

“THE SHIPWRECK OF A NON-SHIPWRECKED LIFE”

Acts 27:38-44

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INTRODUCTION

We all face troubles, trials, tragedies in life. The question is not really: “How can we avoid them?” It is: “How may I best benefit from them and through them bring the greatest glory to God?” The apostle Paul had no lack of troubles, trials, persecutions, and tragedies in his life; but his biggest concern was glorifying God in his body and winning the lost to Christ while strengthening the hearts of believers. In this passage we see an example of Paul’s life philosophy.

I. HELPLESSNESS TO PREVENT TROUBLE AND “TRAGEDY” (38-41)

We may not be able to prevent the tragedy, but we can take measures to lessen its impact

- A. Taking proper nutrition (38)
- B. Removing unnecessary weight and burden to the ship (38)
- C. Planning out the best strategy (39)
- D. Preparing for the best possible outcome (40)
- E. Grounded and broken up on a sandbar (41)

II. HELPFULNESS IN SAVING THE LIVES OF ALL THE OTHERS ON THE SHIP (42-44)

- A. The Logical plans of the unregenerate mind (42)
- B. The life-changing influence of a Godly man’s testimony (43-44)

All of them were saved physically; how many of them were saved spiritually we have no way of knowing.

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF CHAPTER 27:

- 1) Faithful friends often stand with Christians in their time of trial as Aristarchus [and Luke] did here in verse 2; compare Epaphroditus in Phil. 2:25-30 and Onesiphorus in II Tim. 1:16.
- 2) It is common for unbelievers to pay more heed to their own material and financial interests than to listen to the wise advice of Christians (27:10-11).
- 3) In times of crisis God’s people need to call on people to trust in God (22-23).
- 4) Persevering prayer is a powerful resource (24) recommended by Jesus (Matthew 7:7) as well as James (5:15) and Paul (Philippians 4:6-7).
- 5) Faith in God results in “being of good cheer” (25). Paul maintained such confidence until the end of his life (II Timothy 1:12). Abraham also had such confidence (Romans 4:19-21).
- 6) God intends for us to take proper care of our bodies – including proper and timely nutrition (34-35). Jesus so took care of the multitude (Mt. 15:32).
- 7) Giving thanks to God in a public setting can be a powerful testimony (35). In Luke 24:30-31 the disciples came to recognize Jesus when he prayed over food.
- 8) The presence of a Christian and the power of his testimony can have a very positive influence and effect on others –vv. 42-43. Paul knew that his appropriate endurance of troubles would have a positive influence upon others (II Cor. 1:6-7).