

ACTS 28

Confidence in the Spirit

Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. - Philippians 1:6

As we look at the overall narrative of Acts 28, we find a Paul who is unwaveringly confident that God will see the ship's crew, and himself, through this storm. It seems fitting then to ask, how do we embody this kind of confidence in our storms rather than the insecurity we sometimes feel? The answer is easier said than done. Philippians 1:6 reminds us that we can be confident that God is not only completing work in us but is also fulfilling his purpose through us. Every promise from the spirit has a purpose for our lives and the people around us. If Paul hadn't been shipwrecked Malta may not have heard the Gospel. What if Paul's attitude about the shipwreck was that of a spoiled child rather than a mature Christian? Would the people of Malta have seen a leader worth listening to? Paul's attitude of gratitude flipped a negative situation into a positive situation. Shipwreck was not the ideal situation, but through the trial, the people of Malta could hear the Gospel. Every action we take speaks volumes about the God we profess to serve, ESPECIALLY our behavior and the words we use when the pressure is on. The world is watching to see what you really believe, and when you walk through a storm unfazed, and confident of your purpose, that is when the door is open for the Gospel. However, if you find yourself frazzled and insecure in the storm how can you preach a Sovereign God?

Paul's confidence was his faith. In Acts 23 Jesus told him he must be a witness in Rome. He was sure at that point that this storm and shipwreck would not be his demise. He was confident that the God that set him on this mission would provide a way for him to complete it. Even if he didn't know what the next step would be, or all the details, he trusted that God had a plan. And that plan would be ministering to the people of Malta in the midst of his own crisis.

Read Acts 28 together. The story of Acts does not end here. The spirit still lives on and works through God's people. Where do you see the spirit working in your life?

Discussion Questions

1. Although God did not take this trial away from Paul, He provided them a way to find shelter and kindness from the people of Malta. How have you seen God provide you kindness during your trials?
2. Amid the chaos, Paul serves others to help build the fire. How is this a mark of a true leader? How does this kind of behavior distinguish a Christian apart from the world?
3. It could be said that Paul's fortitude, endurance, or confidence was routed in the promise that God told him he would be a witness in Rome. There is always purpose in the promises of God. How do you anchor yourself in God's purpose for you through the pain of trial?
4. Our behavior, and attitude, during a storm can say a lot about the God we believe in. Do you believe every trial comes with a Gospel opportunity? Why or why not?
5. When Paul got to Rome, he preached to the Jewish leaders from the Old Testament. Which Old Testament scripture has had the biggest impact on your faith in Christ?