

Series: Acts

Title: Our Fellow Ship

Text: Acts 27: 22-44

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Throughout the Acts of the Apostles we have seen what great measures Christ our King has gone to, to establish his gospel and what great miracles of grace he wrought in the hearts of his lost sheep through his gospel. So we see again an illustration of the importance, the necessity and the effects which God works through the gospel. Our text is in Acts 27.

Title: Our Fellow Ship

A heavy tempest lay on all the men in the ship. All hope of saving themselves was now taken away. Paul was in the same boat with them. Yet, Paul stands up in their midst and declares the word of the Lord to them, **And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship (Acts 27: 22.)** Where did Paul get such a message? How could he be sure?

God reveals in the hearts of his children through the gospel, what he promises to do for each of his chosen, redeemed, called children. God promises to do just what he did for Paul in the midst of this storm.

1. **Acts 27: 23: For there stood by me this night the angel of God--**Christ promises his own, *I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.* He promises to dwell in our midst.

2. **Acts 27: 23:** Paul said, **whose I am--**God gives assurance by his promise in Christ that every believer he has called is his purchased possession-- *Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me (Isaiah 49:16.)*

3. **Acts 27: 23:...whom I serve--**God promises to make his children willing to serve him through his gospel. Paul was separated unto the gospel by the power of Christ who sent Ananias to him. Our covenant God promises--*them that honour me I will honour (1 Samuel 2: 20.)*

4. **Acts 27: 24: Saying, Fear not, Paul--**Our Savior promises to never leave us Comfortless. Our covenant God says into the heart he has made new through the Spirit--*Isaiah 41:13...I the LORD thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee. 14: Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the LORD, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.*

5. **Acts 27: 24:...thou MUST be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee--**Our God promises us that we shall be saved and so shall all those chosen, redeemed brethren God calls out into Christ. John 10: 27: *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. 29: My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.*

Faith rests all on the word of God and makes us not ashamed. Paul delivered this word

Acts 27: 25: Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me. 26: Howbeit we must be cast upon a certain island.

Salvation is on God's certain shore. Every chosen, redeemed, called child of God must be cast upon a certain island--Canaan's shore, final glory with our God.

Proposition: When God reveals the certainty of his salvation in a sinner, this gospel is the very gospel which is the power of God, which makes his children obedient to trust him alone to save them. We have some illustrations of what believers do who really believe. These are works of faith, fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory of the Father.

I. THROUGH HIS GOSPEL, GOD MAKES HIS CHILDREN TO WATCH IN HOPE

Acts 27: 27: But when the fourteenth night was come, as we were driven up and down in Adria, about midnight the shipmen deemed that they drew near to some country;

Though we pass through this storm of life the believer is ever watching for the return of our Savior.

1. *But when the fourteen night was come--we wait with long patience.*
2. *As we were driven up and down in the sea--we look not at things below but things above--we have his promise.*
3. *About midnight--we know not the time, but even in the night, we are watching*

Luke 12:37: Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.

II. THROUGH HIS GOSPEL, GOD GROWS THE BELIEVER IN GRACE AND KNOWLEDGE OF HIM SO THAT WE TRUST THE LORD MORE.

Acts 27:...about midnight the shipmen deemed that they drew near to some country; 28: And sounded, and found *it* twenty fathoms: and when they had gone a little further, they sounded again, and found *it* fifteen fathoms. 29: Then fearing lest we should have fallen upon rocks, they cast four anchors out of the stern, and wished for the day.

What a contrast from that picture of unbelief we saw in these men before.

1. Before, they would not heed the word spoken by Christ's ambassador.
 2. Before, they gloried in themselves.
 3. Before, they worked feverishly to save themselves in the storm.
- All that was an example of what it is to: make provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts the flesh--boastings in our ability and self-will and so on.

Now we have a picture of growth in grace. They have been told to be of good cheer: no man's life will be lost, they must be cast upon a certain island, though they were close enough to see the island, notice what they did:

Acts 27: 29: Then fearing lest we should have fallen upon rocks, they cast four anchors out of the stern, and wished for the day.

1. As the believer is grown in grace, we know by experience of all the dangers we face. That only God is able to save, so we draw nearer.
 - We are no match for the tempest
 - We are in darkness without Christ the Light.
 - There are many jagged rocks that would sink us.

Application: Growth in grace is not growing more confident in self, but less; growing in grace is growing more persuaded that God alone shall save us. His promises of our sure salvation in Christ are what make us draw nearer, drop anchor and ever wait on Christ the Light to deliver us.

Romans 13: 11-14: 11:...knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep: for now *is* our salvation nearer than when we believed. 12: The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. 13: Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. 14: But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts *thereof*.

III. THE WORD OF PROMISE, MAKES THE BELIEVER ABIDE IN CHRIST ALONE

Acts 27: 30: And as the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship, when they had let down the boat into the sea, under colour as though they would have cast anchors out of the foreship,

These shipmen in front of the ship heard the same word

1. They go through the same motions of those who let down anchors in the stern of the ship, but its merely form--*under colour as though they would have cast anchors out of the foreship*
2. Their hope of salvation was in something else other than the ship--*they let down the life boat*
3. Note: the wickedness of unbelief: they care about no one else in the ship, but themselves.
4. What is the cure? The gospel! Christ the Word of God.

Acts 27: 31: Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved.

We see a type of Christ in this ship. The word from God was that the ship would be lost. But Paul says except ye abide in the ship, ye shall be lost. We have the benefit of looking ahead and seeing how this broken ship meant deliverance.

Acts 27: 41: And falling into a place where two seas met, they ran the ship aground; and the forepart stuck fast, and remained unmoveable, but the hinder part was broken with the violence of the waves.

1. Christ Jesus is our Ship of salvation.
 - God and Man in one body--
 - A body hast thou prepared me--
 - He offered his body through the eternal Spirit.
2. Two seas met in him.
 - Justice broke him in the violence of the waves, under the wrath of God
 - That very act by which he declared God just and the Justifier is the very mercy by which God saves all those given to Christ
3. THESE TWO SEAS HAVE KISSED IN HARMONY--HE SUCCEEDED, HIS PEOPLE SHALL BE SAVED FROM THEIR SINS.
 - By the Faithfulness of Christ Jesus, God in mercy justly, justified his children
 - Through the gospel of Christ, God reveals this--*his righteousness*--giving life and faith to each one he justified

- Those in whom he reveals Christ, say with Paul...Romans 1:16: For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. 17: For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

4. EXCEPT YE ABIDE IN CHRIST, YE CAN NOT BE SAVED--

John 15:4-8: 4: Abide in me, and I in you

1 John 1:3: That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

5. This gospel revelation will make a believing sinner do this:

Acts 27: 32: Then the soldiers cut off the ropes of the boat, and let her fall off.

Bruce Crabtree: NO "JUST IN CASE LIFE BOATS"

IV. THROUGH HIS GOSPEL, GOD MAKES US DESIRE THE GOSPEL MORE AND MAKES BRETHREN ONE

Acts 27: 33: And while the day was coming on, Paul besought *them* all to take meat, saying, This day is the fourteenth day that ye have tarried and continued fasting, having taken nothing.

As long as we worry and work to save ourselves we will not eat this heavenly bread and we have no health. We only are tossed more, worry more, work more and are soul sick.

Acts 27: 34: Wherefore I pray you to take *some* meat: for this is for your health: for there shall not an hair fall from the head of any of you.

1. Consistency comes from a steady diet of hearing these precious promises preached from God's word.
2. They were worried over all these big things--the ship, the waves, the winds, the merchandise--while they were busy with those things they were "exceedingly tossed."
3. But how the minuteness of God's promises are able settle our hearts--*there shall not an hair fall from the head of any of you*.

Brethren, the more we feed upon this gospel of Christ, the more our hearts are cheered by these promises, the more we desire to eat of this Bread and the more one we will be with each other.

They were exceedingly tossed--now they sat down with Paul and with one another--

Acts 27: 35: And when he had thus spoken, he took bread, and gave thanks to God in presence of them all: and when he had broken *it*, he began to eat. 36: Then were they all of good cheer, and they also took *some* meat.

Illustration: In the very beginning a baby has to be taught where the milk comes from and has to be instructed to eat it. This is the very first lesson for an infant. This is the very first principle for a babe in Christ as well.

Example: The Corinthians were a rich people--full of the world--minding earthly things--missing this gospel food. The result was they were full of division toward one another. They actually thought they knew more than Paul. But Paul said that from the first:

1 Corinthians 2: 2: For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified....3: 1: And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. 2: I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. 3: For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?

So Paul spends the first two chapters of 1 Corinthians dealing with the importance of hearing and feeding upon the gospel of Christ. It was the lack of the gospel of Christ that made their sickness of soul and worry and division grow worse. Where there is no eating there is no health, where there is no health there is no cheer. But listen to this:

Jeremiah 15:16: Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts.

Application: Do you find a critical spirit in you? Do you find your first reaction is to point the finger rather than to consider your own fault, rather than submitting, than taking the fault, or bearing the burden? You need to eat this Bread--Christ the Bread of the gospel.

1 Peter 2: 1: Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, 2: As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: 3: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

Someone might say, "But I need strong meat and the meat is not strong enough for me." If that is your high thought of yourself then you, indeed, need milk most.

Be sure of this God gives Bread enough to every one of his children in his Ship.

Acts 27: 37: And we were in all in the ship two hundred threescore and sixteen souls. 38: And when they had eaten enough,...

Application: If you are one of his children, I guarantee you that if you consistently come to the table you will consistently find that God indeed is providing bread enough for you. The problem is not with everyone else--but you will not realize it unless God breaks your critical spirit and your pointer finger through the power of this gospel.

V. THROUGH HIS GOSPEL, GOD GROWS HIS CHILDREN SO THAT THEY ARE USEFUL TO GOD AND HIS WORK.

The work of righteousness is finished by Christ. Believers get no more accepted than we are in Christ. But the work that is left be done are the little jobs involved so that we collectively cast this Bread--this gospel--upon the waters. When will you be spiritually healthy and used of God for this work of casting the bread upon the waters? When you have eaten enough so that you hunger and thirst after this bread yourself.

Acts 27: 38: And when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship, and cast out the wheat into the sea...

Illustration: I tell someone about a good restaurant. They go. But I never eat there. I would not be a credible witness.

1. God sets our minds in hope through this gospel as he opens the way just as he promised he would

Acts 27: 39: And when it was day, they knew not the land: but they discovered a certain creek with a shore, into the which they were minded, if it were possible, to thrust in the ship.

2. God strengthens his children to commit to him through this gospel.

Acts 27: 40 And when they had taken up the anchors, they committed themselves unto the sea, and loosed the rudder bands, and hoised up the mainsail to the wind, and made toward shore.

3. God grows a merciful spirit within us through this gospel

Acts 27: 42 And the soldiers' counsel was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim out, and escape. 43: But the centurion, willing to save Paul, kept them from their purpose; and commanded that they which could swim should cast themselves first into the sea, and get to land: 44: And the rest, some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship.

WHEN GOD WORKS THIS IN YOU THROUGH THE GOSPEL THEN YOU WILL HUNGER AND THIRST AFTER HIM, YOU WILL BE PERSUADED HIS WAY IS THE BEST WAY, YOU WILL COMMIT TO THE WORK, AND YOU WILL DELIGHT IN MERCY TO SEE PRISONERS GO FREE. THEN WE WILL BE USEFUL IN GOD'S WORK.

VI. NOT ONE SHALL BE LOST--God shall save each of his children through this word of salvation!

Acts 27: 44:...And so it came to pass, that they escaped all safe to land.

Isaiah 55: 2: Wherefore do ye spend money for *that which is* not bread? and your labour for *that which* satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye *that which is* good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.

AMEN!