

Acts: The Gospel Gone Viral
Lesson 49 “Shipwrecked”

I. Introduction We’ve been studying thru the book of Acts since January of last year. Reason being with all the craziness that has gone on over the last few years, I felt like people need an answer about what to do. The answer about what to do is contained within Acts. We are to do what we are always called to do which make disciples of all nations so God fills the earth with his glory. In this study, we have seen the early church turn the world right side up within a generation by simply proclaiming the word of God, operating in the miraculous, walking in unity, and not living their lives into death.

A. Last week we looked at how after getting off track with God’s plan for His life after 2 years, the Apostle Paul finally was able to begin his journey to Rome.

1. **Romans 1:9-11** God had already put it in Paul’s heart to go to Rome, but he overrode the prevailing word of God over his life to minister to Gentiles and 2 prophetic words and went to Jerusalem instead.
2. This sidetracked him for 2 years as he was imprisoned in Jerusalem and Caesarea. Before he was shipped back to Jerusalem to stand trial again, he requested to appeal his case to Caesar. He had a right to do this as a Roman citizen. This request was granted by King Agrippa and he was placed on a ship to Rome.
3. Last week we looked at Paul’s voyage to Rome. He had been in a season of prayer and fasting and God showed him there would be trouble on the voyage so he advised the crew to harbor and not try to make the trip. They ignored his counsel and got caught up in a terrible storm that looked like it was going to take everyone’s life. Paul again prayed and God spoke to him. **Acts 27:23-25**. This prophecy gave Paul faith to begin to give orders to the crew on the ship.
4. This time the crew listened to him. They recognized the wisdom of God on Paul’s life based on his relationship with God. It put him in a position of authority even as a prisoner. This is a way God wants each of us to live.

II. Shipwrecked - Today we are going to look at the next part of the voyage and the shipwreck on the island of Malta. **Main Point: Even when we are in the middle of God’s will for our lives, there will be opportunities for our faith to shipwreck.** Today we are going to learn how to overcome that in the midst of facing circumstances that war against our faith.

A. **1 Timothy 1:18-19** This passage reveals our faith can shipwreck. What’s the key to having that not happen? Putting our focus back on the revealed word of God that has been spoken over our lives. The thing that gave Paul faith in the storm was his encounter with Jesus.

B. Acts 27:33-38 After the sailors listen to Paul and choose to get on the lifeboats because Paul said they would perish.

1. Paul then encourages everyone to eat because they would need strength. Faith acts in line with what it believes. People who are going to live need strength.
2. Paul's faith that came from word of God encouraged others. That's how we should be.

C. Acts 27:39-44 Shipwrecked on Malta (put up map) - This physical shipwreck was going to be a circumstance that could have warred against Paul's faith.

1. This shipwreck was actually miraculous. If they would have missed Malta when they put their anchors out and decided to run aground, they would have gone on for 200 more miles before coming to more land.
2. Miraculously, they landed on Malta. The shipwreck was violent, which is why everyone had to jump off and swim or float on boards to land.
3. Interestingly, the soldiers wanted to kill the prisoners (escaped prisoners could have cost the soldiers their lives), but Paul had so much favor with the centurion, he commanded the soldiers to let the prisoners live. **This favor was produced by Paul's faith in the word of God and sharing it on the boat.**

D. Acts 28:1-10 Paul's Ministry on Malta

1. As Paul gathers wood to make a fire, a viper fastens to his hand and bites him. This should have caused him to die. What caused Paul to live? His faith in the word of God over his life. **Acts 27:23-24, Mark 16:17-18.**
 - a. The point Jesus is making is if in the process of life, we are bitten by a snake, the venom released won't kill us.
 - b. As we pursue the will of God, we will be snakebitten. If we'll believe the prevailing word of God over our lives, we will survive and thrive in the midst of the bite.
2. The natives thought Paul was a murderer because of the snakebite, but when Paul believed God and shook the snake into the fire and lived, they then thought he was a god. **People are fickle.**
3. Paul's faith in God's word, gave him favor. He was invited to pray for the father of Publius. When Paul laid his hands on him, Publius's father was healed.
4. When the rest of the people on the island heard of this miracle, they all gathered around Paul and Paul began to pray for many sick people and saw them healed. They had a revival on Malta.

III. Conclusion - Many of you may have received a word for your life for 2023. You may have a godly vision for your life. It's important to keep rehearsing that word and reminding yourself of

God's promise as you go through 2023. Adversity will come so it's necessary to keep the promise of God in front of us so we walk in faith.

A. Closing Prayer

B. Call Up Prayer Team