AVOIDING SHIPWRECKED

**DATE: 2/9/2011**

**TEXT: Acts 27:13-44**

**INTRODUCTION**

Someone has said, “*Tough times do not last, but tough people do*!”

I don’t know about the last part of that statement, but I am certain about this

*Tough times do not last, but people with faith in the Lord do!*

If we are not careful, our lives could experience shipwreck

You can avoid being shipwrecked and this passage gives us a little insight into how to do that!

Paul’s journey to Rome was filled with danger and the potential for destruction

As they sailed toward Rome, their ship was engulfed in a tremendous storm and they all expected to die at sea

Paul’s experiences at sea stand as an example for you and I

As we journey in this life, we sometimes must sail over some very stormy seas

Sometimes, the sailing is smooth as we see in **v.13**

But how quickly things can change - **v.14!**

Often the storms that rock our lives seem to threaten the very foundations that we stand upon

Many times, these storms cause us to become discouraged and to want to give up

I believe there is help here for everyone who is sailing one of life’s stormy seas tonight

If you’re not in a storm now, I can almost guarantee that there is one on the way

Let’s look into these verses and find the help we need as I preach on this thought -

***“Avoiding Shipwreck”***

**~~~Prayer~~~**

The Storms of Life are always -

**I. A TIME OF “DESPAIR” - vs.13-20** (a cause for/ or feelings of hopelessness)

First there is -

**A. The “Deception’ - v.13**

Thecalm before the storm(the eye of a Hurricane)

In **v.13**, Luke says that with the wind now blowing from the south they could leave the Fair Havens

Just 4 miles west of the Fair Havens was the Cape of Matala

They would have had a little struggle to keep the ship away from the coast until finally rounding the Cape

From Cape Matala, it was 34 miles to ***“Phenice”***, with the southern wind now favoring their course they should have reached the harbor in a few hours

Instead, there was a violent change in the weather

A gale suddenly roared down on them from Crete’s 7000’ tall mountains, forcing them to turn and run before the wind

Calm seas can fool us into believing that the storms will not come

But, the Bible says they will –

Turn to **Ecclesiastes 5:15-17**

**Job 14:1 – *“Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble”***

**Job 5:7 – *“Yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward”***

**John 16:33 – *“These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world”***

**B. The Loom of ‘Disaster’ – vs. 14-17**

Luke records that the sailors called this wind ***“Euroclydon”***

An unusual name, but it has been found in one ancient inscription and is a slang compound of Greek and Latin which translates as *“northeaster,”* a strong winter wind

Meteorological evidence reveals that a sudden change from a mild southerly wind to a violent northeasterly wind often occurs in late fall in the eastern Mediterranean

When the severe storms come our way, we often feel as if events are out of our control

And many fall into discouragement and despair

**C. Tough ‘Decisions’ – vs. 18, 19**

The storm ought to make us take an inventory of our life and discard anything we do not need

We already have way too much baggage

Nothing happens to a child of God that He has not allowed –

**Romans 8:28 – *“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose”***

**II Corinthians 4:17 – *“For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;”***

**D. Look at the ‘Desperation’ – v.20**

Even Luke gave up!

When there seems like there is no light at the end of the tunnel,

You may get to the place where you want to just lay down and die

The Storms of Life are not only **A TIME OF “DESPAIR”**

But they are also -

 **II. A TIME OF “DANGER” – v.29a**

***“Then fearing lest we should have fallen upon rocks”***

**A.** The stormy times that we encounter in life have the potential to either make us or break us

They will either drive us to seek the Lord,

Or they will drive us away from Him

What happens in your life is your decision!

**B.** Job is an excellent example

When he was squeezed by Satan, he worshipped God

**Job 1:20-22 – *“Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped,”
“And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord”
“In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly”***

**C.** Simon Peter gave us an example that should be avoided

When he was squeezed by life, he crumbled

**Luke 22:31, 32 – “*And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat:”
“But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not:* *and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren”***

Turn to **Matthew 26:69-75**

**D.** You will either grow stronger, or be dashed upon the rocks

The Rocks of bitterness and unbelief

It all comes down to Who or what you look to in times of trouble!

Men - any man - will fail you; you must put your faith in Christ and Him alone!

The Storms of Life are **A TIME OF “DESPAIR”**

The Storms of Life are **A TIME OF “DANGER”**

And Lastly the Storms of Life can be -

**III. A TIME OF “DELIVERANCE” – vs. 21-44**

Here is some positive help and hope for your storm!

Here is how you Avoid Shipwreck

**A. Get ‘Anchored’ – v.29b**

Luke tells us they cast out four anchors to secure the ship

They anchored their ship yet they were still afraid

***“They wished for the day”***

But Paul was not afraid, why?

**Vs. 22, 23**

The reason is that he was anchored deeper and he was anchored stronger

Notice Four Anchors that will hold you in any storm:

**1.** **The ‘Presence’ of God – v.23**

**Matthew 28:20 – *“lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen”***

**Hebrews 13:5 – *“for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee”***

The Disciples in the midst of the storm - **John 6:16-21**

**2. The ‘Promises’ of God – vs. 24, 25**

His promises are steadfast and true –

**Romans 4:21 – *“And being fully persuaded that, what He had Promised, He was able also to perform”***

Notice some of those Promises we have to assure us of total security

**a. Brighter Days –**

**Psalms 30:5 – *“For His anger endureth but a moment; in His favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning”***

**b. Deliverance –**

**Psalms 34:19 – *“Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all”***

**c. Divine Grace –**

**II Corinthians 12:9 – *“And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me”***

**d. Ultimate Glory –**

**Revelation 21:4 – *“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away”***

His promises are based in and on His Word

It’s Pure, Inspired and will still be standing when the world is in flames

**Psalms 119:89 – *“For ever, O Lord, Thy Word is settled in heaven”***

**3. The ‘Providence’ of God – v.24**

God was working out His plan in Paul’s life

And He is doing the same in yours!

It may be simple faith, but I still believe that God is Sovereign!

**Psalms 57:1 – *“Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast”***

**Isaiah 25:4 – *“For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall”***

**Jeremiah 29:11 – *“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end”***

**4. The ‘Performance’ of God – v.44**

Everyone made it safely to the shore

God is able to work it all out!

He will get you through your storm and land you safely beyond it!

**Hebrews 6:19 – *“Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast,”***

**Get ‘Anchored’**

**B. ‘Accept’ the Storm – vs. 30-40**

These sailors listened to Paul and ate and went on with life

There comes a time when we have to surrender to the Lord’s will and allow Him to have His way in us

We can either bend under His hand, or He can break us

The choice is entirely ours!

If a vine grows against a tree, either the winds will force the vine closer to the trunk; or the tree will shelter the vine from the wind

You don’t have to like it, but you do need to submit to God in it –

**I Peter 5:6 – *“Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God,”***

**James 4:10 – *“Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up”***

**C. ‘Await’ your Deliverance – vs.41-44**

Their storm ended, yours will too!

Somewhere whether on this shore or on that shore, your storm will end

Until it does, Submit to the Lord, Serve the Lord and know that you are going to make it,

**I Corinthians 15:58 – *“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord”***

God has never, and never will, lose even one, of His children!

**CONCLUSION**

If your sea is rough tonight, I encourage you to cast your anchor upon the solid Rock and tie yourself up to Jesus right now

He already knows about what you face, but He wants you to depend on Him for your need

In His presence is the place where storms are conquered