



GETTING STARTED

> *As your group time begins, use this section for very brief review prior to showing the video and to help get the conversation going.*

Conversation Starters/Questions

Who is the strongest and most courageous Christian you know?

What can you learn from their strength?

VIDEO NOTES (Play Video)

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

Ask for a volunteer to Read Acts 27:9-11

1) - What are the different types of Hurricanes we face in life? During those storms in your life, whose advice do you follow? Where do most people turn?

1) **SUGGESTED ANSWERS:** Hurricanes we face: problems with kids, marriage, sickness, employment, etc. Do you turn to Jesus during a storm or attempt to "fix it" yourself

APPLICATION QUESTIONS (cont.)**Ask for a volunteer to read Acts 27:12-20**

2) In Pastor Daniel's sermon, he made the point that a storm doesn't make a person; a storm shows what a person is made of. For the Apostle Luke, this storm caused him to lose all hope. How have storms in your life shown you what you're made of?

2) SUGGESTED ANSWERS: Your true character will show up in a storm...who you really are in Christ, who you turn to in a time of crisis.

Ask for a volunteer to read Acts 27:21

3) When is the right time or is there a right time to say "I told you so"?

3) SUGGESTED ANSWERS: This is an interesting question, let them run with it and relate to kids, spouses, employees, and employers.

Ask for a volunteer to read Acts 27:22-26

4) Paul says keep up your courage. The Greek word is Tharseo. It means, take heart or be of good cheer. How can you be of good cheer in the midst of the hurricane? What does being of good cheer actually look like in real life?

4) SUGGESTED ANSWERS: Remember James 1:2; no one can rob you of your joy if it is grounded in the Christ Jesus. Does this mean to be happy in a storm or just have the joy of the Lord?

APPLICATION QUESTIONS (cont.)

Ask for volunteers to read *John 16:33* and *Matthew 9:2*

5) What's the difference between believing in the power of God and living by the power of God?

5) **SUGGESTED ANSWERS:** Faith and action, believing and doing; you may suggest it takes both in our Christian walk.

Ask for a volunteer to read *Acts 27:34-44*

6) We talked about a person living by the power of God is more powerful than the force of a hurricane. What are some ways we can live by God's power?

6) **SUGGESTED ANSWERS:** Being in the Word daily, spending time in prayer, memorizing Scripture. Asking God for the Holy Spirit to empower our every day.

SUMMARY (My Take-Away for This Week)**POSSIBLE TAKE-AWAY DISCUSSION POINTS:**

- ⇒ I need to be encouraged that when I trust in God, He can help me through the Storm
- ⇒ Because of my godly character, people will look to me as one of the strongest and courageous Christians they know.
- ⇒ To be strong in the Lord, we must be strong in the Word.

WORK OUT (This Week's Assignments)

- Does anyone have childcare needs?
- Today, stop and pray for those who signed up for your group and did not show up.
- It is time to create our T.E.A.M.s (What is T.E.A.M.s?)
- What are your expectations by being in a LIFEgroup?

MY NEXT STEPS

1. This week, I will be intentional to continue talking with my neighbors and pointing them to the hope I have in Christ.
2. This week, I will make myself available to serve others in need.
3. This week, I will carve out time to thank the Lord for His provision in my life.
4. This week, I will memorize *John 16:33* - "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

HOW MY GROUP CAN PRAY FOR ME THIS WEEK

> *Record Group Prayer Request Here:*



COMMENTARY

Introduction: Paul was on the way to Rome. Acts 27:1–28:16 relates the difficult journey, and particularly the shipwreck which Paul experienced. Much of the narrative merely relates in detail the whole life-threatening experience. Through it all, the providence of God shone through. God was with Paul and all his traveling companions so that Paul could bear his witness in the capital city of Rome. Paul's voyage to Rome is one of the most exciting stories in Acts. It is considered by naval historians to be one of the finest sources for ancient navigational technique. Luke was an avid traveler, which is amply reflected in this section of Acts.

A centurion named Julius was responsible for Paul. Aristarchus the Macedonian and Luke were allowed to accompany them. The centurion was kind to Paul, allowing him to visit the Christians of Sidon when the ship put in there. At Myra (southern Turkey) they transferred to a vessel headed for Italy. It was probably a grain ship. They sailed around Crete to a small port on the southern coast named Fair Havens.

1. Acts 27:9-11. Because Fair Havens was not well-suited for wintering, the centurion and the ship's officers decided to sail on. Undoubtedly under God's influence, Paul warned them that the voyage was destined to end up disastrously.

2. Acts 27:12-20. They were headed for another Cretan port named Phoenix. They never made it. A violent Mediterranean storm overcame them. They took all possible measures, undergirding the ship with cables, throwing the ship's tackle and much of its cargo overboard. [David S. Dockery, et al., *Holman Bible Handbook* (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 1992)] At first the plan seemed solid. With a gentle south wind the ship edged along the coast making its way west to Phoenix. Before very long a "northeaster" hit them from over the top of the island and simply took over the ship. The next step was to lower the sea anchor. They did this because they feared the sand bars of Syrtis, still hundreds of miles away but clearly in the path they believed the wind was pushing them. Syrtis represents a long stretch of desolate banks along the northern Africa coast near Tunis and Tripoli. By lowering the anchor, they would have slowed their progress lest this violent wind blow them all the way to those dreaded shoals.

The sailors threw overboard part of the cargo; and the passengers and supernumeraries, in eager anxiety to do something, threw overboard whatever moveables they found, which was of little or no practical use, but they were eager to do something. This makes a striking picture of growing panic.

3. Acts 27:21-22. Doubtless they retained food on board, but in such a storm, who could eat? Furthermore, they had rushed from one end of the ship to the other with ropes, hooks, and boxes—sleeping and eating were the least of their worries during those awful two weeks. All of a sudden a very human prisoner shows up on deck to tell the crew, "I told you so." Probably the last thing they needed at that point was a missionary rabbi nagging, "If you had only listened to me." He had earlier warned them that there would be loss to our own lives also; now he changed that threat in view of the heavenly message he had received the night before. For this reason we are perhaps best advised not to take Paul's words in verse 10 as a prophecy but merely his usual habit of giving advice whenever and wherever he thought people could use it. (Kenneth O. Gangel, *Acts*, vol. 5, *Holman New Testament Commentary* [Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1998])

COMMENTARY

4. The storm was at its height. All sense of direction was lost. Morale was at its lowest ebb. No one had the stomach for food, as the vessel lurched in the waves. At this dramatic point, Paul came and stood in their midst to offer a reassuring word. We cannot be sure of the exact composition of Paul's audience on this occasion. Perhaps it was primarily the crew struggling on the deck to perform whatever operations they could to avert seemingly inevitable disaster. There is nothing implausible about Paul's action. In ancient literature one often encounters the main character of a narrative giving an address at the very peak of a storm. In those accounts the speech usually emphasizes the danger of the situation and increases the impression of impending doom. *Paul's* words serve the opposite function, introducing a message of hope in the midst of despair. He had given them his opinion previously, and there was perhaps a very human "I told you so" in his reminder that they had failed to follow his advice on the former occasion (v. 21b). He had been right *then*, so his words *now* should be taken with more confidence. Then he spoke of coming disaster. Now he spoke of deliverance. Since their failure to hear his words of warning led to the present catastrophe, they must not fail to heed his message of deliverance; they must keep up their courage and not give in to despair (v. 22). (John B. Polhill, Acts, vol. 26, The New American Commentary [Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992])

5. John 16:33. In this Gospel the anxieties that accompany discipleship are taken very seriously. There is here no attempt to ignore pain. There is here not even the hint that Jesus will rescue them out of their sufferings. The presence of the disciples in the world, even though it would be difficult for them, is a necessary part of God's plan for communicating the Gospel, just as it was in God's great saving purpose through the genuine incarnation and death of Jesus. Christians do not run from the hostile world. They are God's witnesses to the world.

The Gospel of John and 1 John are not books that proclaim a defeatist attitude. They are realistic in that they take suffering, persecution, and martyrdom very seriously. They are books of encouragement in the face of anxiety and genuine concern. They do not call the followers of Jesus to superficial discipleship but to a self-giving obedience modeled on the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. So in spite of all the concerns of the disciples, this ring of anxiety begins and ends with a message of hope—an ultimate hope to be with Jesus in his specially prepared place (14:1) and a hope of victory for living in a world of hatred and trouble (16:33). (Gerald L. Borchert, John 12-21, vol25B, The New American Commentary [Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2002])

6. Acts 27:34-44. Paul then set the example, taking food and eating it in the presence of all. Paul's confidence in their survival and his example encouraged the others to take sustenance. Paul's faith continued to be the source of their courage (cf. vv. 22, 25). All were evidently encouraged by Paul and took steps for the beaching operation, jettisoning the remaining cargo to lighten the ship for running as far up on the beach as possible. The concern of the soldiers that the prisoners might escape is understandable (v. 42). Roman law held guards personally responsible for their charges, and those who allowed prisoners to escape could pay with their own lives (cf. 12:19). (David S. Dockery et al., Holman Bible Handbook [Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 1992])

Summary: The true anchors in any storm—physical, emotional, or spiritual—can only be found in faith, hope, prayer, and the sovereignty of God. ([Kenneth O. Gangel, Acts, vol. 5, Holman New Testament Commentary [Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1998])

(All cited sources were used with permission of the publisher)