**FINDING HOPE IN THE STORMS**

**Acts 27:1-44**

**THE BIG IDEA: When we listen and obey the word of God we can find hope in the midst of life’s storms.**

* **“Human society has no idea how much it owes, in the mercy of God, to the presence in it of righteous men and women.” – F.F. Bruce**
* **You may not have all the details but when God has spoken you can always trust in Him to accomplish what He said!**

**LIFE IS FULL OF STORMS BUT GOD’S WORD REMAINS TRUE**

* *“Sailing slowly for many days, with difficulty…”* (Acts 27:7a)
* *“With still more difficulty we sailed…”* (Acts 27:8a)
* *“But before long, a fierce wind called the ‘northeaster’ rushed down from the island.”* (Acts 27:14)
* *“Because we were being severely battered by the storm…”* (Acts 27:18a)
* *“For many days neither sun nor stars appeared, and the severe storm kept raging. Finally all hope was fading that we would be saved.”* (Acts 27:20)
* *“The bow jammed fast and remained immovable, while the stern began to break up by the pounding of the waves.”* (Acts 27:41b)
* **God never promised that we wouldn’t go through storms, but he did promise He would be with us at all times.**
* *“Haven’t I commanded you: be strong and courageous? Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”* (Joshua 1:9)
* *“Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.”* (Psalm 23:4)

**THERE IS HOPE IN THE STORMS WHEN WE TRUST GOD’S WORD**

* *“Now I urge you to take courage, because there will be no loss of any of your lives, but only of the ship. 23 For last night an angel of the God I belong to and serve stood by me 24 and said, ‘Don’t be afraid, Paul. It is necessary for you to appear before Caesar. And indeed, God has graciously given you all those who are sailing with you.’ 25 So take courage, men, because I believe God that it will be just the way it was told to me.”* (Acts 27:22-25)
* *“So I urge you to take some food. For this is for your survival, since none of you will lose a hair from your head.’ 35 After he said these things and had taken some bread, he gave thanks to God in the presence of all of them, and after he broke it, he began to eat. 36 They all were encouraged and took food themselves.”* (Acts 27:34-36)
* **Relying on our own feelings or abilities will lead to despair, but when we trust in the Lord we can have hope and encouragement in our darkest moments.**
* *“We know that all things work together for the good of those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.”* (Romans 8:28)

**SURVIVING THE STORMS REQUIRES OBEYING THE LORD**

* *“In this way, everyone safely reached the shore.”* (Acts 27:44b)
* **Our ability to thrive and survive the storms of life hinge on our obedience to God’s word (the Bible).**
* Jesus – “B*lessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it.”* (Matthew 11:28)

**CONNECT GROUP DISCUSSION**

**ICE-BREAKER**: If there were no limitations, where would you like to travel to?

**START THINKING (Observation):**

* What does Acts 27 teach us about God/The Holy Spirit?
* Who accompanied Paul on His trip to Rome?
* Why didn’t the leaders initially listen to Paul’s advice on the ship?
* What changed that made them listen to Paul later?
* How did Paul set an example to the people on the ship?

**DIGGING DEEPER (Understanding and Application):**

* When storms of life come, what is your initial response usually?
* What can we learn from Acts 27 about God’s sovereignty?
* Would you say you are more like the crew who just wanted to escape the storm by any means necessary, or like Paul who stayed calm and trusted the Lord? (Be transparent here)
* How do we know God is always with us? How does that help you to weather the storms of life?
* How does obedience to God’s Word relate to getting through the “storms”?
* What will you do differently based on this study?

**LOVING OUTWARD**

* Who do I/you need to share Jesus with this week?
* Who do you need to have a follow-up conversation about Jesus with?
* Who are you inviting/bringing to church next week?