

Acts 27 "Stay in the boat!"

Why did the Jews want to kill Paul? **Because he preached repentance!**

- NOAH DIDN'T STAND ON THE STEPS OF HIS ARK AND SAY. *"Something good is about to happen to you."*
- Amos was not confronted by priests who threatened to kill him because he was preaching, *"I'm okay. You're okay."*
- Jeremiah was not cast into the dungeon because he said, *"It's ok to live that way, God made you that way"*
- DANIEL WAS NOT THROWN TO THE LIONS FOR SAYING. *"Smile, God loves you."*
- John the Baptist wasn't beheaded for having a *"Honk If You Love Jesus" bumper sticker on the back of his donkey!*

The message of Noah and Daniel, Amos and Jeremiah, John the Baptist and Jesus Christ, was singular. The message was:

REPENT.

As Courson says, "The message of repentance is not a popular message because it says people who think they've got it together—**don't**. People who think they're okay—**aren't**. People who think they'll make it to heaven on their own—**won't**."

Chapter 26 verse 24 Now as he thus made his defense, Festus said with a loud voice, "Paul, you are beside yourself! Much learning is driving you mad!"

Paul said in 1 Corinthians 1:18: *the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing but the power of God to those who are being saved. So if this is "crazy" to you guess what? You are perishing!*



Hughes again adds, To be earnest about wealth or power or science or pleasure or athletic championships is not crazy from the world's viewpoint. But to be fervent about spiritual things is called madness."

DEGARMO AND KEY "ALL THE LOSERS WIN"

You think that all is far too much to give... that's what Jesus gave so that this loser could live. Here's to all the losers that lose guilt and sin. Here's to live in Jesus where all of the losers win!

Call me Crazy, but anything short of full surrender is not surrender at all. Jesus is either Lord of ALL or not Lord at all. Pray

Almost 40 billion dollars spent on cruising last year. The number of passengers carried by the cruise industry has grown every year and is expected to exceed 24 million in 2018. The old saying, "Cruises are for the overfed and almost dead" is no longer true. I LOVE to go on cruises!

Everybody wants to take a cruise – especially a cruise to Rome. Well, in Acts 27 Paul and his pals get that opportunity. *They board a boat for Rome – not as partiers, but as prisoners. This is a cruise to refuse – a cruise for the blues.* Paul would get to Rome! His journey would be an *"all expenses paid"* trip, courtesy of the Roman GOVT because he would travel as the prisoner of Rome.

Acts chapter 27 And when it was decided that we should sail to Italy, they delivered Paul and some **other prisoners** to *one* named Julius, a centurion of the Augustan Regiment.

Notice "other prisoners". The Greek word means "others of a different kind". Most likely going to Rome to be executed not to stand trial. Fight the GLADIATORS... He pursuits us till the end! hardened Criminals who are going to spend eternity in Hell. God totally hooks them up! Places Paul on their boat – So that before they die they will have the chance to hear the gospel.

2 So, entering a ship of Adramyttium, we put to sea, meaning to sail along the coasts of Asia. Aristarchus a Macedonian of Thessalonica, was with us. **Paul was accompanied by Aristarchus and Luke on this voyage. While some have thought that they went "undercover" with Paul as his "slaves," it is just as likely that Aristarchus paid his fare as a passenger and that Luke was on board as the ship's doctor.** Luke will be right with him to the end!

3 And the next *day* we landed at Sidon. And Julius treated Paul kindly

and gave *him* liberty to go to his friends and receive care. **Throughout Scripture, centurions—the backbone of the Roman army—are always seen in a favorable light... No doubt Paul’s character gave Julius absolute confidence that he would not try to escape.** 4 When we had put to sea from there, we sailed under *the shelter of* Cyprus, because the winds were contrary. 5 And when we had sailed over the sea which is off Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to Myra, *a city* of Lycia. 6 There the centurion found an Alexandrian ship sailing to Italy, and he put us on board.

Slide... Picture of ship... A larger vessel, typically carrying grain from Egypt to Italy. Chief among its drawbacks was that it could not sail into the wind. 276 passengers

7 When we had sailed slowly many days, and arrived with difficulty off Cnidus, the wind not permitting us to proceed, we sailed under *the shelter of* Crete off Salmone. 8 Passing it with difficulty, we came to a place called Fair Havens, near the city *of* Lasea. 9 Now when much time had been spent, and sailing was now dangerous

The strong winds again hindered their progress so that “much time had been spent” to cover the 130 miles from Myra to Cnidus. The pilot then steered south-southwest to Crete, passing Salmone and finally struggling into a harbor at Fair Havens. It had been a most difficult voyage, a portent of things to come.

→ **Again verse 9** Now when much time had been spent, and sailing was now dangerous because the Fast was already over, **“The fast” referred to here was the Day of Atonement October 5, A.D. 59. —a dangerous time to be at sea, with winter storms soon approaching.**

Paul advised them, **10** saying, "Men, I perceive that this voyage will end with disaster and much loss, not only of the cargo and ship, but also our lives." Paul isn't really speaking as a prophet of God, but as an experienced traveler on the waters of the Mediterranean, having logged some 3,500 miles by sea. In his experience as a traveler, **Now, although Paul was a tentmaker by trade, a rabbi by profession, and a prisoner by decree, the fact that he had been shipwrecked three times and had spent an entire day and night in the open ocean (2 Corinthians 11:25) qualified him to be able to give advice concerning the dangers of the sea. Bottom line... Paul says don't go!**

11 Nevertheless the centurion was more persuaded by the helmsman and the owner of the ship than by the things spoken by Paul. **12** And because the harbor was not suitable to winter in, the majority advised to set sail from there also, if by any means they could reach Phoenix, a harbor of Crete opening toward the southwest and northwest, *and winter there.* They wanted to go to the port of Phenice on the southern coast of Crete, about 40 miles away. Fair Havens was not a comfortable place to settle down because it was too open to the winter storms. Phenice had a more sheltered harbor. This small town probably could not support 276 people for winter.

13 When the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained *their* desire, putting out to sea, they sailed close by Crete. **"South wind" is a favorable wind, contrary to the normal winds there.**

14 But not long after, a tempestuous head wind arose, called Euroclydon.



Euroclydon a hybrid Greek and Latin word that means **"a northeasterner."** Once there were underway, it seemed as if all the forces of evil broke loose upon them! From their point of view, Euroclydon, the terror of seamen, had been watching and waiting from the top of Mount Ida (the fabled abode of Zeus) to drive them to destruction.

15 So when the ship was caught, and could not head into the wind, we let *her* drive. 16 And running under *the shelter* of an island called Clauda, we secured the skiff with difficulty. **The skiff was normally towed behind the boat, but was taken aboard at bad weather - so they brought it in.** 17 When they had taken it on board, they used cables to undergird the ship; a customary practice sometimes called "frapping." It helped prevent the ship from breaking apart in a storm. and fearing lest they should run aground on the Syrtis *Sands*, they struck sail and so were driven. **The Syrtis Sands were an infamous "graveyard" of ships off the coast of North Africa, feared like a "Bermuda Triangle." At all costs, the sailors wanted to avoid this area.**

Verse 18 And because we were exceedingly tempest-tossed, the next *day* they lightened the ship. 19 On the third *day* we threw the ship's tackle overboard with our own hands. 20 Now when neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small tempest beat on *us*, all hope that we would be saved was finally given up. **They used the sun and the stars for guidance, and when they were blocked, they had no way to know where they were. When we are at the end of our rope Jesus begins...** 21 But after long abstinence from food, (most likely because they were sick as a dog... sea sickness) then Paul stood in the midst of them and said, **Can you picture in your mind's eye . . . Paul shouting above the spray of the howling storm:** "Men, you should have listened to me, and not have sailed from Crete and incurred this disaster and loss. 22 And now I urge you to take heart, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. 23 For there stood by me this night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve, **He said I belong to God... I am His**

property... that's why Paul mastered the storm because he knew he belonged to God

→ We belong to God *because he bought us.* 1 Cor. 6... you are not your own you are bought with a price... the price the precious blood of Jesus!

→ **Zech 2 verse 8 for he who touches you touches the apple of His eye.**

→ **We are His bride... His children... we are HIS**

Verse 23 again... For there stood by me this night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve, 24 saying, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must be brought before Caesar; and indeed God has granted you all those who sail with you.' **As one man noted "Huge waves were assaulting the ship but Paul's soul was as calm as a windless pond"** **Why He knew God was sovereign over ALL... time... history... events and even the ocean itself.** 25 Therefore take heart, men, for I believe God that it will be just as it was told me. **Take note of what Paul said: "I believe God." He didn't say, "I believe in God." Every demon in hell agrees with the existence of God. Paul declared his total confidence in God's promise.** The writer of Hebrews (and this may have been Paul himself) put it, "God has said, 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you'" (13:5).

Paul was not *ashamed* to say that he believed God. Spurgeon said, "I would to God that all Christians were prepared to throw down the gauntlet and to come out straight; for if God be not true let us not pretend to trust him, and if the gospel be a lie let us be honest enough to confess it."

26 However, we must run aground on a certain island." 27 Now when the 14th night had come, as we were driven up and down in the Adriatic Sea, about midnight the sailors sensed that they were drawing near

some land. **NOTE:** even after Paul's encouragement, before God saved them all from the sinking ship, things got even worse.

28 And they took soundings and found *it* to be 20 fathoms; and when they had gone a little farther, they took soundings again and found *it* to be 15 fathoms. 29 Then, fearing lest we should run aground on the rocks, they dropped four anchors from the stern, and prayed for day to come. **Finally, after 14 nights of hopeless, interminable drifting and driving wind and rain, the men aboard heard something. Over the howling wind, the sailors made out the faint rumblings of waves crashing the rocks. When the sailors heard the waves crashing they knew that they were going into shallow water. The helmsmen commanded that they find out the depth.**

In first century Roman times, a lead sounding device was a bell-shaped lead object affixed to rope. The sounding device would be dropped overboard so that the sailors could determine the depth of the water.

→ **The first recorded depth was 120 ft. or 20 fathoms.**

→ **A second sounding was made and the depth was 90 ft. or 15 fathoms.**

The captain of the ship knew that they were approaching land and gave the order to drop 4 anchors from the stern.

Quoting from Chuck Missler's commentary on Acts, "First century anchors on an Alexandrian grain freighter would be approximately 12 ft. long made entirely of wood. The anchor's stock, or the cross bar of the anchor would have been made of solid lead. The wood would, over the years, decay in the sea and not survive, but the lead crossbar would last indefinitely. **They did find the surviving crossbars!**

30 And as the sailors were seeking to escape from the ship, when they had let down the skiff into the sea, under pretense of putting out anchors from the prow, 31 Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, "Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved." 32 Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the skiff and let it fall off. 33 And as day was about to dawn, Paul implored *them* all to take food, saying, "Today is the 14th day you have waited and continued without food, and eaten nothing. One commentator noted... **"The crew had been fasting for fourteen days—not because they were seeking God, but because they were sick to their stomachs. Filled with fear, they lost their appetites."** Joseph Parker ***"Paul began as a prisoner, he ended as the captain."*** 34 Therefore I urge you to take nourishment, for this is for your survival, since not a hair will fall from the head of any of you." 35 And when he had said these things, he took bread and gave thanks to God in the presence of them all; and when he had broken *it* he began to eat. 36 Then they were all encouraged, and also took food themselves. 37 And in all we were 276 persons on the ship. 38 So when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship and threw out the wheat into the sea. **NO PROFIT ON THIS TRIP... WE JUST WANT TO SURVIVE!** 39 When it was day, they did not recognize the land; but they observed a bay with a beach, onto which they planned to run the ship if possible. **They did not know it at first, but they came to an island called Malta. The place where the ship came aground is now called St. Paul's Bay.** 40 And they let go the anchors and left *them* in the sea, meanwhile loosing the rudder ropes; and they hoisted the mainsail to the wind and made for shore.



From Chuck Missler’s notes, “...taken up”: or cut, the anchors: they left them in the sea (cf. v.25). The details in this narrative enabled the Greek maritime authorities, using the latest navigational computer software, to assist in locating these very anchors which were cut loose!

41 But striking a place where two seas met, they ran the ship aground; and the prow stuck fast and remained immovable, but the stern was being broken up by the violence of the waves. 42 And the soldiers’ plan was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim away and escape. 43 But the centurion, wanting to save Paul, kept them from *their* purpose, and commanded that those who could swim should jump *overboard* first and get to land, 44 and the rest, some on boards and some on *parts* of the ship. And so it was that they all escaped safely to land.

Two years earlier (Acts 23:11) Christ had appeared in Paul’s cell in Caesarea and told him to take courage, for he would bear witness for the Savior in Rome. This was an unconditional promise. **Paul would go to Rome – no doubt about it.** However, God did not promise smooth sailing along the way. As we serve Christ, there will be storms, hardships, high seas, breakdowns but also peace, assurance, fruitfulness, the sustaining presence of God.

When we are anchored in God’s presence we will display amazing courage in the worst storms

The reason Paul displayed such courage was *that he believed God!* If our hearts bear the anchors of the Lord’s presence, ownership, and service, we will be able to stand tall in any storm.

We are often *objective*-oriented, but God is *process*-oriented. We just want to get to Rome, but God is even more interested in *HOW* we get there.

Bringing God’s clear application to use today... R Kent Hughes says, “The

imminent threat of death on that floundering Egyptian freighter revealed the secrets of each man's character, and Paul was head and shoulders above them all. Perhaps many found Christ in those following months on Malta. Sometimes storms come so that others will look beyond us to Christ."

Are you in a storm? Does it look like your ship is about to go under? If so, you need some anchors:

The anchor of God's presence. He is with you – “an angel of the God whose I am an whom I serve stood beside me.”

The anchor of Gods' ownership. You are his possession – “the God whose I am.”

The anchor that comes through serving God. “...the God ... whom I serve.”

The anchor of faith. “So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will happened just as he told me.”

One final word of exhortation... When all hope is lost Paul asks to speak to the crew. In 27:23 he reports that an angel assured him that though the ship would sink all its passengers would be preserved – with one condition... **verse 31** Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, “Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved.” **There's a lesson here – life is like a storm-tossed sea - it can be rough. The safe place is in Christ. We'll make the heavenly shore only if we stay in the boat. When in the middle of the storm we are apt to revert to natural instincts ... run... bail... man the life boats... ignore God's word.**

Stay in the boat people... There are times—maybe you're in one right now—The storm is raging, waves are rising, confusing abounds... I'm outta here you might say, “I'm jumping ship! I cannot take this marriage one more day,” I've been hurt too many times by people in the Church... I'm not going back!. Or even loneliness has taken it's toll and your going to give into dating a person you have no business doing so.... Stay in the boat, trust God to deliver you...

PRAYER: O Lord, as we sail through life's storms, may your presence and rule in our lives preserve our trust in you. May we not allow the winds and waves to draw us aside from serving you faithfully, wholeheartedly, and courageously. When we must decide whether to believe circumstances or our Sovereign King, may we again and again chose to trust in you. And may others see you in us and come to

know you too. In Jesus' name. Amen.