

## **I Believe God**

Acts 27: 20-25

Our text today deals with a difficult season in the life of Paul. He is on a journey, headed toward Rome to stand before his accusers in a court of law. Sensing the grave danger in proceeding at the present time, Paul urged those onboard with him to delay their travel until a more suitable time. Refusing to heed his warning, the ship sailed and soon was caught up in the midst of a ferocious storm, threatening the lives of all onboard.

While we are not on a ship, headed to Rome to stand trial, we are all on a journey through the sea of life. At times the sea is calm, and our journey is enjoyable. During other seasons, the waves are rough, and we are forced to sail within the storm. We need the faith Paul possessed when faced with those difficult seasons in life. While it is not easy, believers are promised safe passage to the other side. Maintaining our faith in the Lord will aid us on the journey.

I want to examine the [details](#) of the text as we consider the profound thought: [I Believe God](#).

**I. The Ferocity of the Storm** (20) – [And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away.](#) The storm Paul and the others faced was no passing gale, it was a strong tempest. We discover:

**A. They were Disoriented** (20a) – [And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us.](#) In those days ships did not enjoy all the modern navigational equipment used today – they depended on the sun and stars to guide their journey. For many days the storm had raged and they were unable to see the heavenly bodies for direction. They were in the midst of a great storm, and had no idea where they were or where they were headed.

- While in the midst of adversity and storms, it is easy for even the strongest Christian to become disoriented in the journey. We must keep our eyes on the Son, if we are to maintain a proper direction. When the storm clouds cover our path, and we lose our focus, we are in danger of getting off course and into hazardous waters.

**B. They were Discouraged** (20b) – [all hope that we should be saved was then taken away.](#) Luke is along with Paul on this journey. He has recorded the book of Acts for us. In the midst of this ferocious storm, Luke admits that all hope of survival seemed gone. They were beginning to resign to defeat, feeling as if they all would perish at sea.

- That is exactly the frame of mind the enemy wants every believer to possess. He wants to divert our focus from the Lord to the storm we face. He seeks to have us believe we will never survive the adversity we face, and there is no use to press on. He wants us to abandon our efforts and cease serving the Lord. No doubt we all have faced similar situations and have been tempted to abandon the faith. We must resist the urge to give up, look to the Lord by faith, and continue on in the journey, no matter how difficult it may be.

**II. The Fervency of the Prayer** (21) – [But after long abstinence Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss.](#) This verse reveals the fervency of Paul in prayer. While everyone else had given up hope, Paul remained resilient in prayer and hope in the Lord. Consider:

**A. The Context** (14-15, 18-19) – To fully appreciate the dedication of Paul, we must understand the adverse conditions they faced. The storm was so intense they had no control over the ship. The captain made the decision to let the ship go where she wished. Their path was literally being dictated by the storm. As the storm continued to rage, they were forced to begin throwing everything overboard in an effort to keep the ship afloat. There can be no doubt that the ship and those who sailed upon it were in a perilous situation.

- Surely we have all faced a situation in life that resembled the dire situation Paul faced. We may not have been on a ship, in the midst of the sea, but we faced a situation so desperate that it genuinely dictated our course of life and actions. It seemed as if our lives were spiraling out of control, and we were simply trying to hang on and survive the storm. Maybe you tried to rid your life of perceived hindrances, and yet the storm was unrelenting. You felt as if you tried everything you could, and yet there appeared to be no end of the storm in sight.

**B. The Commitment** (21) – [But after long abstinence Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss.](#) While the storm raged above, it is apparent that Paul had been within the ship praying and seeking the Lord. Everyone else may have abandoned hope, but Paul hadn't. He committed himself to fervent prayer in the midst of the storm. The word abstinence carries the idea of "fasting." Paul was seeking the Lord on behalf of himself and all who traveled with him.

- I will admit, this is easy preaching, but hard practice. Prayer is often viewed as a last resort, but it should always be considered our first line of defense. We must be committed to prayer, regardless of the situations we face. During storms like these, often a hurried, casual prayer will not suffice. There are times when we must commit to long seasons of prayer.

**III. The Faithfulness of the Lord (23-24)** – Paul knew the Lord was faithful, and yet he wanted those onboard to ship to recognize it too. Paul was aware of:

**A. God's Presence (23a)** – *For there stood by me this night the angel of God.* Paul assured them he had been in the presence of the Lord. While the others were fearful and hopeless, feeling left to the mercy of the storm, Paul assured them that God was in the midst. During the turmoil of the storm, Paul had rested in the presence and security of the Lord.

- Storms of life are a reality we all must face. They are unavoidable and unpreventable, but we do not have to face them alone. The saved by grace are promised that the Lord will never leave us or forsake us. We are never alone or abandoned.

**B. God's Possession (23)** – *For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve.* While the others were in a state of panic, Paul rested in peace. He knew he belonged to God. He was trying to follow the Lord's direction and serve Him faithfully. Paul declared that he belonged to the Lord, and the Lord was bigger than any storm they faced. He was secure in the hand of the Savior!

- Storms of life will come, but when they do, remember to whom you belong! We will never face a storm that He isn't the Master of. There will never be a situation in life that He can't calm and provide perfect peace. Paul remained in the storm, but the Lord gave peace and security. Sometimes He causes the storm to cease, and sometimes He gives peace while the storm rages.

**C. God's Provision (24)** – *Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.* God had promised Paul that his life would be spared along with all who traveled with him. Not a one would perish in the storm. They were safe in the hand of God.

- Paul was key for many on the ship. God's favor was extended to them because of Paul. The unsaved don't enjoy the promise and security of eternal life in Christ, but I am thankful those who are in Christ are secure in Him. The saved are held within the hand of Christ, and in the hand of God. Nothing we face can remove us from the grip of our Lord!

**IV. The Faith of the Apostle (25)** – *Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me.* Here Paul reveals the great faith he has in Christ the Lord, and the God he serves. Notice:

**A. The Peace** (25a) – [Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer](#). Bear in mind the context of the passage.

They are in the midst of a storm with hurricane force winds. They have thrown everything overboard expect themselves, and Paul urges them to be of good cheer. They may have thought he had lost his mind, but he was simply resting in the peace of God. Even though a massive storm was raging, Paul saw no reason for fear or dread. He enjoyed perfect peace in the Lord.

- This requires great faith and focus, but it is possible to enjoy peace in the midst of difficult trials and adversity. The saved enjoy a decided advantage, regardless of the circumstances we face. The Lord purchased our redemption on the cross. He atoned for our sin and removed the penalty of eternal death. He rose triumphant in resurrection life, ensuring eternal life for all the saved. With that in mind, there is perfect peace regardless of the storm.

**B. The Promise** (25b) – [for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me](#). Paul knew they were

basing their assumptions on outward conditions, but he was resting in the promise of God.

Although the situation seemed hopeless, God had promised he would survive, and he chose to believe God over circumstances.

- The enemy desires us to live in defeat. He knows he was defeated at Calvary, and he is unable to touch the souls of the redeemed. However, if he can get us to succumb to defeat, we are rendered ineffective in service to Christ our Lord. As we face the storms and trials of life, we have a choice to make – do we believe the promises of God or the lies of the devil? Our victory in the trials we face depends upon the choice we make. I choose to believe God. His promises never fail. Satan is the father of lies and deceit. He can't be trusted. Don't allow him to divert your focus or hinder your faith. Look to the Lord and believe Him!

**Conclusion:** You may be like Paul and Luke, dealing with a raging storm today. While it may appear to be devastating, the Lord is in control. If you are in Christ, you are secure in Him. He alone can provide the strength you need to endure. Seek Him as Paul did for victory in your life.

If you are unsaved, you don't enjoy the peace and security found in Christ. He stands ready to save you today, ensuring safe passage to heaven. Come to Him by faith, recognizing your need and repenting of sin, and He will save you today!