

“Riders On The Storm”

Acts 27:27-38

Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Peter LaRuffa / August 23, 2020

I. You need to remember that God's purpose & plan for you isn't limited by you.

Look at how Paul's role radically changed from the beginning to the end of Acts 27!

- A. Acts 27:1 - Paul is in **custody** (treated like any other prisoner).
- B. Acts 27:3 - Paul is allowed in the **city**, as he is allowed to leave to see his friends.
- C. Acts 27:10 - Paul boldly **cautions** the Centurion and the crew.
- D. Acts 27:21 - Paul **consoles** the crew and crowd, and prophecies about their survival
- E. Acts 27:31 - Paul is able to **confront & correct** the men trying to escape.
- F. Acts 27:33 - Paul gives **care** to all onboard.
- G. Acts 27:43 - Paul and everyone onboard **coasts** to safety.

Even though Paul was a prisoner, God still used him. His ability to deal with a crisis elevated him from a prisoner who was in charge of nothing, to the acknowledged leader of all onboard.

II. You need to realize God calls His people to ride out the storm with Him.

Acts 27:22-25 “Yet now I urge you to take heart, **for there will be no loss of life among you**, but only of the ship. For this very night there stood before me an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I worship, and he said, ‘Do not be afraid, Paul; you must stand before Caesar. And behold, God has granted you all those who sail with you.’ So take heart, men, **for I have faith in God that it will be exactly as I have been told.**”

Four Reasons Why We'd Rather Jump Ship Instead of Ride Out the Storm

1. **God is taking too long.** Certainly He would have acted by now. Since He hasn't, He probably won't.

Acts 27:3 - “The next day...”

Acts 27:7 - “We sailed slowly for a number of days and arrived with difficulty...”

Acts 27:9 - “Since much time had passed, and the voyage was now dangerous...”

Acts 27:12 - “And because the harbor was not suitable to spend the winter in...”

Acts 27:18 - “...they began the next day to jettison the cargo...”

Acts 27:19 - “And on the third day they threw the ship's tackle overboard with their own hands.”

Acts 27:20 - “When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days...all hope of our being saved was at last abandoned.”

Acts 27:21 - “Since they had been without food for a long time...”

Acts 27:27 - "When the fourteenth night had come..."

2. **God isn't answering our call for help.** We're so obsessed with escaping, we ignore or reject wisdom from others.

Acts 27:11 "But the centurion paid more attention to the pilot and to the owner of the ship than to what Paul said."

Prov. 14:12; 16:25 "There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death."

3. **We know what God says, but think what we're going through is probably different.**

Acts 27:30-31 "And as the sailors were seeking to escape from the ship, and had lowered the ship's boat into the sea under pretense of laying out anchors from the bow, Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, 'Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved.'"

It's easy to doubt in the dark what we believed in the light.

Hebrews 11:1 "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, **the conviction of things not seen.**"

4. **God must have forgotten or rejected us.**

Psa. 77:9 "Has God forgotten to be gracious? Has he in anger shut up his compassion?"

Psa. 60:1 "O God, You have rejected us, broken our defenses; You have been angry..."

- III. **You can ride out the storm because even the storm itself is in God's sovereign hands!**

- A. You can ride it out because although it's new to you, it's not new to God!

1 Cor. 10:13a "No temptation has overtaken you that is not **common to man...**"

- B. The storm might be too much for you, but God knows your limits better than you do!

1 Cor. 10:13b "...God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted **beyond your ability...**"

Heb. 4:16 "Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

- C. The storm might last longer than you ever imagined, but it will not last forever!

1 Cor. 10:13c "...but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it."

2 Peter 2:9 "...the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials..."

IV. You need to remember that safety always comes as a result of surrender to God!

Acts 27:32 "Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the ship's boat and let it go."

Acts 27:38 "And when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship, throwing out the wheat into the sea."

Acts 27:44 "And so it was that all were brought safely to land."

Questions for Personal Reflection and/or Community Group discussion:

1. What personal limitation(s) do you have that cause you to believe you might not be used by God?
2. When has God called you to "ride it out" instead of rescuing you from a difficult situation?
3. Pastor Peter covered 4 reasons we tend to jump ship instead of ride out the storm. Which of those reasons resonated with you? What other reasons would you add to the list?
4. Take another look at 1 Cor. 10:13. What is significant about the fact that God provides a way of escape, not just so you can escape, but so you can endure?
5. Pastor Peter said that when it comes to God, safety is always preceded by surrender. What might you be clinging to for "safety" that has yet to deliver? What would "throwing it overboard" look like for you? What's stopping you from surrendering it and more fully trusting in God?