



Sermon Text: Acts 27:1-28:16

Sermon Date: January 13, 2019

In Acts 27:1-28:16, we witness Paul's tumultuous journey to Rome. In this text, we learn an important truth: **God always keeps His promises, so we can trust Him even when we've got nothing left.**

A DIFFICULT, YET DUMB DECISION (1-12)

After being handed over to a centurion named Julius for transport, Paul begins his voyage to Rome. Since they are making the trip in late Autumn, the winds are against them throughout the journey. After reaching a port called Fair Havens after great difficulty, Paul warns the crew from continuing the journey. Even though Paul had 30 years of experience traveling on the sea, the centurion disregards his counsel and decides to winter in the port of Phoenix (roughly a day's journey away). After setting off, the ship is soon overwhelmed by a storm and driven out to sea.

DARK SKIES, DANGEROUS SEAS, AND DEATH'S DESPAIR (13-20)

In breathless succession, Luke recounts the frantic activity of the crew as they sought to survive the storm. In verse 20, we catch a glimpse of the hopelessness of their situation. They are lost at sea, without direction. We can't help but read this account and wonder why a sovereign God (who rules the sea) would cause His servant to endure this hardship. We can understand why God used a storm to discipline a fleeing Jonah, but Paul wants to go to Rome and preach the gospel! The very fact that this storm was never stilled must cause us to re-evaluate the assumption that God's will for our lives will result in "smooth sailing."

FIRM FAITH IN THE GOD PROMISE

After all hope of salvation is lost, an angel appears to Paul to re-affirm God's promise and to declare that none of the crew will die, but that the ship must wreck on some island. In light of God's promise, Paul encourages the crew to "take heart, brothers, for I have faith in God that it will be exactly as I have been told." As Christians we must grasp that God's sovereignty doesn't mean He will always still the storm. Sometimes He won't. He is always in control, and He will always accomplish His purposes, so we can always trust Him, but sometimes He ordains that we run aground.

DIVINE PROMISES AND HUMAN DECISIONS

As we watch God's promise come true, we also see Paul and the crew making critical decisions to bring the promise to fruition. The centurion keeps the sailors from leaving. Paul encourages everyone to eat. The centurion spares the prisoners from execution. Paul didn't sit back and "let go, and let God." Trusting in God's promise, he acted in obedience and with common sense.

MYSTERIOUS, YET FAITHFUL: OUR PROMISE-KEEPING GOD

By Acts 28:16, Paul reaches Rome. God kept his promise; He always does. Yet, even though He is faithful, His ways are mysterious. They don't make sense from our vantage point, and that is why we must follow Paul's example and have faith in God in all circumstances.

As a take-away, Pastor Justin highlighted three things Paul did. He knew God and His Promises, he trusted God and His promises, and he obeyed God and His promises.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What stood out to you from the sermon and the biblical text from this Sunday?
2. Why is it important for Christians to know that sometimes God ordains the storm & refuses to still it?
3. What truths about God must you know and trust when you find yourself in one of life's storms?