

Anchor Down

- Acts 27:9-25

- **It seems as though we are constantly preaching to you about getting serious, getting grounded & getting committed in your Christian walk.**
 - There is a reason for that ... the storms are coming.
 - And I am going to tell you something. We have a lot of people hurting today, we have people sinking in their storm, we have folks floating around from church b/c they are running from storms.
 - But the truth is, you can't run from a storm, you can only weather it, right?
- **Storms come in each of our lives & it seems that they always come at the most inopportune times & rarely end in a timely fashion.**
 - Storm on Friday afternoon
 - When the storms of your life come, they may come quickly & suddenly, but rarely do they leave in the same manner, right? Unfortunately it seems as though they hang around way too long.
- **Yet, when the storms come our way, isn't it good to know that we can find comfort while we are waiting to be delivered.**
 - My son does not like severe weather.
- **Paul found himself in a significant storm here in Acts 27.**
 - Paul had been taken captive with several other prisoners by Julius and his men, and these prisoners were being taken to Rome, not to stand trial, but to die for their crimes.
 - The centurion found a coastal ship leaving Caesarea, so they embarked and covered the eighty miles from Caesarea to Sidon in one day.
 - Here, Paul was permitted to visit his friends and put together the things needed for the long trip.
 - As they journeyed from Sidon to Myra, the voyage became difficult because of the westerly winds, so they found another ship heading to Italy where they abandoned the slower coastal ship and put Paul and the others on board this large grain ship from Egypt that carried 276 passengers.
 - The strong winds again hindered their progress so that "many days" were required to cover the 130 miles from Myra to Cnidus. The pilot then steered towards Crete and finally struggling into Fair Havens. It had been a most difficult voyage.
 - The centurion now had to decide whether to "hang out" at Fair Havens or set sail and try to reach the port of Phoenix about forty miles away.
 - Paul admonished them to stay in Fair Havens. They had already encountered very rough winds, and it was now the start of the stormy season.
 - Paul had already experienced three shipwrecks to date, so he was certainly speaking from experience as he warned of the dangers of pressing on. However, the men in charge gave little value to Paul's warning, an attitude they lived to regret.
 - The soft winds quickly turned violent and as the storm grew worse, the crew did all it could to keep the ship afloat.
 - They wrapped ropes (or chains) around the hull so the boat would not come apart, and they took down some of the sails.

- The second day, they started throwing some of the wheat overboard,
 - And the third day they began tossing furnishings.
 - Because of the storm, they could not see the sun or the stars, so it was impossible to determine their position. The situation seemed hopeless, and it all happened because one man would not listen to God's messenger.
- **But then the man of God comes forward & says, “It’s going to be OK.”**
- “Paul, are you kidding me! Look at what we are facing! There is no way out of this! We are going to die!”
- **In the midst of this storm, Paul took comfort & was able to comfort the others because of some very important “anchors” in his life that had already been proven to him time & again & these same anchors prove to hold us stable as well as we face the storms of life.**
- 1. Anchor Of Ownership (v.23a)**
- **It’s important in our lives that we understand exactly “Whose” we are. We need to remember Who it is that we belong to.**
 - **Throughout the scriptures, God’s people are referred to in several different forms, but God’s protection is always near.**
 - a. **As a Father Protects His Children (I John 3:1-2)**
 - b. **As a Shepherd Owns His Sheep (John 10:1-9)**
 - c. **As a Slave To His Master (I Corinthians 4:1-2)**
 - **Paul doubtless was tossed like everybody else, Paul was hungry like everybody else, Paul was wet and damp like everybody else, but God kept His man and God said to Paul, "Paul, fear not."**
- 2. Anchor Of Service (v.23a)**
- a. **Paul Was Doing The Work Of God**
 - i. Paul was obeying God in his life, He was following the Lord’s will, and he knew as long as He was obeying the Lord, He was safe.
 - ii. Service & commitment to God may not bring your storm to a quick resolve; but what it does is give you assurance that He is in complete control.
 - 1. I can’t promise you that you will be free from trouble if you will submit your life to God; but what I can promise you, according to the Word of God, is that God will have His hand on you & He will meet your needs & protect you.
 - b. **Others Had Abandoned The Work Of God**
 - i. Now Jonah is a different story. Jonah knew the will of God, yet He was running from God’s will.
 - ii. And b/c He was disobeying God, there was consequences to his disobedience & Jonah put his life as well as the other sailors life in jeopardy.
- 3. Anchor Of Belief (v.25)**
- **At the end of the day, when your storm comes, you have to choose what, or more importantly Who, you are going to believe in.**
 - a. **Paul Received Assurance (vv.23-24)**
 - i. Paul had something solid on which to base his word of encouragement and cheer. He had received a visit, that very night, from the angel of God.
 - 1. Paul didn’t have some “foolish” hope.

2. He was not trusting in something or someone that was unable to deliver.
3. Paul anchored his belief in the One who controlled the storms.
- ii. Nobody on board that boat, in that wide and angry sea, had any idea at all as to where the ship really was. But God knew.
- iii. And you may be facing some dark waters this very day or maybe your storm is still ahead of you in the future ... when the storm comes, remember, God knows exactly where you are.

b. Paul Believed In God's Promises (vv.25-26)

- i. What do you find yourself clinging to in the storms of your life?
- ii. We are living in a time where religious people only want to claim the promises of God when things are going good. But there are just as many promises when we are facing dark days.
 1. Psalm 34:4 – “I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.”
- iii. God had promised Paul that no lives would be lost & he would go before Caesar so he found comfort in this promise of God.
 1. Now it seemed as though Paul was mistaken b/c of the havoc that surrounded them and to be sure, this storm would cost them a lot.
 2. But b/c of his testimony, the men listened to Paul & believed what he said.
- iv. This was not the first storm where God had delivered His people & it certainly would not be the last.
 1. Remember the disciples as they crossed Galilee? A storm arose & tossed that ship all over the sea, but Jesus had already told them “we are going to the other side”.
 2. In other words, we will make it. It might be rough, it might be uncomfortable, it might take longer than expected, but we will get to the other side.