

Conquering the Storms

In Acts 27, there is an account of Paul's journey as a prisoner on a Roman ship. He's on this ship to go stand before Caesar and defend the gospel.

As you read Acts 27, you see that Paul is a prisoner on this ship heading for Rome and they've been sailing for a while now, but it's not been easy. They are sailing in late fall and heading into winter which weather wise is not the best time to sail.

But where I want to pick up reading is in verse 9 where Paul admonishes the centurion and the owners of the ship not to sail because it's going to cause damage to the ship, its cargo, and the lives of all those on board.

I want to start off looking at this account from two different perspectives: the sailor's perspective and then Paul's.

First from the sailor's perspective:

- Acts 27:9-10
 - o So Paul, I believe, perceives by the Holy Ghost that if they sail, there is going to be damage to the ship, the cargo, and their lives.
- Acts 27:11
 - o The centurion seems to be the deciding factor here and he decides to side with the sailors who disagreed with Paul and thought it would be alright to sail.
- Acts 27:12-13
 - o So basically, they decided that where they were harbored was not a good place to spend the winter, so they wanted to set sail and make it to Phenice to spend winter there.
 - o Then it says in verse 13 that when the wind blew softly, they thought they were going to be alright and make it.
 - o So, they've rebelled against the man of God, didn't take his advice, and now it looks like everything is going to work out.
 - Whenever you initially rebel against God, it will always look like everything is going to be ok and as if you've got it without Him.
 - You don't have anything without Him. Without Him you are standing on a thin piece of ice or hanging on to a limb that's about to break.
- Acts 27:14
 - o So, about the time they think they have it figured out they hit a tempestuous wind or in other words a hurricane.
 - o They called this hurricane Euroclydon which means violent agitation.
 - o When you are in rebellion against the word of God, the Holy Ghost, or the anointed man of God like here with Paul, you better be ready because about the

time you think you have everything figured out, you are about to get violently agitated.

- Pro 16:25 There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.
- Just because it seems right to you doesn't mean it is right.
- Right is God's way and you better be sure what you are doing is God's way because the end of that is life.

Now let's think of things from Paul's perspective.

- Here is Paul and He is exactly where God wants him to be which is on this ship headed for Rome to stand before Caesar. He is submitted to God and following the Holy Spirit. But, at no fault of his own, here he is being violently agitated.
 - So, there is violent agitation that comes from disobedience that can be avoided. But what about the violent agitation that comes even when you are doing the will of God and submitted to the Holy Ghost?
 - This is something Paul experienced all of his ministry.
- But that violent agitation is there to agitate your faith.
 - The things you encounter as you go after God can only stop you if it can affect your faith and confidence in God and His word.

But no matter how they got to the storm, they are now in the storm. So how do you conquer the violent agitations of life?

Acts 27:15

- The storm was stopping them from going the way that they wanted to go so they had to just give in to the wind.
 - Sometimes the violent agitations of life or the storms of life become so bad that it feels like there's nothing you can do, and you just are sitting there taking it and letting it do whatever it's going to do.

Acts 27:16-18

- They lightened the ship.
 - You always get lighter in the storm because all the things that you thought were important to you when there was no storm become less important in the storm and easy to let go of.
 - Sometimes there's some cargo you let go of in the storm because your survival in this season is more important than holding on to it.

Acts 27:19-20

- But the problem is that the storm didn't just take some cargo, it took their hope.

Acts 27:21-25

- When the storm brought them to a place of hopelessness, God showed up and said I'm going to bring you through because there is purpose on this ship.
 - o God wasn't going to let this storm destroy anyone on the ship because it was Paul's purpose to stand before Caesar.
 - o In the midst of your violent agitation, however you got there, you need to know that God is not going to let you be taken out because there is purpose in you.

Acts 27:26

- Certain island.
 - o On this island they had revival and a new ship going to the same place.
- The language of this verse, "must be cast on a certain (specific) island." Leads me to believe that God had to take over the storm and begin to use the storm for his glory.
 - o The reason I say this is because "must be cast" means that there is a purpose for the ship to be cast on this island.
 - o But it's not like the storm has a mind of its own. We know here in Florida that storms are unpredictable. Nobody knows where they are going or what they are going to do.
 - o So, this tells me that God is going to take over this storm and use it.
- God said, "Ok I tried to get you to miss the storm but since that didn't happen, I'm going to take control of the storm and use it to bring you to a certain place."
 - o Sometimes God will stop the storm. But sometimes that's not the best thing. Sometimes the best thing is for God not to stop the storm but use the storm.
 - o Think about it if He would've stopped the storm, they would've one, sailed right on by this island and missed revival. Two, they may not have made it to Rome with the damaged ship they had.
 - o So, the best thing was for God to use the storm to bring them into revival and get them a better ship.
 - o Could it be that God is using the violent agitations in your life to move you into revival and give you something better than you have ever had?