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## **ACTS 27:1-28:16**

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### **GETTING STARTED...**

Have you ever been out at sea during a storm? Even on a modern boat with all our equipment and technology being on the water can be dangerous. Even more so during Paul's day when the only way to steer a boat was with the wind. As Paul is being taken from Jerusalem all the way to Rome, the sea was far from calm and quiet. Paul gets swept into a storm and shipwrecked on an island. It seemed as though everything was going wrong, that the plans he had laid out were all going sideways. But God's plan wasn't. God has already promised that he would bring Paul to Rome and while it wasn't the way Paul expected to go, in chains through a storm. God was faithful to hold him steady through the storm, and we have the promise that he will do the same for us.

### **READ THE TEXT: ACTS 27:1-28:16**

**27** And when it was decided that we should sail for Italy, they delivered Paul and some other prisoners to a centurion of the Augustan Cohort named Julius. **2** And embarking in a ship of Adramyttium, which was about to sail to the ports along the coast of Asia, we put to sea, accompanied by Aristarchus, a Macedonian from Thessalonica. **3** The next day we put in at Sidon. And Julius treated Paul kindly and gave him leave to go to his friends and be cared for. **4** And putting out to sea from there we sailed under the lee of Cyprus, because the winds were against us. **5** And when we had sailed across the open sea along the coast of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to Myra in Lycia. **6** There the centurion found a ship of Alexandria sailing for Italy and put us on board. **7** We sailed slowly for a number of days and arrived with difficulty off Cnidus, and as the wind did not allow us to go farther, we sailed under the lee of Crete off Salmone. **8** Coasting along it with

difficulty, we came to a place called Fair Havens, near which was the city of Lasea.

<sup>9</sup> Since much time had passed, and the voyage was now dangerous because even the Fast was already over, Paul advised them, <sup>10</sup> saying, "Sirs, I perceive that the voyage will be with injury and much loss, not only of the cargo and the ship, but also of our lives." <sup>11</sup> But the centurion paid more attention to the pilot and to the owner of the ship than to what Paul said. <sup>12</sup> And because the harbor was not suitable to spend the winter in, the majority decided to put out to sea from there, on the chance that somehow they could reach Phoenix, a harbor of Crete, facing both southwest and northwest, and spend the winter there.

### **The Storm at Sea**

<sup>13</sup> Now when the south wind blew gently, supposing that they had obtained their purpose, they weighed anchor and sailed along Crete, close to the shore. <sup>14</sup> But soon a tempestuous wind, called the northeaster, struck down from the land. <sup>15</sup> And when the ship was caught and could not face the wind, we gave way to it and were driven along. <sup>16</sup> Running under the lee of a small island called Cauda, we managed with difficulty to secure the ship's boat. <sup>17</sup> After hoisting it up, they used supports to undergird the ship. Then, fearing that they would run aground on the Syrtis, they lowered the gear, and thus they were driven along. <sup>18</sup> Since we were violently storm-tossed, they began the next day to jettison the cargo. <sup>19</sup> And on the third day they threw the ship's tackle overboard with their own hands. <sup>20</sup> When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope of our being saved was at last abandoned.

<sup>21</sup> Since they had been without food for a long time, Paul stood up among them and said, "Men, you should have listened to me and not have set sail from Crete and incurred this injury and loss. <sup>22</sup> Yet now I urge you to take heart, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. <sup>23</sup> For this very night there stood before me an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I worship, <sup>24</sup> and he said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must stand before Caesar. And behold, God has granted you all those who sail with you.' <sup>25</sup> So take heart, men, for I have faith in God that it will be exactly as I have been told. <sup>26</sup> But we must run aground on some island."

<sup>27</sup> When the fourteenth night had come, as we were being driven across the Adriatic Sea, about midnight the sailors suspected that they were nearing land. <sup>28</sup> So they took a sounding and found twenty fathoms. A little farther on they took a sounding again and found fifteen fathoms. <sup>29</sup> And fearing that we might run on the rocks, they let down four anchors from the stern and prayed for day to come. <sup>30</sup> And as the sailors were seeking to escape from the ship, and had lowered the ship's boat into the sea under pretense of laying out anchors from

the bow, <sup>31</sup> Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, "Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved." <sup>32</sup> Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the ship's boat and let it go.

<sup>33</sup> As day was about to dawn, Paul urged them all to take some food, saying, "Today is the fourteenth day that you have continued in suspense and without food, having taken nothing. <sup>34</sup> Therefore I urge you to take some food. For it will give you strength, for not a hair is to perish from the head of any of you." <sup>35</sup> And when he had said these things, he took bread, and giving thanks to God in the presence of all he broke it and began to eat. <sup>36</sup> Then they all were encouraged and ate some food themselves. <sup>37</sup> (We were in all 276 persons in the ship.)

<sup>38</sup> And when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship, throwing out the wheat into the sea.

### **The Shipwreck**

<sup>39</sup> Now when it was day, they did not recognize the land, but they noticed a bay with a beach, on which they planned if possible to run the ship ashore. <sup>40</sup> So they cast off the anchors and left them in the sea, at the same time loosening the ropes that tied the rudders. Then hoisting the foresail to the wind they made for the beach. <sup>41</sup> But striking a reef, they ran the vessel aground. The bow stuck and remained immovable, and the stern was being broken up by the surf. <sup>42</sup> The soldiers' plan was to kill the prisoners, lest any should swim away and escape. <sup>43</sup> But the centurion, wishing to save Paul, kept them from carrying out their plan. He ordered those who could swim to jump overboard first and make for the land, <sup>44</sup> and the rest on planks or on pieces of the ship. And so it was that all were brought safely to land.

### **Paul on Malta**

**28** After we were brought safely through, we then learned that the island was called Malta. <sup>2</sup> The native people showed us unusual kindness, for they kindled a fire and welcomed us all, because it had begun to rain and was cold. <sup>3</sup> When Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and put them on the fire, a viper came out because of the heat and fastened on his hand. <sup>4</sup> When the native people saw the creature hanging from his hand, they said to one another, "No doubt this man is a murderer. Though he has escaped from the sea, Justice has not allowed him to live." <sup>5</sup> He, however, shook off the creature into the fire and suffered no harm. <sup>6</sup> They were waiting for him to swell up or suddenly fall down dead. But when they had waited a long time and saw no misfortune come to him, they changed their minds and said that he was a god.

<sup>7</sup> Now in the neighborhood of that place were lands belonging to the chief man of the island, named Publius, who received us and entertained us hospitably for three days. <sup>8</sup> It happened that the father of Publius lay sick with fever and dysentery. And Paul visited him and prayed, and putting his hands on him, healed him. <sup>9</sup> And when this had

taken place, the rest of the people on the island who had diseases also came and were cured. <sup>10</sup> They also honored us greatly, and when we were about to sail, they put on board whatever we needed.

### **Paul Arrives at Rome**

<sup>11</sup> After three months we set sail in a ship that had wintered in the island, a ship of Alexandria, with the twin gods as a figurehead.

<sup>12</sup> Putting in at Syracuse, we stayed there for three days. <sup>13</sup> And from there we made a circuit and arrived at Rhegium. And after one day a south wind sprang up, and on the second day we came to Puteoli.

<sup>14</sup> There we found brothers and were invited to stay with them for seven days. And so we came to Rome. <sup>15</sup> And the brothers there, when they heard about us, came as far as the Forum of Appius and Three Taverns to meet us. On seeing them, Paul thanked God and took courage.

<sup>16</sup> And when we came into Rome, Paul was allowed to stay by himself, with the soldier who guarded him.

### **UNDERSTANDING THE WORD**

1. Summarize the story that takes place. Where is Paul coming from and where is Paul going? It may help to look at a map of the locations – see the attached photo at the bottom of the guide.
2. What is the reason that the text gives for Paul's confidence that they will not die in 27:21-25?

### **REFLECTING ON THE SERMON**

3. What was the main point of the sermon?
4. What has God been impressing on your heart from the sermon?

### **APPLYING THE POINT**

5. How do we put this into practice?

*Agassiz*      How have difficulties allowed you to experience God's provision and protection in ways that you otherwise would not have experienced? How have these experiences become part of your witness for Christ? There are times when Christian fellowship moves one in quite a special way to "thank God and take courage". How have you experienced the encouragement of belonging to the family of God? Is there someone in the church whom you can come alongside to encourage?

*Chilliwack*      What is it about the character of God that has anchored your faith in the midst of the storms of life you have faced? What are the things that Christian community have done

for you in the midst of the storms of your life that have helped anchor your faith?

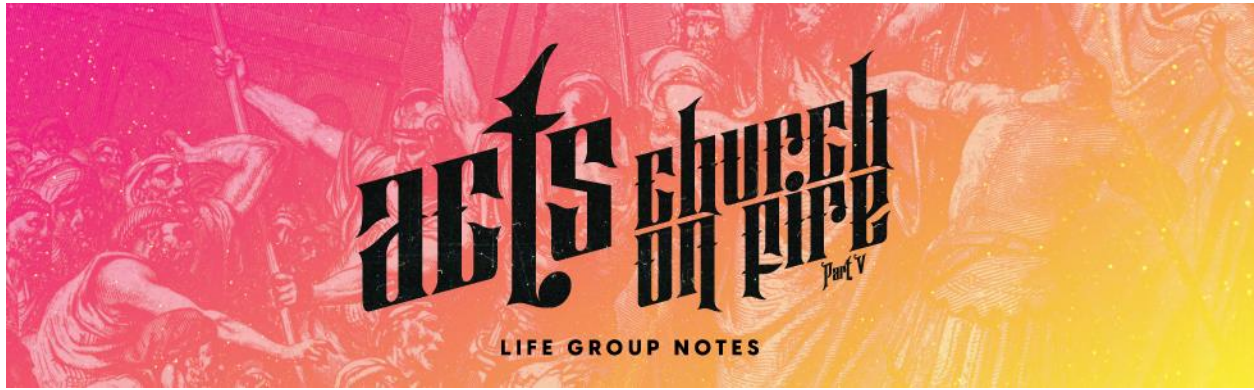
*Harrison & Lake Errock* In what ways do you see Paul build credibility as a Christian witness throughout this sea adventure? What storms are you facing and how trust in Jesus as you face these storms?

*Promontory* What promises of God seem most difficult to believe in the middle of a trial? How can you remind yourself of them and trust them more? What part does the fellowship of other believers play during our trials?

## **PRAYING & SHARING**

1. How can you share what you have learned with... another believer? An unbeliever?
2. Share and pray for one another in your life group. How can you specifically pray for and encourage one another in response to this text?





# How to Use this Guide

This guide is intended to help facilitate Central Life Groups as they meet to understand the Bible passage, discuss the sermon, and how to put it into practice in our lives. What is contained in this guide is not an exhaustive text analysis nor a full list of questions that can or should be asked during Life Group. This is simply a guide to help **start conversations that are centered on the Word of God.**

The Life Group Guide is separated into three main sections that are arranged with an intentional order: *Understanding the Word, Reflecting o*



*n the Sermon, and Applying the Point.* We want to first understand the Word of God, and then check that understanding by what has been preached, and then discuss how to put it into practice in our own lives. The order is intended to imitate the process of how the Word of God makes changes in our lives. Head, heart, hands, and all of it wrapped in prayer.

While the meaning of a text doesn't change, the way that we are called to apply it may look different from campus to campus, and even person to person. To reflect this distinction, you will see application questions from each campus in this guide.

Start with the question(s) from your campus and then look at others to see if they are helpful for your group. You may be surprised how similar or different they end up being and how the diversity brings a fuller understanding to how we can apply the Word of God.

Our goal is not that you answer every question in this guide, but that you are able to discuss the Word of God in a way **that helps everyone follow Jesus together!**

*“Great are the works of the LORD,  
studied by all who delight in them.” - Psalm 111:2*