

Introduction:

- Have you ever been in a place that is so storm-tossed and lonely? How do you weather a storm in a season of life when no place seems safe, friends are far away and you are alone?
 - Your job is a bear.
 - Maybe you are flunking a class.
 - Home is filled with stress and tension or maybe you just found out you have a challenging sickness.
- It is in times like this that we feel we have to find something new. New job, new career, new family, another prophetic word.... Ever been there?
- Acts 27:21-26
- Paul drew strength from an old promise not a new word.
 - He hung on to a word given the year before. *"Afterward Paul felt compelled by the Spirit to go over to Macedonia and Achaia before going to Jerusalem. "And after that," he said, "I must go on to Rome!"*" (Acts 19:21, NLT)

I. What Do You Do When the Wind Is Against You?

- A. Have you ever been in that place where you know God has spoken to you but there is nothing in the natural to confirm you heard correctly? You know you are called to... but it sure does not look like it.
- B. Regroup—don't regress.
 1. When ambushed in the spirit, regroup and punch through.
 2. Don't lay down and don't retreat. Ambushes have the whole field of fire covered. If you lay down you die. If you retreat you get it in the back. Charge ahead in the Spirit of Christ.
- C. Discover what God is doing in you!
 1. The Bible is full of stories of people who over time realized what God was doing in them.
 2. Most often it is not seen until the end of the journey.
- D. Avoid getting in the flesh but find the fruit of the Spirit!
- E. Rediscover what God has said.

II. Storms Reveal The Strength Of God's Promises

- A. We are going to Rome. This was the Word of the Lord to Paul.
- B. What was the last word that God spoke to you?
- C. IE. The children of the righteous shall inherit the land.
 1. *"Who, then, are those who fear the Lord? He will instruct them in the ways they should choose. They will spend their days in prosperity, and their descendants will inherit the land. The Lord confides in those who fear him; he makes his covenant known to them."* (Psalm 25:12-14, NIV)

2. That word got me though all the way to my son came home from hospital.
- D. Watch this: *"Since we were violently storm-tossed, they began the next day to jettison the cargo. And on the third day they threw the ship's tackle overboard with their own hands. 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 27:18-20, ESV)
 1. Paul told them not to go, Acts 27:9-10. The Centurion paid no attention to Paul.
 2. It is darkest when we obey men and encounter storms than when we obey God and encounter storms. Acts 27:21-24 Paul is confident in where He is going!
- E. Faith in word of the Lord brought supernatural manifestation. Acts 27:23-24 an angel shows up from God.
 1. God...to whom I belong
 2. God...to who I worship
 3. An old word of the Lord:
 - a) Acts 19:21 and *"The following night the Lord stood by him and said, "Take courage, for as you have testified to the facts about me in Jerusalem, so you must testify also in Rome.""* (Acts 23:11, ESV)
 - b) An old 'Word of the Lord' has power...Don't ever forget it!!! Paul did not need a new promise, he needed to be reminded of one already given!
 - c) Paul strengthened the crew with his faith! That is what we should be doing church!

III. Saved By A Promise

- A. Acts 27:27 - "After Midnight" the 'witching hour'. The sailors get a gut feeling, test the waters depth and seek to escape on the life boat.
 1. Better to stay with God than to abandon ship. *"Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, "Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved." Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the ship's boat and let it go."* (Acts 27:31-32, ESV)
 2. Renew your strength when you have been in the fight. Acts 27:33-37 They eat, are encouraged (comfort food) and back in the storm.
- B. Sometimes we will be tempted to 'find a new plan' rather than staying with God's plan: Stay in the boat! I think people do this often. They trust God. They rest in faith and then their natural gifting/training/head 'kicks in' and they seek their own way rather than trusting God.
 1. This threaten the lives of others. Acts 27:31. *Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved.*
 2. One, I think this was a specific Word for the Centurion, Julius Acts 27:3.
 3. Two, I think that God wants Julius to have an encounter with Him here. One that he will always look back on when he tells the story of how God saved everyone through Paul's encouragement.

4. The Promise is greater than the how. We often start with the Word of God and then start looking for how He will do it.
 - a) Everyone still ended up in the water.
 - b) Even the ones who could not swim
 - c) But they all made it! No loss of life...they obeyed the Lord.
- C. And all is well: "... *And so it was that all were brought safely to land.*" (Acts 27:44, ESV)

Conclusion:

- Learn to draw strength from an old promise rather than a new word.
- Sometimes we go through the same things in order to learn/relearn an old truth. This lets us know that God is more interested in us than anything else.
- Rather than reach for a new word or a new promise, why not consider what God last spoke to you and go after it with an old promise that's tested.
 - *"And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ."* (Philippians 1:6, ESV)
 - *"fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."* (Isaiah 41:10, ESV)
 - *"And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus."* (Philippians 4:19, ESV)
- When you are all alone in the storm, and no place seems safe, and friends are far away, remember you have a promise from God!