

Lessons from a Storm

Acts 27:1-44

5/ 08/ 05

Intro

At this point in the book of Acts, Paul has gone through several trials and rather than face yet another trial in Jerusalem he appeals to Caesar, so he is now headed for Rome.

Acts 27 is a famous chapter because of the adventure Paul has on the high seas on the way to Rome. But this is no adventure; it is a life and death storm.

There are basically three kinds of people; those who have just been through a storm, those who are in a storm now, and those who will be in a storm.

There are many lessons for us to learn from this storm that we can apply to our lives now.

These are lessons we can learn from a storm.

I. Storms Come Even in God's Will

A. God gives great purpose and calling

- The Lord had told Paul that he would be going to Rome to appear before the Emperor.
- Paul was now on his way to Rome; therefore, Paul was perfectly in the center of God's will.
- It is very tempting to think that if you're fulfilling God's purpose and calling in your life that God is going to make the way smooth before you... Isaiah 40:4 could become your life verse.

Isaiah 40:4, "Let every valley be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; and let the rough ground become a plain, and the rugged terrain a broad valley;"

Illus – When I felt called of God to become a pastor, I was certain that my pastor would jump for joy and want to pay for everything! I was in for a surprise.

- Even if you're in the center of God's will, there may be more storms that you can imagine.

B. Yet contrary winds will come

- This is a truth that we see illustrated over and over in scripture.
- So much so that it should encourage us.

Illus – 1) Joseph when he was used of God to save his family, 2) Moses leading Israel through the desert, 3) David when he was told that he would be king of Israel, 4) Jeremiah when he was told he would be God's prophet to Israel, 5) the disciples when they were told to cross over to the other side of the Sea of Galilee...

Matthew 14:24-25, "But the boat was already a long distance from the land, battered by the waves; for the wind was contrary. And in the fourth watch of the night He came to them, walking on the sea."

C. God has not withdrawn His hand

- When you are convinced in your heart that you are doing what God wants you to do and yet the storm rages on, it would be tempting to think that God has withheld His hand from.

- Nothing could be further from the truth. He has indeed withheld His hand from the storm, but he will not withdraw His hand from you.

Psalm 139:9-10, “If I take the wings of the dawn, if I dwell in the remotest part of the sea, even there Your hand will lead me, and Your right hand will lay hold of me.”

Isaiah 43:1-2, “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze.”

II. How to Face to a Storm

A. Deal with it

- Many people have a hard time taking on a storm.
- It’s very common for people to ignore it, procrastinate,
- The best thing we can do is to face it head on.

Esther 4:14, “For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?”

B. Change your perspective

- It’s always amazing how our perspective changes when we’re in the midst of a storm.

- What we think is important begins to change...

Vs 18-19 – First they threw the ships cargo overboard and then even the ship’s tackle.

Illus – As the Titanic was listing and passengers were being loaded into the lifeboats, one of the wealthy passengers went back to her room. Leaving behind all her valuables, she took two oranges...

- What happens is that when you’ve been through enough storms, your perspective starts to become permanent. You begin to see that the most important part of life is your relationship with the Lord, your family, and your friends. Stuff begins to matter less and less.

Luke 9:59, 61, And He said to another, “Follow Me.” But he said, “Lord, permit me first to go and bury my father.” Another also said, “I will follow You, Lord; but first permit me to say good-bye to those at home.”

C. Don’t shipwreck your faith

- Luke wrote, “and all hope was gradually lost...”
- Yet Paul was the one standing in faith and encouraging them to do the same.
- We can become so discouraged when we’re in a storm – it’s understandable...

Illus – In the news there was a story of a parakeet who went through his own storms... and then he stopped singing; all he could do was sit and stare.

1 Timothy 1:18-19, “that by them you fight the good fight, keeping faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith.”

Hebrews 4:14-16, “Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

III. Grace Will Lead Us Home

From the hymn, **Amazing Grace**; “Through many danger, toils and snares, we have already come, ‘twas grace hath brought us safe thus far, and grace will lead us home.”

A. Set your anchors

- The men on the ship heeded Paul’s advice this time and decided to prepare for a shore landing.
- But they had to wait till daybreak and were afraid they might be dashed on the rocks, so they set four anchors and waited.
- The purpose of an anchor to set upon something solid, to take hold of a rock.

Hebrews 6:18-19, “so that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge would have strong encouragement to

take hold of the hope set before us. This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast...”

B. Keep praying

- In verse 29 it says that they wished for daybreak. The word literally means prayer.
- Prayer is itself an anchor that takes hold of the Rock eternal.
- Prayer keeps the soul encouraged when we pray in faith believing that God is faithful and will by “grace lead us home.”

Luke 18:1, 7, Now He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart... “now, will not God bring about justice for His elect who cry to Him day and night, and will He delay long over them?”

- James tells us that there is significant power in prayer...

James 5:16, “The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.”

Conclusion

Life is filled with dangers, perils, and even shipwrecks; it is through these we make our way. Through these, God will increase our faith and teach us the life lessons we need to accomplish every purpose God has for us.