

## What To Do When You Hit Rough Waters Acts 27

### Introduction:

1. Here in our text, Paul commences his long trip to Rome where he will ultimately stand trial before Caesar.
2. On this trip, Paul encountered a great storm on the Mediterranean Sea which resulted in a violent shipwreck experience. Paul was about three-fourths of the way to Rome, and on the second ship of the voyage.
3. Paul had warned the crew **not** to set sail, but nobody would listen. vs. 9-13
4. They sailed in a large ship that could carry at least 276 people (vs. 37), and it was caught in the storm very suddenly. vs. 14-20
  - Things didn't look good at all. Death looked certain and imminent.
5. How does the apostle Paul respond to these turbulent circumstances? There appears to be no fear or panic. His soul was at total peace. He was calm and cool-headed.
6. Rest assured, this doesn't happen by accident. Paul walked close to the Lord, and it showed. The depth of our relationship with God will be revealed when we hit rough waters. Every believer **can** navigate victoriously through the rough waters of life.
7. Let's look at Paul's response and learn some valuable principles that will help us to come through rough waters victoriously.

### First, you must stand firmly on the promises of God. vs. 21-26

1. When things looked hopeless, God provided Paul with a precious promise that his life would be spared, as well as the lives of everyone on the ship.
2. Paul then stood up and shared this promise with everyone on the ship. vs. 21-26
  - Paul couldn't resist saying, "I told you so." vs. 21
  - When Paul said this (vs. 22), every head on the boat must have turned.
  - Can't you just see these hardened soldiers and sailors saying, "Yea right, Paul's personal angel appeared to him. Are you crazy? Sit down and shut up!" vs. 23-24
  - Yet look at verse 25. "*I believe God.*"
3. When we hit rough waters, we must stand firmly on the promises of God.
4. God has given to us "***exceeding great and precious promises.***" 2 Peter 1:4
  - Because they are "*exceeding great,*" they give us limitless hope when going through problems.
  - Because they are "*precious,*" they provide us enormous hope when encountering trials.
5. There are four excellent reasons to stand firmly on God's promises.
  - God cannot lie. Titus 1:2 (A promise isn't any good if the one making the promise is a liar.)
  - God's power knows no bounds. Romans 4:21 (He is able to keep His promises.)

- God is faithful. Hebrews 11:11 (It's one thing to have the power to keep a promise, but it is another thing to have the character to keep a promise.)
  - Standing on God's promises demonstrates our faith. Romans 4:20
6. There is no way to please God without faith. When you read the Bible and pray, quote God's promises back to Him. He loves this.

**Second, you must walk in the wisdom of Christ. vs. 27-32**

1. The sailors devised a scheme to try to escape the ship by using the life boat. vs. 27-30
2. God gave Paul the wisdom to clearly discern the evil plot of the sailors and to publicly expose it. The soldiers immediately put a stop to it. vs. 31-32
3. It appears that nobody else on the boat was aware of the sailors' escape attempt. Paul didn't allow the turbulent circumstances to cloud his vision, nor did he allow the promises of God to make him complacent.
4. He was keenly aware of his surroundings, knew what was happening, and took the necessary action. He was walking in the wisdom of Christ.
5. When we go through rough waters, we are tempted to exercise fleshly wisdom (2 Corinthians 1:12), and we simply make matters worse. We must be filled with Christ's wisdom, and then apply it. Colossians 1:9, 2:3, 3:16, 4:5
6. Sometimes we make bad decisions that blow up in our face. We blame God when, in reality, we never yielded to the wisdom and mind of Christ, and we made the decision through our own fleshly wisdom.

**Third, we need to guard our physical health. vs. 33-34**

1. Paul stood up and gave counsel to all on board the ship. He advised them to eat some food because, "...*this is for your health.*" vs. 33-34
2. This would end up being very wise and prudent counsel. The worst was yet to come and everyone on the ship would need physical strength if their lives were to be spared. vs. 38-44
  - **Illustration:** Elijah (1 Kings 19:7)
3. When we hit rough waters in life, we compound our problems by neglecting our physical needs through poor eating habits and lack of exercise.
4. Our mental, emotional, and physical well-being are intricately woven together. When we don't give our bodies the tools they need to run at an optimum level, it makes it that much tougher to navigate through the rough waters of life.
  - **Illustration:** Taking care of your car (oil change, spark plugs, rotate tires, fuel filter, etc.). Take care of it and you will get better performance from it.
5. Our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit and we need to treat them as such. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

**Fourth, you must maintain a thankful spirit.**

1. Here they are in the middle of a storm, and Paul unashamedly and publicly gave thanks to God for the food. He didn't go off in a corner and mumble a prayer.

2. What a testimony Paul was to the rest of the passengers on this ship.
3. Notice what a positive influence Paul was on everybody else. vs. 36
  - Paul didn't have a despairing spirit. He was upbeat and positive.
  - How much do we improve the atmosphere where we are? Are we like a cloud that covers the sun? Are we critical, complaining, and cynical?
4. When we are going through rough waters, we can get so absorbed in our problems that we forget to give thanks to God. 1 Thessalonians 5:18; Ephesians 5:20
5. No matter how bad circumstances, there are still multiple blessings we can be thankful for.
  - **Illustration:** Here, Paul could be thankful for his salvation in Christ, his opportunity to be a witness for Christ, that they had food to eat, they weren't dead yet, and the ship had held together. It is all a matter of attitude.
6. Even after all of this, things got worse before they got better. Many times this will happen. This lesson isn't a magic formula to get you out of rough waters, but to help you deal with the rough and navigate successfully through them.