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BISHOP'S DEVOTIONAL THOUGHTS

The Storms of Our Lives

Acts Chapter 27

Sometimes the sea is calm and the wind blows softly. But other times the wind rises, the sky darkens, and we find ourselves in the midst of a terrible storm. We know that is the way life is, and in [Acts 27](#) we read of such a storm in the life of the apostle Paul.

He had been arrested for preaching the gospel of Christ and was now being taken to Rome to be adjudicated when they encountered a huge storm. Perhaps you are even in the midst of a terrible storm yourself, and all hope has seemed to vanish.

First we need to realize there are many different types of storms we all encounter. Then we are going to see what Paul did in his storm and what we can do.

- There are normal storms. The Bible says God makes it rain on the just and the unjust ([Matthew 5:45](#)). We simply live in a world that has storms as a natural part of life.

- Then there are some storms we engineer by our own foolishness and disobedience. That is the kind of storm Jonah got into to when he tried to flee from the presence of God ([Jonah 1:1-4](#)).

- There are also storms God sends us for growth. Jesus commanded His disciples to get into a boat and go to the other side of

the sea ([Matthew 14:22-24](#)). He knew a storm was brewing but was teaching them a lesson for their development.

- And then there are storms we are dragged into by other people. That is where we find the apostle Paul. He was a prisoner who had tried to warn them! But they would not listen so he was dragged into his storm by others.

Sinking the Ship

The sailors on Paul's ship took some actions that made things worse. We tend to do some of these same things when we find ourselves in a storm. Let us look at some of the ways we sink the ship.

Make decisions in haste. Verse nine says much time had past, and they felt they had to do something. Have you heard some say "Let's do something even if it's wrong!" If you're in the middle of a decision, wait on God. If you feel something pushing you, I can assure you it's not the Holy Spirit. He leads and He guides, but He doesn't shove.

Depend upon worldly wisdom rather than godly wisdom. The captain and owner of the ship believed each other instead of Paul (verse 11). Don't go to the people of this world and ask them what to do. Seek a godly

counselor — one that bases their counsel on the Word of God.

Take the easy way out. Because the harbor was not up to their standards, they decided to depart hastily ([Acts 27:12](#)). When they made their decision, it was based on what would be easy. Almost always you will find trouble this way! Sometimes, we are called upon to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ.

Follow the crowd. There was a crowd on that boat. When they took a vote, Paul was outvoted (verse 12). They said, "Let's sail." But if you think about it, often the majority is wrong. Don't get the idea that if everybody says it, then it is right. You may go from person to person trying to get permission to do what you already decided to do, but frequently, the majority is simply a lot of people pooling their ignorance.

Depend upon circumstances. In [Acts 27:13](#) they said, "The sun is shining, the sea is calm, and the wind is blowing in our direction; it must be the right thing." There are a lot of people who are led by circumstances and say, "Lord, it must be Your will. It looks good." But that soothing south wind may turn into a horrible, ferocious storm.

Responding to Rain

When they found themselves in the teeth of this torrential rainstorm, the ungodly on this ship reacted in some curious ways.

- In verse 15, they saw dashed dreams as the floundering vessel began to sink.
- And they also saw desperate efforts as described in verse 16. They desperately tried

to get the tackle of the ship back together.

- Subsequently in verses 18-19, they experienced wasted resources. They started dumping what they thought were precious things into the ocean. What a waste!

- Then in verse 20, they lost hope. The stars, sun and moon has disappeared and they were in complete darkness.

- And finally, in verse 30, we see their foolish actions almost caused their demise as they tried to escape by lifeboats. In our lives today, we often see escapism in the form of alcohol, divorce, desertion, or even suicide. These are all foolish reactions to the storms of our lives.

In contrast to the ungodly responses, Paul said "**be of good cheer**" (verses 22 and 25). Can you imagine saying that in the midst of these problems? But the same One Who gave him songs in the night in a dungeon at Philippi gave him peace in the midst of this storm — His name is Jesus.

We serve a mighty God! You may fail, flounder, and sin; but God is ultimately in control. Paul believed in God and could say, "**Be of good cheer,**" even in the midst of his storm. And you can too by relying on the same God Who brought him through the storm. **SHALOM!**

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