

Steadfast Part 2

Acts 27

1 When it was decided that we would sail for Italy, Paul and some other prisoners were handed over to a centurion named Julius, who belonged to the Imperial Regiment. **2** We boarded a ship from Adramyttium about to sail for ports along the coast of the province of Asia, and we put out to sea...

3 The next day we landed at Sidon; and Julius, in kindness to Paul, allowed him to go to his friends so they might provide for his needs.

4 From there we put out to sea again and passed to the lee of Cyprus because the winds were against us. **5** When we had sailed across the open sea off the coast of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we landed at Myra in Lycia. **6** There the centurion found an Alexandrian ship sailing for Italy and put us on board. **7 We made slow headway for many days** and had difficulty arriving off Cnidus. When the wind did not allow us to hold our course, we sailed to the lee of Crete, opposite Salmone. **8 We moved along the coast with difficulty** and came to a place called Fair Havens, near the town of Lasea.

9 Much time had been lost, and sailing had already become dangerous because by now it was after the Day of Atonement. So Paul warned them, **10** “Men, I can see that our voyage is going to be disastrous and bring great loss to ship and cargo, and to our own lives also.” **11** But the centurion, instead of listening to what Paul said, followed the advice of the pilot and of the owner of the ship.

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13 When a gentle south wind began to blow, they saw their opportunity; so they weighed anchor and sailed along the shore of Crete. **14** Before very long, a wind of hurricane force, called the Northeaster, swept down from the island. **15** The ship was caught by the storm and could not head into the wind; so we gave way to it and were driven along.

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18 We took such a violent battering from the storm that the next day they began to throw the cargo overboard. **19** On the third day, they threw the ship's tackle overboard with their own hands. **20** When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days and the storm continued raging, we finally gave up all hope of being saved.

- This is a story of Paul being placed under Roman Authority and transported as a criminal, in the company of other criminals.
- He was on appointment to stand trial before Caesar in Rome...
- Here Paul is in the company of some very interesting characters I'm sure...
- I'm sure it was an uncomfortable situation for him to be in...
- One that in his own words:

Vs. 7 made slow headway for many days

Vs. 8 moved along the coast with difficulty

Vs. 9 Much time had been lost, and sailing had already become dangerous

It was a stormy situation and Paul was right there with these guys in the midst of it...

1. Paul Remain Steadfast in the Storm

God didn't call us to be like the world, he called us to be light in the world...

- Can I tell you we live in a world that faces storms...
- And there are people around us who face storms of many kinds and for many reasons...
- You don't know what someone next to you at work may be going through... Or at the gym... or a friend on facebook...
- They may be experiencing what these men experienced... frustration, fear and hopelessness...

- It reminds me of the saying - *“sin will take you further than you want to go, cost you more than you want to pay and keep you longer than you want to stay”...*
- This storm definitely took these men further than you want to go, cost them more than you want to pay and keep them longer than you want to stay...
- And God allowed the Apostle Paul to be on that ship, with these men, at that time...
- Paul remained Steadfast, in the midst of the storm...

21 After they had gone a long time without food, Paul stood up before them and said: “Men, you should have taken my advice not to sail from Crete; then you would have spared yourselves this damage and loss.

22 But now I urge you to keep up your courage, because not one of you will be lost; only the ship will be destroyed. **23** Last night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve stood beside me

24 and said, ‘Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand trial before Caesar; and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you.’ **25** So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me. **26** Nevertheless, we must run aground on some island.”

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33 Just before dawn Paul urged them all to eat. “For the last fourteen days,” he said, “you have been in constant suspense and have gone without food—you haven’t eaten anything. **34** Now I urge you to take some food. You need it to survive. Not one of you will lose a single hair from his head.”

35 After he said this, **he took some bread and gave thanks to God in front of them all.** Then he broke it and began to eat.

36 They were all encouraged and ate some food themselves.

37 Altogether there were 276 of us on board.

I don't know if the Apostle Paul expected to have an audience with such a crowd as this but God gave him that opportunity...

Paul was able to say: **“23 Last night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve stood beside me 24 and said, ‘Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand trial before Caesar; and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you.’”**

How many of you know after what they had been through that caught their attention...

- These men hadn't eaten for 14 days...
- They were probably thinking this was the end of the story for them...
- Then Paul says an Angel of the God to whom I belong stood beside me and said...
- I bet they were all ears...
- Praise God there was a man on the boat who had a Relationship with God...
- Praise God there was a man on the boat who could get a word from God...

Story: The Lord spoke to a friend, after he had run from God for a season - “First I called me with my love, then he called you with pain.”

- It reminded me of the story of Jonah...
- God will use painful, difficult circumstance, if needed, to get peoples attention to ultimately save their souls, because he loves them.

2. Paul Remain Steadfast in his Relationship with God

1 Timothy 4

16 Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.

39 When daylight came, they did not recognize the land, but they saw a bay with a sandy beach, where they decided to run the ship aground if they could.

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41 ... the ship struck a sandbar and ran aground. The bow stuck fast and would not move, and the stern was broken to pieces by the pounding of the surf.

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42 The soldiers planned to kill the prisoners to prevent any of them from swimming away and escaping. **43** But the centurion wanted to spare Paul's life and kept them from carrying out their plan. He ordered those who could swim to jump overboard first and get to land. **44** The rest were to get there on planks or on other pieces of the ship. **In this way everyone reached land safely.**

3. Paul Remained Steadfast as a Witness for Jesus

1 Peter 3:15

Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.

Proverbs 11:30

The fruit of the righteous *is* a tree of life,
And **he who wins souls *is* wise.**

2 Timothy 4:5

But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, **do the work of an evangelist...**

Closing:

The Apostle Paul knew he would stand as a witness for Christ before Caesar...

He didn't know what would happen on the boat getting there...

He didn't know he would end up ship wrecked on the isle of Malta but he did and he was used to bring the Gospel to Malta...

On June 27th Fabian Grech who is now a Missionary to Muslims will be here with us...

- 1. Remain Steadfast in the Storm**
- 2. Remain Steadfast in your Relationship with God**
- 3. Remain Steadfast as a Witness for Jesus**