***43 But the commanding officer wanted to spare Paul, so he didn't let them carry out their plan. Then he ordered all who could swim to jump overboard first and make for land.***

***44 The others held onto planks or debris from the broken ship. So everyone escaped safely to shore.***

**EVERYONE escaped safely to Shore!**

**everyone makes it out ALIVE - Just as God Said**

What an **Incredible Documenting** - of an **Incredible Storm**

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**There are SO MANY great lessons we can learn here**

We **moved** quickly **Thru at least Four** - But let me **ASK you**

**What was God SPEAKING to YOU ?**

**Was it the Need for you to have Good Christian Friends  
BEFORE you Enter a Storm??**

**Was it Listening to God's Counsel  
to NOT CREATING your own Storms by your own choices??**

**Was it TRUSTING God to DO what He Said He would Do  
No Matter What your circumstances look like ??**

**Was it THANKING GOD for His Provision  
& Encouraging those in the Storm with you?**

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Guys **we ALL Face Storms** in this Life → → →

We **CAN** learn to **MEET God** in those **Storms**

We **CAN** learn to **TRUST God** in those **Storms**

We **CAN** be **USED by God** in those **Storms**

**The Lord** didn't promise us - a life **FREE from Storms**

He **promised** us that He has **OVERCOME the Storms**

& He **Promised** us - that **IN HIM**

we **HAVE VICTORY** - & we **CAN** have **PEACE**

**John 16:33 (ESV)**

***33 . . . in me you may have peace. In the world you will have [STORMS]. But take heart; I have overcome the world.***

**Let's Pray**