

**# 17 Barrier Breaking Faith:  
Without Hindrance  
Acts 27:1-28:31**

**Calm when Someone Else is in Charge 27:1-12**

Our attitude and anxiety about a situation are affected by whether we look at God through the circumstances or we look at the circumstances through God's eyes. Paul had been called to be an apostle to the Gentiles (9:15). The Holy Spirit gave specific direction for ministry 16:6-9, and God had previously delivered him multiple times from dangers (2 Cor. 11:24-27). He was warned by the Holy Spirit of trouble in Jerusalem (20:22-23). He was given assurance of God being with Him in Corinth (18:9). God knew Paul's desire to travel to Rome and on to Spain (Rom. 15:22-32) and gave him a second assurance in the face of possible imminent death (23:11). God was with Paul and his heart desire was granted. He was going to Rome.

Even when it appeared that others were in charge, Paul was calm because he was assured of God's sovereignty. He was not only under protective custody as a Roman citizen exercising his legal rights going through the appeal process, but as an apostle of Christ, Paul knew that God was ultimately in charge and at work, Romans 8:28.

When it seems that others are in charge and we are but a "pawn" in the midst of historical circumstances, how big is your God? Will you endure to the end?

**Calm in the Storm 27:13-44**

This could have ended up as another Jonah story, but Paul was not running from, but going to do God's will. Even though they threw everything else overboard to try and save the ship, even the lifeboat, this time it was about staying on the boat for the 276 souls on board to live. An angel gave Paul an encouraging message that he shared with the crew (:21-26). Some did not believe him, again, but his words came true. All were physically saved.

Whose advice will we follow in the middle of our storms? Will the Word of God give us assurance? Will we obey His will or in fear seek a second opinion to hear what we want to hear (2 Tim. 4:3), even though it will lead to disobedience?

**Calm when a Snake Bites 28:1-10**

What appeared at first to be the "bad luck of a cursed man", giving credit to the gods, became an opportunity for giving testimony and ministry follow up. Victory was snatched from the jaws/bite of defeat, and God was glorified. (See Gen. 3:15, Lk. 10:19). God turned what appeared to be a wrong, right.

Like Paul, this testimony humbly denies accolades and glorifies God. Sydney McLaughlin won two gold medals in the Tokyo Olympics, and set a world record in the women's 400-meter hurdles. But her comments after the race were even more impressive.

*Let me start off by saying, what an honor it is to be able to represent not only my country, but also the kingdom of God. What I have in Christ is far greater than what I have or don't have in life. I pray my journey may be a clear depiction of submission and obedience to*

*God. Even when it doesn't make sense, even when it doesn't seem possible. He will make a way out of no way. Not for my own gratification, but for His glory. I have never seen God fail in my life. In anyone's life for that matter. Just because I may not win every race, or receive every one of my heart's desires, does not mean God [has] failed. His will is PERFECT. And He has prepared me for a moment such as this. That I may use the gifts He has given me to point all the attention back to Him.*

### **Calm while in Prison 28:11-31**

Calm does not mean being complacent, nor idle. It does mean to trust the Lord and continue doing all the circumstances allow. Paul is credited with writing letters of encouragement to churches while in Rome, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians. We know he also wrote personal letters to Timothy, Philemon, and Titus.

The final sentence of Acts is a statement of victory! 28:30b-31 *And (Paul) he welcomed all who visited him, proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance. (The prayer request for boldness in Eph. 6:19-20 was answered.)*

To understand Paul's mindset here is some of what he wrote:

Philippians 4:6-9 *Don't worry about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. <sup>8</sup> Finally brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable—if there is any moral excellence and if there is anything praiseworthy—dwell on these things. <sup>9</sup> Do what you have learned and received and heard from me, and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.*

4:11-13 ... *I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I find myself. <sup>12</sup> I know how to make do with little, and I know how to make do with a lot. In any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of being content—whether well fed or hungry, whether in abundance or in need. <sup>13</sup> I am able to do all things through (Jesus) Him who strengthens me.*

1 Timothy 6:6 *Godliness with contentment is great gain.*

2 Timothy 4:7-8 *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. <sup>8</sup> There is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me, but to all those who have loved his appearing.*

How did he endure?

2 Timothy 4:17-18 *But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, so that I might fully preach the word and all Gentiles might hear it. So I was rescued from the lion's mouth. <sup>18</sup> The Lord will rescue me from every evil work and will bring me safely into his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory forever and ever! Amen.*

May you continue to be faithful in whatever circumstances you find yourself. As said previously in Philippians 4:9, and here in 2 Timothy 4:5 *But as for you, exercise self-control in everything, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.*

For, Jesus' promise of the Great Commission is still in play. Matthew 28:20b *And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.*