

Sermon Summary

This sermon draws from Acts 27, using Paul's harrowing voyage to Rome as a powerful metaphor for faith and surrender. The central message challenges us to recognize what truly matters before crisis forces the realization upon us. Like the sailors who initially risked everything for cargo and completion of their mission, only to throw it all overboard when the storm hit, we often pursue worldly things—careers, possessions, status—that we'd abandon in an instant if our lives depended on it. The sermon emphasizes three critical decisions: first, listening to God's voice rather than the majority opinion; second, cutting away our "lifeboats"—those backup plans and false securities that represent divided trust in God; and third, staying with the ship (Jesus) rather than attempting self-salvation. Paul's prophecy that "not one of you will be lost; only the ship will be destroyed" foreshadows the gospel itself: Jesus, like the ship, was destroyed so that we might be saved. The call is to full surrender now—not incremental obedience, but decisive trust that cuts the ropes on our escape routes and clings entirely to God's promises.

Discussion Questions

1. **The Adverse Winds:** Everyone on the ship faced the same storm regardless of their status or role. What "adverse winds" are you currently facing in your life? How does knowing that trials are universal—not a sign of God's disfavor—change your perspective?
2. **Listening to the Wrong Voices:** The centurion ignored Paul's prophetic warning and listened to the majority instead. When have you followed popular opinion or "expert" advice over what you sensed God was saying? What was the result?
3. **What Are You Throwing Overboard?:** The sailors threw away cargo, tackle, and grain—things that seemed essential before the crisis. What in your life seems important now but might be revealed as insignificant when you face eternity? Are you willing to reprioritize before the storm forces you to?
4. **Your Lifeboat:** What "lifeboat" might God be calling you to cut loose? Is there a backup plan, escape route, or safety net that's preventing you from fully trusting Him? What makes it so hard to let that drift away?
5. **Incremental vs. Decisive Obedience:** The sermon states, "You either obey or you don't. You trust, or you don't." Where in your life are you trying to obey God incrementally—keeping one foot in the boat and one in the lifeboat? What would full surrender look like in that area?
6. **The Ship as Jesus:** Paul promised that everyone would be saved but the ship would be destroyed. How does this image deepen your understanding of what Jesus did for you on the cross?
7. **Your Boat Story:** The survivors never stopped telling their salvation story. How has God saved you from a storm—either literal or spiritual? Who needs to hear your "boat story" this week?

