

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you talk about God's word and Pastor Brian's message with friends and family. You of course can use your own questions, but we'd like to give you this tool to encourage Biblical fellowship and discipleship in your circle of relationships. We hope you are well and discovering new ways to relate to God and His Word.

"CONFIDENT IN CRISIS" | ACTS 27 | PASTOR BRIAN

WARM-UP QUESTION:

What's your favorite movie or story involving the sea?

"Bon Voyage and the God of the Sea" - (Acts 27: 1-12)

The centurion chose to listen to the pilot and ship owner instead of Paul because of their expertise and investment. What are common advisors or sources people listen to? How is it difficult to choose advisors today?

"Storm at Sea " - (Acts 27: 13-20)

While all hope was abandoned, Paul continued to show confidence in this crisis. What advantages does having character bring in times of crisis? What are ways character is developed?

"Keep Courage, Stay Together, Take Food " - (Acts 27: 21-38)

Paul reminds his fellow travelers in different ways to keep courage, stay together and take food because they have given into fear, wanted to go their own way, and forgot their physical needs. What's your struggle in times of crisis?

REFLECTION QUESTION:

Pastor Brian creates the word picture of 4 anchors in times of crisis that Paul experienced on the boat: God's Presence, God's Peace, God's Plan, and God's Protection. Have you experienced this in in the past? Have you asked God for more of His Presence, Peace, Plan and Protection?

Confident in Crisis

I. Slide1 **Announce:**

A. Slide2-7 AL: GS. **Blood**. 2 Min Opp's. C@R. Pantry.

II. Slide8 **Intro:** *Confident in Crisis*

A. This is the most valuable document we have today concerning *ancient seamanship*.

1. This is also a striking illustration of the blend of **natural & supernatural**; **Divine Providence & human struggle**; that is so characteristic of life.
2. Here was a **great crisis**, & there was a **great man** to take full advantage of it, **to the glory of God & to the furtherance of the gospel**.

B. Come on *Land-Lubbers*, Let's *weigh anchor & jump on board* with Paul.

The last 2 chapters are an extensive travel narrative, which include: **the route** followed, **landmarks** passed, heavy use of **technical seafaring terminology**, & **ancient sailing techniques**; **but most importantly** some great **practical wisdom** during **life's crisis**. [like a storm, a shipwreck, almost starve, a near mutiny, & later getting bitten by a venomous snake on Gilligan's Island]

C. Slide9a/b Show Map: walk through trip.

III. Slide10 **BON VOYAGE (1-8)**

A. (2) **Julius** (unbeliever, but very kind man). His aim was to sail on this **smaller coastal vessel** until he could arrange booking on a **trans-Mediterranean grain ship (the Alexandrian)**, which regularly carried **wheat** to Rome from Egypt, *the so called breadbasket of the Roman Empire*.

IV. Slide11a **GOD OF THE SEAS (9-12)**

A. (9) Due to **dangerous weather conditions**, no sailing occurred in the Mediterranean Sea from **November to early March**.

1. **The fast** = The Day of Atonement (late Sept or early Oct).

2. Paul's voyage was near this dangerous period. He had years of experience as a seasoned seafarer, *most stamps on Passport*.

a) Before this trip, the apostle had **11 voyages** on the Mediterranean.

He's already traveled at least **3,500 miles** by sea. Yet it is more than *mature experience at sea* which made Paul stand out as a **leader** on board ship; it was his *steadfast Christian faith and character*.

B. Also, the bible is always showing God as the *1 true living God* & leveling to the ground all other local mini-deities. **Slide11b In this case Poseidon** (Gk, Olympian god) & the Roman Equivalent **Neptune**. And of course *Arthur Curry* as **Aquaman**.

V. Slide12a **STORM AT SEA (13-20) All Hope Abandoned**

A. Slide12b The God of Hope, in Hopeless Situations.

B. (14) **The northeaster**/euroclydon - (combines: east wind + northward)

europaquilo: euros = east wind, aquilo = northward.

C. (17) **Undergird** - Ancient ships has as part of their ordinary gear, *undergirders* which were simply **ropes** for passing **round the hull**. **This practice helped prevent leaking** from boards bursting apart.

D. **Syrtis** Sands - dangerous **quicksand** off the north shore of Africa.

1. Sailors were afraid wind would drive them onto it. They lowered all sails except what was needed to keep ships head into wind.

E. (20) **All hope that we would be saved was finally given up** -

1. No **GPS**, no **sexton**, the **Compass** not even invented yet (Chinese in 11th cent) All they had to depend entirely on were the *observations of the heavens*.

a) **But**, sun & stars had been hidden for days.

2. The last & most precious cargo heave overboard is the passenger & crew's **Hope!** And they drift in *despair*.

a) **Slide12c** With all hope gone, how do you remain **Confident in Crisis?**

F. **Crisis** (def: *decision, decisive moment, a turning point*)

1. **Crisis** is a good thing...it helps people **change**.

2. God knows that & *lovingly provides* those times of crisis for us.
3. They can come in countless of forms: *disaster, disease, catastrophe, emergency, calamity, predicament, job loss, spouse loss, child loss, economic crisis, Covid, etc.*
4. Issac Newton said in his 1st Law of Motion *Everything continues in a state of rest unless it is compelled to change by forces impressed upon it*
 - a) Slide12d No one is willing to do **real Change** until **real Crisis** comes.
 - (1) Some people will change when they **see the light**; Others change only when they **feel the heat**.
5. Slide13a Ok so **how do we remain confident in crisis?** Know that God is *the God of Hope in hopeless situations*. Know *your character counts* during the crisis. Know *God keeps His word*. And know *God Saves* (phys/ Sp)

G. **Character Counts** - Paul's Christlike character on the ship & **even** in his chains.

1. If a possible **employer** were standing behind you in a slow grocery line, would you be an attractive hire? If your **friends** could hear everything you said about them, would they still be your friends?
 - a) The one who is faithful in small things *will also be* faithful in big things.
 - b) Slide13b *Never underestimate the **protection** that a life of character provides.*
2. How does our **character in everyday life** open doors for bigger things?
3. How can a **lack of character** interfere with the opportunities God might give us?

VI. Slide14a **KEEP COURAGE (21-26)**

- A. Slide14b Paul Intervenes 3 times: *Keep Courage. Stay Together. Take Food.*
- B. (21) He did say, *I told you so*, **but** followed it by a word of encouragement & a promise.
 1. Slide14c At a time like this people need **promises, not preaching!**¹

¹ Warren Wiersbe; With the Word; Acts 27

C. (23) **The God to whom I belong & whom I worship** [focus on these 2].

D. (24) **His prayer was heard.**

1. As the **needle** of a compass is constantly feeling the pull North, so should our **hearts & eyes** be constantly feeling the pull Heavenward.

E. **Slide15** (25) Up near Cambria I took pictures of a large rock formation, that just gets pummeled by wave after wave, & yet stands so sturdy over time, never crushed by all the force the waves can muster. Wind, waves, mist, salt, storms, tides all **try** to destroy it ... all in vain.

1. **Slide16** Such an immovable rock was St. Paul. *He was a lighthouse, a means of stability, safety, & blessing to all the despairing souls.*
2. **Take heart, don't be discouraged, Why?** Because God is with them (us). Nothing is more terrifying than facing danger alone.
 - a) So, the storm will **end** right? **No**, but He'll see you to the end!

F. **I have faith in God** - Paul's *mini Apostles Creed*.

1. I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth (& Sea).
2. I have faith in God ... that it will be exactly as I have been told.

VII. **Slide17a STAY TOGETHER (27-32)** [the orig. "we're in this together"]

A. (27-32) The sailors sensed they were nearing land (prob heard waves). Soundings proved them right.

1. They were drifting towards some unknown island. To slow down the drift they put out anchors from the stern, used as *brakes*.

B. (29) **Praying/wishing for day to come** - we've all had some of those nights.

C. **Slide17b** (29) **4 ANCHORS TO DROP IN ANY STORM:**

1. **The Anchor of GOD'S PRESENCE.** 23a *For this very night there stood before me an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I worship.*
2. **The Anchor of GOD'S PEACE.** 24a *Do not be afraid, Paul.*
3. **The Anchor of GOD'S PLAN.** 24b *you must stand before Caesar.*

4. The Anchor of GOD'S PROTECTION. 24c *God has granted you all those who sail with you.*

- D. (30) *Do you want to jump ship?* (in your life? in your Christianity? in commitments you've made? in your promises?). *Like when Jesus asked his disciples, Do you also want to go away?* (jump ship)
- E. (31) *Shipwrecked people* have all they need in order to be *saved*, *if* they but **believe & obey**. This is a tangible way to show God Saves (those who believe & obey).
1. They were *foundering* (taking on water) **but not floundering** (stagger helplessly).
- F. (32) At the same time some went to the **bow** *pretending* to lay anchor, but were trying to *escape on the dinghy*. They tried to get into the *lifeboat* (actually death-boats), **but** they eventually *cut the rope* to the small dinghy. They were now literally "*all in the same boat!*" [maybe too far, *I would have kept the stringy on the dinghy*]

VIII. Slide 18a TAKE FOOD (33-38)

- A. (33-36) *Take nourishment* - Paul was **practical** as well as **perceptive**. *I think it's appropriate, as the island they are near is Malta so of course he encourages them to have a ... Slide 18b Malta Meal :*)
1. Paul started this voyage as a **prisoner & passenger**, **now** the **captain** of the ship.
 2. *They were all encouraged* - *Why?* Circumstance change? **NO!** But their **attitudes** did.
- B. *Slide 18c Paul's Integrated Life:* [God's Sov & Human Responsibility, seamlessly integrated]
1. *He shows how to live in a secular culture as a believer.* He's on a boat with 276 unbelievers (except Luke & Aristarchus). *He combines Spirituality with Sanity. Faith with words. And Faith with Action.*
 2. *He was a man of spiritual depth and common sense.* (not a wild mystic)
 3. *He gives an appropriate and faithful witness on this boat.*

a) **We see:** Confidence. A word from God. The promise of God. Courage to say grace in front of pagans. (you don't see aggressive evangelism). **You see Paul here, in a public setting, giving a clear & appropriate testimony.**

C. **Prayer:** Ask God for the **strength of character** to be *faithful in the little things*, to be **prepared for the great things.**

D. Keywords: Paul, storm, ship, Crisis, Confidence, sea, character, courage, anchors.