

Acts 27

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Date: 03 January 2016

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[0 : 0 0] let's unite the hearts and care our heavenly father we thank you that at the beginning the first Lord's day of this new year we can come into your presence and we can acknowledge you as the Lord our shepherd we thank you that you are God and that you are our God and we praise you Lord afresh this morning that we can find rest and refreshment in your presence those who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength and we thank you that as we take this time to be in your house to be in this place where we have that assurance that you are we thank you that there is restoration for our souls that there is refreshment for our inner being thank you that when we can say that the Lord is my shepherd we have the assurance of that contentment that you give us in life the satisfaction that our souls desire the satisfaction that we may look many places for and find that our hearts are empty we thank you that we find that satisfaction we find that contentment we find that peace when we are able to say within our hearts the Lord is my shepherd we thank you that when the Lord is our shepherd we have nothing to fear and even at the threshold of this new year we look ahead and we don't know what is in your providence for us but we thank you that when the Lord is our shepherd we have nothing to fear we thank you that you are the God who guides us and who leads us who protects us and who is with us through every path of life even when we face these perplexing paths in life we thank you that we have that assurance that you are with us and we praise you that as we look back over years gone by we have had so many experiences of your presence with us we thank you that when the Lord is our shepherd we can know forgiveness our souls can be restored the reconciliation with God that we long for we thank you that

Jesus the good shepherd has bought for us with his blood and we pray that every one of us here this morning may know the reality of sins forgiven peace with God and the assurance of the Lord as our shepherd so thank you Lord for who you are who you reveal yourself to be to us through your word and we pray that as you reveal yourself in the word by the spirit that we would not flee from you that we would not resist you but that by faith each one of us would come come unto me said Jesus all who are weary who are burdened who are under that weight of sin and I will give you rest we pray that we may know that deep rest of soul on this Lord's day for everyone who is here today thank you for those who are visiting with us and we ask that you would bless them refresh them in their time in this place bless the congregations that they are part of if they are part of congregations and we ask

Lord that you would be with those that they love the fellowships they are part of thank you that the church of Jesus Christ meets in every place in every continent every country almost across this world and Lord we pray that whatever Christ crucified is preached wherever your people gather we pray that you would add your blessing and that you would build your church the kingdom of the evil one would be destroyed we pray for those today whose desire would be with us but who are unable to we think of some who are in hospital we think of some who are in their homes not well enough to come out this Lord's day we think of those who are in respite care and we pray that whatever your people are that you would bless them we thank you that you are not bound by these walls and so as we think of those that we love in different places who are not here with us today we pray that you would minister to them in the power of the

Holy Spirit we thank you Lord for this new year for all the prospects of it we thank you that we can have confidence and courage when we know that you are with us we pray that as we acknowledge you in prayer today and each day that you would direct our paths as individuals and as a congregation Lord that you would lead us in the ways that you have determined ways that will bring glory to your name and blessing to your people and Lord we pray for those who struggle with a new year we think of some who at this point in time remember those whom they have loved and who have gone from the scene of time we continue to remember them Lord and ask that you would comfort those who grieve and we continue to remember those who struggle with addictions and temptations at this time of year some who may be laid low some who may be close to despair even at this time and we ask that you would reach out to them thank you that in

Christ there is always hope no one is beyond your grace and so for those who are struggling for those who are battling with addictions and who do not seem to be able to get through them we ask that you would give them strength and that they would come to Christ we pray now that you would continue with us bless each one we thank you for the young ones here this morning we thank you for young lives born into this world even in the course of this last week and we pray that you would bless these young ones and that they would grow up to know that you are God and that you love them that you are with them we pray that they would grow up to glorify your name and be a blessing to those who are around them so hear our prayers Lord spoken and the unspoken prayers of our own hearts receive us in Christ cleanse us from sin empty us of all that would seek to exalt ourselves and fill us with the Holy

[7 : 58] Spirit so that our worship here this morning and each day would be sincere and would be pleasing to you and glorifying to you and we pray all these things in Jesus name Amen Boys and girls would you like to come forward please how's everyone today you're getting closer every week you know that how's everyone today fine you had a good holiday so far tired right

I want you to teach me how to work this thing the girls are all awake just now over in the US they're not able to come back home yet and so there's lots of toys in the house I don't know how to work after toys I've got one this morning somebody want to tell me how this thing works well you were first Alistair so come take the mic place yourself coming how does this work you tell us all you draw on it you draw on it you want to do some drawing on it are you an artist is that your dad no too much hair there that's beautiful what do you think of that boys and girls big of boys yeah there's half a flap there what is that

Alistair a man's face okay so that's what you do you just draw on it is that how it works yeah what happens if I want to draw on this night am I stuck with this man's face with the short hair and the big ears is this wee am I stuck with this face forever how does it work then somebody come and tell me how it works okay how does it work you do wow so you do that and it cleans it off that's how it works is it you all seen these before so you know what we're talking about you draw a picture you might do a beautiful picture like

Alistair did or make a mess like I did and you just go and you've got a clean slate clean slate make a mess wipe it clean week a new year they make what not just pancakes and scorns but you hear about new year right help him out you hear about new year's resolutions don't you alistair was telling me on friday that his new year resolution was he was going to keep his coats tidy how's that going alistair good how's that going cammy oh we've got quite an agreement there and your room was going to be immaculate how's that one going good yes okay that's good so we're three days into the new year and you're doing okay there'll be some people you know and they love the beginning of a new year because they think well all the things i wish i hadn't done uh last year but i did see when we go into a new year people think in their minds well it's a new year everything that was done before is finished and i've got a clean slate and so they might say this year i am going to be very kind so they make a resolution i will be kind and on day one maybe they're kind all day and day two might be kind day three somebody does something that annoys them and they have an unkind thought and maybe they get a bit wild maybe by day six a punch has been thrown in the house with the young ones maybe somebody would have a scratch underneath their eye and you think oh i was going to be so kind this year and it's only day five and already i've not been kind it's like a mark you've got a cross there you got a mark i was going to be kind but i made a mess of it and then by day 10 maybe there's been another couple of uh ruckuses in the house a wee bit more mess then you go back to school and there's that boy that always annoys you at school and he just gets right under your skin and one day you just explode at him and there's a bit more of a mess by the end of january you think oh resolutions throw it away by the end of the year we can think about lots and lots and lots of mess and you know people who don't know jesus often that's what they feel like as the year goes through i'm going to be better this year they say and then they get so far into the year and think oh i've made a mess again and in their heads they're thinking i have to wait all the way until january the 1st 2017 until i get a clean slate it's not true is it do any of us live perfectly put up your hand if you're perfect nobody's perfect and we might try and do things and try and be better

but nobody's perfect because even if we decide we're going to be kind every day and we manage to not fight and not shout and not do anything in our heads in our hearts sometimes that's how we feel isn't it nobody else sees it but god sees it and so every day i sin every day i sin but thankfully i don't have to wait until january the 1st 2017 i have my heart washed clean and to be given a clean slate how do we have our hearts washed clean remember the candy cane white it's for a clean heart but to get a clean heart there needed to be the red wasn't there what does the red tell us about what does the red tell us about the tell me yes how do we have to the blood of jesus and the bible tells us that every time we confess our sin we say sorry to god for the sins that we do against he will wash our hearts clean with the blood of jesus he gives us a clean slate so let's ask god to forgive us and to give us that clean heart that jesus makes it possible for us to have let's pray heavenly father we thank you that you love us even though we so often make a mess of things lord you see our hearts and you see all that we say and we do and we think and we admit lord before you that we're far from perfect we so often get it wrong so often we sin we wish we didn't but even when we're christians we still sin so often we thank you though that jesus shed his blood so that our hearts could be washed clean we thank you that that doesn't happen once a year but that happens every time we come and we confess our sin and we tell you that we're sorry we're sorry for our sins and we pray lord that you would wash our sins away in the blood of jesus give us that clean slate and give us strength we pray to live each day for you and not for ourselves so hear our prayers and help us as we go into this new year to be close to you and to very often come and ask for forgiveness for our sins and we pray this in jesus name amen we're going to sing now about that the words are on the steam of the hymn what can wash away my sin nothing but the blood of jesus we'll stand for a second what can wash away my sin nothing but the blood of jesus what can make me whole again nothing but the blood of jesus oh

[19:12] oh oh nothing but the blood of jesus oh oh oh For sin at all Nothing but the blood of Jesus

Not of good that I have done Nothing but the blood of Jesus Oh, precious is the flow That makes me white as snow No other fount I know Nothing but the blood of Jesus This is all my hope and peace Nothing but the blood of Jesus This is all my righteousness Nothing but the blood of Jesus Oh, precious is the flow That makes me white as snow

No other fount I know Nothing but the blood of Jesus Very posh Let's turn in our Bibles to Acts chapter 27 We're just about the end of our studies in the book of Acts So we're in Acts chapter 27 Thinking back a few weeks The Apostle Paul has gone through these various trials He's called upon the right that he had as a Roman citizen To appear before Caesar And so there's a journey for the Apostle Rome bound is what he is

And so we read about this voyage to Rome In chapter 27 So chapter 27 and verse 1 When it was decided that we would sail for Italy Paul and some other prisoners were handed over to a centurion named Julius Who belonged to the imperial regiment We boarded a ship from Adramitum About to sail for ports along the coast of the province of Asia And we put out to sea Aristarchus, a Macedonian from Thessalonica, was with us The next day we landed at Sidon And Julius, in kindness to Paul Allowed him to go to his friends That they might provide for his needs From there we put out to sea again And passed to the Lee of Cyprus Because the winds were against us When we sailed across the open sea Off the coast of Cilicia and Pamphylia We landed in Myra at Lycia There the centurion found an Alexandrian ship Sailing for Italy and put us on board

We made slow headway for many days And had difficulty arriving off Sniders When the wind did not allow us to hold our course We sailed to the Lee of Crete Opposite Salone We moved along the coast with difficulty And came to a place called Fair Havens Near the town of Lycia Much time had been lost And sailing had already become dangerous Because it was now after the fast So Paul warned them Men, I can see that our voyage is going to be disastrous And bring great loss to ship and cargo And to our own lives also But the centurion, instead of listening to what Paul said Followed the advice of the pilot And of the owner of the ship Since the harbour was unsuitable to winter in The majority decided that we should sail on Hoping to reach Phoenix And winter there There was a harbour in Crete Facing both south-west and north-east When a gentle south wind began to blow

[24 : 25] They thought they had obtained what they wanted So they weighed anchor And sailed along the shore of Crete Before very long A wind of hurricane force Called the north-easter Swept down from the island The ship was caught by the storm And could not head into the wind So we gave way to it And were driven along As we passed the lee Of a small island called Codan We were hardly able to Make the lifeboat secure When the men had hoisted it aboard And passed ropes under the ship Itself to hold it together Fearing that they would run aground On the sandbars of Cyprus They lowered the sea anchor And let the ship be driven along We took such a violent battering From the storm That next day They began to throw the cargo overboard On the third day They threw the ship's tackle overboard With their own hands When neither sun nor stars appeared For many days And the storm continued raging We finally gave up all hope Of being saved

After the men had gone A long time without food Paul stood up before them And said Men You should have taken my advice Not to sail from Crete Then you would have spared yourselves This damage and loss But now I urge you To keep up your courage Because not one of you Will be lost Only the ship will be destroyed Last night an angel of the Lord Whose I am and whom I serve Stood beside me And said Do not be afraid Paul You must stand trial before Caesar And God has graciously given you The lives of all who sail with you So keep up your courage men For I have faith in God That it will happen Just as he told me Nevertheless We must run aground On some island On the fourteenth night We were still being driven Across the Adriatic Sea When about midnight The sailors sensed They were approaching land They took soundings And found That the water was One hundred and twenty feet deep A short time later They took soundings again And found that it was

In discovering when you approach it. This magic and watching the festival of Christ 1500 sing again to God's praise we sing from Psalm 139 in Gaelic this time Psalm 139 and the last two stanzas of the psalm verse 22 to 24 as it's marked in the English with perfect hatred then I hate my foes I then behold search me O God and know my heart try me my thoughts unfold and see if any wicked way there be at all in me and in thine everlasting way to me a leader be these two stanzas sing all up to God's praise we remain seated in the second it's all his they're the

Medanumatur the name, the name is Who a girl for me I am God my wídzolas well is Thank you.

The in in I need you complete.

I need you complete. I need you complete.

[38 : 29] I need you complete. I need you complete.

I need you complete. I need you complete.

I need you complete. I need you complete. I need you complete.

Well, if you turn in your Bible, please, to Acts chapter 27, the section that we read together. Acts chapter 27.

And we will look at the whole of the chapter today. Let's just pray for a moment. Our Heavenly Father, we acknowledge before you that without your help, we cannot speak.

[39 : 46] We cannot listen. We cannot hear and understand. And so we pray again that you would send the Holy Spirit that you would be active in our minds and our hearts, giving us understanding and applying the truth of your word to our lives.

Meet with each one of us individually, we pray in the word. And we pray that you would do a work in each of our hearts that would lead to salvation.

And we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen. Well, that's chapter 27. As we have come to in the series that we've been studying.

There's a bit of a nautical theme going on over the last few days. For those who were here on Friday, we were in Mark chapter 4 and chapter 6.

And we noted in the course of these two chapters, all that Jesus taught his disciples, not in the flat calm but in the stormy seas. And here we find that Paul is taught and Paul teaches others how much God can be trusted.

[40 : 58] And so what we have in Acts chapter 27 is today four lessons from the storm.

Four lessons that can be taken from the storm. Two negatives and two positives. I'll just give them to you. And this will be our course for the time that we have.

The first lesson from the storm is that not listening to the word of God leads to spiritual shipwreck. The second lesson that we get is not sharing the word of God.

We are Christians. Not sharing the word of God leaves people's lives around us in danger. The third lesson is listening to the word and the witness of God brings hope.

Not on the other side of the storm but in the midst of the storm. And the final lesson that we note going through this is acting upon the word of the Lord brings salvation.

[42 : 04] We can know but we need to act if there's to be salvation. So these are the four points to navigate through in the course.

And the first one here is not listening to the word of God leads to spiritual shipwreck. That's the spiritual principle. That's the application that we start with.

We're kind of going back to front today. Usually we start with a point and get to the application. Today we're going straight to the application. Not listening to the word of God leads to spiritual shipwreck. Just as we can observe here that not listening to the advice of Paul who was God's man in that place at that time led to a literal shipwreck.

Let's just step through the opening verses. If your Bible isn't open in front of you you'll find that helpful. In chapter 27 and verses 1 to 9 Luke gives us this account of the journey.

The sea journey which Paul and those with him have to undertake. Luke the historian who is a man who is ever interested in detail records the specifics of the journey.

[43 : 20] And Luke is recording this and sharing it with us. Not as one who's heard of this from a distance. But Luke was one who was on the ship. He was an eyewitness.

We see in verse 2 that Luke writes in the first person. We boarded a ship he says from Adramitum about to sail for ports along the coast of the province of Asia.

And we're given a list of all these specific places. And we're given a timeline as he's going through this journey. And what becomes clear as we read through the verses is that this was not flat town.

This was not plain sailing. This was a troubled journey. This was a difficult journey. Verse 4 we learn that the wind was against them. Verse 7 we see that they didn't make good headway but they made slow headway.

And so from the point of view of a captain trying to navigate this ship. Navigation was difficult. Setting the course and sticking to the course was hugely challenging.

[44 : 20] And by verse 9 it's clear and it's recorded for us here that this sailing voyage had become very dangerous.

Now just as an aside here. If you're interested in going and reading around this chapter. One book that you can pick up is a book called The Voyage and Shipwreck of St. Paul.

It's written by a Scottish man by the name of James Smith. And he was a yachtsman of three or four decades experience. He spent much time on the seas.

He was a military man and a geographer by trade. And as he read through this book and this chapter in particular that grabbed him. And he became fascinated with this chapter and the voyage and the specifics that are recorded in it.

And so he devoted two years of his life to studying this voyage that's recorded for us. He went out to the area. He spent time in the place. He surveyed the land.

[45 : 27] He studied the weather patterns that were common in that place at that time. He looked at the seamanship of the navigational practices and routines of that day.

And after two years of studying his conclusion was that this chapter that we have here. When we compare it to the historic details that are available for that place at that time.

It's entirely credible. It stands up for scrutiny historically. And his comment was that this is an account that seems to have been written by somebody who was, quote, a landlubber.

Not an actual sailor. A landlubber with considerable sea experience. Which essentially is what Luke and Paul were.

We'll get to that in a wee bit. Why did I share that as an aside? Because I share that because there may be some skeptics here. There may be some people who are going through a period of doubt.

[46 : 39] Because the enemy of our souls will love to flood our minds with doubts about the credibility of the Bible. There are so many people who want to dismiss the Bible as unreliable.

But time and time again, as we've stopped and paused and looked at the specifics of Luke's record, we have discovered that this stands up to historical scrutiny.

This is reliable. This is accurate. Now back to the story. I was just an aside. We see from verse 9 and onwards the weather is worsening.

The weather is worsening and Paul sees that the weather is worsening. And Paul, when he sees this impending danger, he interjects. Now is Paul an expert in navigation?

Is he an expert seaman? No, he's not. But we know from Luke's records prior to this, that Paul had considerable experience at sea.

[47 : 41] If we just scan back to the last few chapters, which we're not going to do just now, we can note at least 11 voyages that he undertook at sea.

If we do a quick calculation, we can see that in recent times he's logged up 3,500 miles at sea in these missionary journeys. So Paul was this landlubber with sea experience.

And Paul, remember, is an apostle. He's God's man. He's the one that God sent to be in that place at that time. And to share God's word with them.

And so Paul speaks with an authority and an insight that God gave him. And Paul, when he speaks up in verse 9 and verse 10, he gives this warning. You can see it in verse 9 and 12.

Paul warned them. Men, I can see that our voyage is going to be disastrous and bring great loss to shipping cargo and to our rights also. It took a bit of courage to say that.

[48 : 46] Especially when you're dealing with a centurion. Paul, Paul, the centurion and all the people of power before him. Paul, remember, is just a prisoner.

And yet he speaks up. Was he listened to? Well, verses 10 and 11, as we follow through there, we see that Paul wasn't listened to. The centurion also is obviously sympathetic.

He likes Paul. He shows him some privileges, but he's not willing to listen to Paul. He listens to the pilot and the owner of the ship, verse 11. And he listens to the majority in verse 12.

And the majority want to sail on. And so the centurion decides, well, let's go with the majority. And they sail on. And they sail into disaster.

And we're trying to understand that. That's all. Now, here is the spiritual lesson that we need to take, especially at the beginning of a new year.

[49 : 47] At the beginning of a new year, we're probably more reflective than we are in the midst of a new year. We're down the line, March, April. We're just getting on with things.

At the beginning of a new year, we're thinking about what's ahead. What things do we know? what events are going to be in our experience and how are we going to navigate through these things so how can we navigate through this new year if God allows us to see this year there are so many people and so many groups who want to tell us how to steer our lives there are so many influences on how we live and what we live for and like the centurion we have much in the way of conflicting advice today on what we are to give ourselves to so who do we listen to do we go with the majority well the majority isn't always right as this voyage illustrates the way to steer a steady course in 2016 is by listening to the word of God and thankfully we have access to the word of God all of us have access not just on a Sunday but every day of our lives to the word of God

Proverbs 3:5 and 6 is a great verse to take into the new year with us trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding in all your ways acknowledge him and he will make your path straight the centurion he leans on his own understanding he leans on the understanding of the pilot and the owner and the majority and in doing so he leads the crew into shipwreck we can be sure if we do not listen to God we'll be listening to every other external influence we are headed for spiritual shipwreck we have been given his word so if we want to avoid tragedy if we want to avoid shipwreck spiritually speaking if we want to steer that steady course which God will determine for our lives we need to be much in the word of God this word is inspired this word is credible this word is living and active and trustworthy we are to hold fast to it so that's the first point first point not listening to the word of God leads to spiritual shipwreck second point not sharing the word of God leads people around us in danger now Paul as we think about Paul again

Paul as he saw this storm roll in Paul in his own mind he knew he was safe Paul was one who was in Christ to use the word the phrase that he uses so often in Ephesians Paul knew that he belonged to God Paul knew that God loved him he was utterly convinced of that Paul knew that God was with him Paul knew that God was sovereign and stepping back through these chapters the sovereign power of God was so compelling within Paul's experience Paul knew that God was in control over all situations this voyage included so Paul is not in a panic as the wind starts to whip up we'll see more about that just shortly Paul has that assurance as he sees the storm roll in just my way of application I hope we all have that

I hope we're all in Christ and that's the crucial thing going into this new year are we in Christ have we asked for forgiveness of our sin and asked Christ to come into our lives that's a lesson not just for the five year olds it's a lesson for the 95 year olds too and every age in the game Paul was in Christ he was assured that God was with him if we are in Christ this morning we should have that same assurance we don't know what's ahead in the course of this year but if we're in Christ we should know each day the love of God for us and when we doubt the love of God for us go back to the cross see it again this is how we know God's love for us

[54 : 55] Christ died for us we should have that assurance if we are in Christ that Jesus is with us always not sometimes but always to the end of the age if we are in Christ we should have that steady assurance that he is in control of every situation and every episode that he allows us to be taken into if we're in Christ we don't need to be worried I know that's easy to say and I also know that's hard to live out but Paul had that assurance that we also should have Paul knew he was safe because he was in Christ Paul knew he was safe because Jesus had promised him he would be safe until he got to Rome if we step back to chapter 23 and verse 11 just go there for a moment chapter 23 and verse 11

Paul has been going through the mill with riots and mobs and attacks and he's been before the aggressive Sanhedrin he's thrown into jail and when he's in jail probably at a very low end within himself Jesus the Lord verse 11 came near to him and stood by him and said take courage as you have testified about me in Jerusalem which is where he'd been so you must also testify in Rome so Paul knew with assurance that he was headed for Rome he knew that he was going to be safe until he arrived in that destination of Rome he knew that he was okay Paul knew that whatever happened he was not going to lose his life on this voyage now if that's the case as it was why didn't Paul just relax and put his feet up and have a snooze in the cabin why does he have to keep interjecting and risking ridicule and risking discipline for insolence he's just a prisoner after all he could have got slapped down very quickly for having the cheek to try and advise the centurion why does he keep interjecting we see four interjections

I haven't got the time to go through them just now you see an interjection in verse 10 a second one verse 21 to 26 where he calls them to have courage just as Jesus called him to have courage you see a third interjection from verse 27 to 32 where he tells them to stay on board not to start peeling off the side of the boat then again verse 33 to 38 he speaks up and advises them to eat and get your strength up why does Paul not just stay quiet lock himself in the cabin and have a snooze the reason that he would not stay quiet is because he cared for the people who were on board with him he wasn't just interested in saving his own skin Paul knew he was safe but he wanted those who were with him the other 275 on board to be safe there's a lesson there for us if we are in Christ if we are Christians the great joy for those who are in Christ is to know that we are safe whatever happens in time whatever is ahead of us in God's providence we are safe we are safe from the penalty of sin which is death eternally we are safe from the sting of death which Christ has removed we are safe from the second death that second death that eternal death that hell which Christ so often spoke about we are safe from that if we are in Christ we are safe for eternity we are heaven bound what a joy that is to know that's the joyful assurance of all who are in Jesus we are eternally safe but those who are around us if they are not in Christ they are not safe and they are not secure they are in danger and if we love them we will tell them just as Paul continued to tell those who were on board of the danger they were in if we love those who are around us we will tell them of the danger their souls are in if they are out of Christ we will point them to Jesus the one who came to rescue us from danger he so often sing it in that hymn come thy fountry every blessing he to rescue us from danger interposed he shed for us his precious blood when did you last tell somebody about that real question when did we last share with somebody who is in danger who is presently lost of the blood of

Christ that was shed to take away their sin and make them secure if we love them as God gives us opportunities to tell him we will take them so that's the second point not sharing the word of God leaves people in danger Paul was ever ready to share so that the people around him would be saved third point here is listening to the word and indeed the witness of God to his people brings hope in the story and that would be the testimony of the censurion and the soon to be saved crew following the story through here as the storm worsens what is evident is that there is a degree of panic that sets in even Luke who's the writer as he writes in the first person in verse 20 he writes about how after 14 days of darkness that intensity of the storm he says in verse 20 we finally gave up all hope of being saved touches the darkness of the storm but into the darkness of that storm the life of

God shone in through Paul there's three things that we can just note in passing about Paul and his conduct and his demeanour within the storm three things that we see in Paul's life as the storm raged on first thing is that Paul had poise everyone else was in a blind panic perhaps but Paul had poise everyone else verse 20 had given up hope Paul hadn't given up hope and he was always ready to share the hope that he had Paul had poise he was ready to share this hope that steadied him and so Paul preached that's the second thing we keep hearing these interjections and in these interjections that Paul makes in the course of the chapter he keeps on pointing them to the God that he loved and that he served that took courage I've never spent much time see I've never been in a boat with 276 people for a long period of time but I imagine that for

[63 : 28] Paul to share the faith that he had in God with 275 hairy seamen that must have taken a fair bit of courage Paul in verse 23 he speaks out about his God whose I am and whom I serve he says verse 24 Paul again he's speaking out about the God who could save them and then before they ate after Paul urged him to eat in verse 35 it seems that Paul wasn't content to go in the corner as we often do and bow his head hoping that nobody was seeing him giving thanks for the food Paul wants everyone to know this gracious provision comes from God and so he gives thanks to God in verse 35 in front of them all and so Paul in his actions and his words he preaches and the third thing we can know about Paul's conduct in the storm is that he prayed now we don't have an actual verse that says Paul prayed we don't have a record of what

Paul prayed but we are told that Paul's prayer was answered in verse 24 it says that God has graciously given you the lives do not be afraid Paul this is in verse 24 where the angel of God that Paul speaks about he's recounting his experience last night an angel of the God whose I am and whom I serve stood beside me and said do not be afraid Paul you must stand trial before Caesar another assurance that he's headed for Rome so don't worry Paul and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you God has another verse that says granted you all those who sail with you now our wishes are granted when we ask for them God has given Paul I'm quite certain what he asked for and as

Paul shared the faith that he had in God and as Paul saw the danger that the crew were in I'm sure he was not only speaking to the crew but he was speaking to his Lord about the crew and so he has given this assurance that those who are with him not only him but those who are with him will be saved and all this is going on not in calm waters but in the storm midst of the storm these men find hope through the word of God and the witness of God's man in the midst of the storm here's a lesson for those who are in Christ those who are Christians if we are Christians all those who are around us who sail with us through life in the hard times and the happy times and the rough times and the calm times we should be seeking to show them Christ and share

Christ with them and we should be praying for them just as Paul was through the crew around wouldn't it be great to receive that message that Paul got from the Lord in verse 24 God has granted you all those who are around you God has heard your prayers for those who are around you in your experience of life and he has granted you the souls and the lives of those who are around you God puts us in this world and the people who are around us it's no coincidence God puts us in particular circles of friends in particular workplaces in particular families so that we will pray for them and so that we will share the hope of Christ with them so think about the people in your office think about the people who are in your family think about the people that you rub shoulders with every day in the village think about the people in your school class think about the people that are in our circles in our

Facebook reach even are we sharing Christ with them it's no coincidence that they're sitting around us are we sharing Christ with them and here's the other point in application here we often look so disparagingly at the stormy waters we just want out of it I speak first about that no one likes to be thrown around in a storm but sometimes the Lord allows us to go through a storm so that we can show out the faith that we have in the Lord in the midst in the fury of the storm Paul has such calmness such composure through all the fierce shaking of this storm and as the two observed

[69 : 22] Paul they must have asked the question what does he have that we don't have how come he's so steady how come he's so sure how come he's not scared like the rest of us how he's so different reading about Wesley one of the Wesley brothers before he became a Christian he was recording in his journal some of the movements that they were undertaking at sea and he was on a voyage from I don't know where from but it was headed for Georgia 1736 was the time in the midst of the storm he observed this little group of German Christians who were gathered in worship and this is the entry from his journal he says in the midst of the sound wherewith their service began the sea broke over split the mainsail in pieces covered the ship and poured in between the decks as if the great deep had already swallowed us up a terrible screaming began among the

English the Germans calmly sang on I asked one of them afterwards was you not afraid he answered I thank God no I asked that were not your young women and children afraid he replied mildly no our women and children are not afraid to die from from from them I went to their crying trembling neighbors and pointed out to them the difference in the ire of trial between him that feareth God and him that feareth him not he these German believers in 1736 that God had put next to Wesley had hope in the store the apostle Paul had hope in the store do we have that hope and can people see that hope in us a hope that is not ruffled by the crises of life a hope even that is not ruffled by the approach of death we're going to sing at the end will your anchor hold in the storms of life the

Christian can say with Paul we have an anchor that keeps the soul steadfast and sure while the billows roll fastened to the rock Christ which cannot move grounded firm and deep in the saviour's love so they find hope by listening to the word and witness of God in the storm and finally it's just a word to finish acting upon the word of the Lord brings salvation I'll say this quickly but this is crucially important so please stay with me for the next three or four minutes acting upon the word of the Lord brings salvation now salvation in the sense of Acts 27 is salvation of life and breath as the situation worsened and soundings are taken and the fear of hitting the rocks becomes increasingly real there were some there in verse 30 who want to try and save their own skin so they pretend to put down an anchor but in actual fact they want to lower the lifeboat so that they can make their escape

Paul sees it he's astute he's experienced he sees what's going on he interjects and he makes clear to the centurion if they want to be saved there's only one way they need to stay with him verse 31 on the boat God had made that much clear to him and this time the centurion a little bit wiser now listens to the word of God through Paul and because he does the two are saved none are lost one commentator says this this is among the clearest examples in scripture of the interplay and harmony between God's sovereignty and our responsibility Paul was no passive fatalist he knew beyond a shadow of doubt that he and all those travelling with him would be preserved from drowning for God had said so and God's purpose could not fail on the other hand the decisions of the sailors the centurion and the soldiers were integral parts of that divine purpose

Julius and his men had to stop the sailors from abandoning ship their action was an indispensable means of God's saving plan God's sovereignty and yet man has a responsibility to act for salvation of life and breath to be effective and what was true of life and breath salvation on that day is still true on this day of heart and soul salvation there is only one way to be saved it's God's way and he has made that way clear through his word we cannot save ourselves by our good works we cannot save ourselves by sitting in these church chairs we cannot save ourselves or be saved by any other name under heaven or in earth save through Christ salvation comes only through the name and the blood of Jesus

[75 : 25] John 14 6 Jesus said I am the way the truth and the life no one comes to the father no one is saved except through me God in his sovereign power has provided that way for you and I to be saved God in his sovereign power as he moves in this place by his spirit showing us our sin showing us our need to be saved but our responsibility is to believe in him turn from sin repent and turn in faith to Jesus have we done that yet if not today is the day to act repent believe and be saved let's pray heavenly father we pray that we would act we thank you for your sovereign power we acknowledge that you are the only one who has made it possible for us to be saved we cannot be saved apart from the father sending the son to this world and the son going to the cross we thank you that he did we thank that the holy spirit himself is the one who shows us that he did helps us to understand why he did it shows us our sin shows us our need to be saved lord in your sovereign power we thank you that if we see these things you are striving with us we pray that you would enable each one here to act to defend to believe to be saved we do this in

Jesus name amen we sing to conclude from mission praise 770 one of my new year's resolutions was to teach for shorter i'm sorry about that i failed again 770 in mission praise will your anchor hold in the storms of life and now may the grace of our lord jesus christ and the love of god the father and the fellowship of god the holy spirit be with us all both now and forever more amen