

Sermon Notes

Week of Sunday, September 13, 2015

Trust & Obey - Eye on the Horizon

Acts 27:1-44 (ESV)

Pastor - Mark Saunders



A. Sometimes we trust our senses more than God

9 Since much time had passed, and the voyage was now dangerous because even the Fast was already over, Paul advised them, 10 saying, “Sirs, I perceive that the voyage will be with injury and much loss, not only of the cargo and the ship, but also of our lives.” 11 But the centurion paid more attention to the pilot and to the owner of the ship than to what Paul said. 12 And because the harbor was not suitable to spend the winter in, the majority decided to put out to sea from there, on the chance that somehow they could reach Phoenix, a harbor of Crete, facing both southwest and northwest, and spend the winter there. (Acts 27:9-12 ESV)

B. When we trust anything more than God, things eventually go bad

13 Now when the south wind blew gently, supposing that they had obtained their purpose, they weighed anchor and sailed along Crete, close to the shore. 14 But soon a tempestuous wind, called the northeaster, struck down from the land. 15 And when the ship was caught and could not face the wind, we gave way to it and were driven along. (Acts 27:13-15 ESV)

C. When things go bad, we do what we can, but it doesn't matter

16 Running under the lee of a small island called Cauda, we managed with difficulty to secure the ship's boat. 17 After hoisting it up, they used supports to undergird the ship. Then, fearing that they would run aground on the Syrtis, they lowered the gear, and thus they were driven along. 18 Since we were violently storm-tossed, they began the next day to jettison the cargo. 19 And on the third day they threw the ship's tackle overboard with their own hands. 20 When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope of our being saved was at last abandoned. (Acts 27:16-20 ESV)

D. When we come to our end, God comes to our rescue

1) No boat.

26 But we must run aground on some island.”

2) No workaround.

27 When the fourteenth night had come, as we were being driven across the Adriatic Sea, about midnight the sailors suspected that they were nearing land. 28 So they took a sounding and found twenty fathoms. A little farther on they took a sounding again and found fifteen fathoms. 29 And fearing that we might run on the rocks, they let down four anchors from the stern and prayed for day to come. 30 And as the sailors were seeking to escape from the ship, and had lowered the ship's boat into the sea under pretense of laying out anchors from the bow, 31 Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, “Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved.” 32 Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the ship's boat and let it go.

39 Now when it was day, they did not recognize the land, but they noticed a bay with a beach, on which they planned if possible to run the ship ashore. 40 So they cast off the anchors and left them in the sea, at the same time loosening the ropes that tied the rudders. Then hoisting the foresail to the wind they made for the beach. 41 But striking a reef,[h] they ran the vessel aground. The bow stuck and remained immovable, and the stern was being broken up by the surf. 42 The soldiers' plan was to kill the prisoners, lest any should swim away and escape. 43 But the centurion, wishing to save Paul, kept them from carrying out their plan. He ordered those who could swim to jump overboard first and make for the land, 44 and the rest on planks or on pieces of the ship. And so it was that all were brought safely to land. (Acts 27:26-44 ESV)

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Getting Started

1. Describe and explain what, in this week's sermon, stood out or made an impact on you?

2. What friends or acquaintances do you have whom you trust because of their relationship with God? Who are the friends who best meet your needs?

3. Read Acts 27:1-26. How many times have you received a warning from God, either through Scripture, or through God's people? What was the warning? How did you respond to that warning?

4. Paul trusted God throughout the storm. Why was that? How have you trusted God through your storms, past or present?

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5. Read Acts 27:27. How did Paul's confidence in God affect the people around him? Are you convincing those around you, through your actions, to trust in God? Explain your answer. How can you be even more convincing?

6. What part did obedience play in the salvation of those on the ship? How does your obedience to Christ help you survive the storms and shipwrecks of life?

7. Read Psalm 18:1-3, Psalm 20:6-9, Psalm 71:1-4, and Proverbs 28:26. What do these words tell you about the character of God, particularly His trustworthiness?

8. Read through Proverbs 3:1-35 several times in the coming week. Make a list of all the commands you see in this passage of Scripture. Ask God to show you where you struggle to seek after Him, and ask Him to strengthen you in these areas.