

# LIBERATED

A MESSAGE OF FREEDOM

## LIBERATED, PART 3: A TIME TO HEAL

Paul was finally able to take the gospel to Rome, but not before he almost died in a shipwreck out at sea. In our lives, we too, will face seemingly insurmountable circumstances. When we do, we'll need to turn to God and trust that he is able to bring to completion that which he has called us to do.

**BIG IDEA: It takes time to heal, but you heal so you can help others.**

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever faced a shipwreck? Maybe not a literal one, but maybe your world was rocked through a terrible pain in your life. The loss of a job. Divorce. Cancer. The loss of a loved one. The betrayal of a friend. If you can, share with your group your painful experience. How did that experience change you? How long did it take you to heal from it?
2. Paul and his companions were shipwrecked because of a rash decision by the centurion. When have you made a risky decision that blew up in your face? When have you been caught in the shrapnel of someone else's poor decision?
3. Even after doing everything possible to try and survive the storm, all seemed lost. It is at this point that the sailors were ready to listen to Paul. Why do we turn to God during dire circumstances only after we've exhausted all other avenues? When have you cried out to God as a last resort?
4. It seemed as though all was lost as the ship was pushed farther and farther by the storm. And yet, just when it was darkest, God stepped in and provided hope and the promise of safety. When has God delivered you from seemingly hopeless circumstances?
5. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read Acts 28:1-10.*

*Once we were safe on shore, we learned that we were on the island of Malta. The people of the island were very kind to us. It was cold and rainy, so they built a fire on the shore to welcome us. As Paul gathered an armful of sticks and was laying them on the fire, a poisonous snake, driven out by the heat, bit him on the hand. The people of the island saw it hanging from his hand and said to each other, "A murderer, no doubt! Though he escaped the sea, justice will not permit him to live." But Paul shook off the snake into the fire and was unharmed. The people waited for him to swell up or suddenly drop dead. But when they had waited a long time and saw that he wasn't harmed, they changed their minds and decided he was a god. Near the shore where we landed was an estate belonging to Publius, the chief official of the island. He welcomed us and treated us kindly for three days. As it happened, Publius's father was ill with fever and dysentery. Paul went in and prayed for him, and laying his hands on him, he healed him. Then all the other sick people on the island came and were healed. As a result we were showered with honors, and when the time came to sail, people supplied us with everything we would need for the trip.*

*Acts 28:1-10 (NLT)*

6. Chris said, "Even though you survived the storm, you didn't survive unscathed. That's why you need time to heal." In our fast-paced, microwave culture, why don't we take the time and take a knee so we can heal?
7. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read Ecclesiastes 3:1-3.*

*For everything there is a season, a time for every activity under heaven. A time to be born and a time to die. A time to plant and a time to harvest. A time to kill and a time to heal.* Ecclesiastes 3:1-3 (NLT)

8. Chris said, "Taking time to heal isn't glamorous or fun. But it is needed so we can help others get through their shipwrecked lives. Often, there is no shortcut—it just takes time." What shortcuts have you seen people take to stop waiting and get through the healing? Do the shortcuts work?
9. Chris said, "What feels like a **setback** is a **set up** for God to **use you** in someone else's life." Think about your greatest loss and greatest pains. How can God use those to help other people who have experienced pains?

10. Even when seemingly out of danger on the island of Malta, Paul was bitten by a poisonous snake; yet he suffered no harm—once again displaying how God’s favor rested upon this man. When in your life have you felt God’s favor upon you?
11. *Oftentimes a person’s waiting season is also a person’s healing season.* What are you waiting on right now? What areas of your life does God want to work on while you wait?

## MOVING FORWARD

God never wastes afflictions. He will use any and everything that you have experienced to help and heal other people. But *it takes time*, and the *deeper the emotional hurt, the more time it takes to heal*. We don’t have any room for that in our belief system, even though it’s biblical. We want people to get with it. Don’t leave Malta too quick. We’re so Rome oriented, that we can’t even abide Malta.

## WHAT WILL YOU DO?

Chris gave 2 take aways from today’s message. The first take away was *the one who takes time to heal should be honored, not have hard feelings towards them*. As a church, we need to allow people time to heal from their messes. One of our core values at oneChurch.tv is “It’s okay to come messy, but it’s not okay to stay that way.” Everyone is accepted, but everyone is expected to change, because growing people change.

The second take away was *the one who is healed will be better equipped to help others*. We say it this way at oneChurch.tv: “Saved people serve people.” Have you thought that the reason who have experienced setbacks is God setting you up to help someone else go through what you’ve experienced? How does that change your perspective on your setback shipwrecks in your life?

## WEEKLY READING

This week, spend some time reading and reflecting on James 1:2-4, 2 Corinthians 12:5-10, 1 Peter 1:6-7, Isaiah 53:3-6, Psalm 46:1-3.