

# Further up, Further in

## Resources for Continued Study

### “HELP AND HOPE IN THE SHIPWRECK”

#### For individual study or discussion

This story, like the ones preceding it, gives us such a clear picture of both God’s sovereignty and human agency (Julius prevented the Roman soldiers from killing all the prisoners, for example). The angel had assured Paul that God was going to protect the lives of every person on board the ship—all 276 of them. But the cliff-hanger didn’t suddenly end with the angel’s appearance. The ship continued to be driven by the wind and would ultimately be run aground with everyone swimming or clinging to some flotsam through the cold sea to the shore. Weeping had tarried for many a night, but joy did finally come in the morning. And much of the guidance, solace, and hope in all of the dire circumstances came from Christ’s servant, the Apostle Paul. God was at work. So was Paul.

- 1) Take a moment to consider who was on board this ship with Paul. What did they all share in common? How were they different?
  - With what and with whom did Paul concern himself?
    - ◇ Christians have sometimes been accused of caring little for the world around them because they are so focused on “pie in the sky, by and by.” Can you point to ways that make clear that Paul’s focus on Jesus and the Gospel made him, in fact, so heavenly-minded that he was MORE able to do great good for those around him?
    - ◇ How do we decide what we should be doing for others? See Gal. 6:2, 9-10; Phil. 2:4; 1 Pet. 2:17; and 1 John 3:17.
- 2) The book of Proverbs warns that folly delights (or gives joy to) a man who lacks judgment. Like Paul in this story, the “man of understanding keeps a straight course.” (Prov. 15:21) The passage in Proverbs continues with the observation that plans so often “fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed.” (v. 22)
  - What wisdom did Paul have to offer? What different things did he provide as a helper and Christ-like leader? (Or, to put it another way, what differing needs did he address?)
  - What folly tempted the sailors? (Are we tempted by similar follies? If so, can you name one?)
  - How do we go about looking for wise help? And how can we become wise helpers and/or leaders?
- 3) For another example of someone giving wise aid, read the story of Abigail found in 1 Samuel 25.
  - What can we learn about wisdom and folly from this story?
  - In what ways did Nabal, like the sailors, chase false security?
  - In what ways did Abigail exhibit a wisdom that focused on both God and others?



LOOKOUT  
MOUNTAIN  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH

DATE: March 7, 2021

SPEAKER: Brian/Chad

SERIES: Acts

PASSAGE: Acts 27:27-44

### Family Dinner Table

Sometimes something happens to us that makes us very, very aware of how truly amazing it is that everything worked out. We realize, for example, that if we had arrived at a certain point just two minutes later, we would have missed seeing someone very special. Or we come to understand that two minutes BEFORE we arrived somewhere something very bad happened, so we avoided a disaster. Can you give an example of when something like that happened to you?

This story contains a lot of “what-if’s.” What if the wind had blown in a different direction? What if the sailors who were trying to abandon the ship in the life boat had gotten away? What if Julius had allowed the Roman guards to carry out (or even to begin to carry out) their plan to kill all the prisoners?

Do you see how there is a “both-and” story going on here? God is so clearly at work accomplishing his purposes, but people are making decisions, too. Paul cares, for example, whether or not his fellow travelers faint from hunger. (v. 34) Read Phil. 2:12b-13. People are not robots controlled by a few buttons. What is God doing in this world? What are we to be doing?

#### PRAY FOR HOME MISSIONS

Bridges Community Church in Alhambra

#### PRAY FOR WORLD MISSIONS

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