

God Will Make a Way

Joseph Scarfone / General

Salvation is for Everyone / Acts 27:1-44

Are you tired? Are you worn out? Are you at the end? Have you been through 3 seasons of winter? Have you had enough and feel like there is no way out, no where to turn, nothing you can do?

Are you at the end of yourself?

Can I just encourage you this morning and tell you. When you think there is no way, God will make a way.

When there is nothing else you can do. He can.

When there is no where else to go, there is His way.

For he is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think ([Eph. 3:20](#)).

If you are tired, worn, hurting, battered and broken...you are in the right place.

These words written about the statue of Liberty could be easily said of the church.

The New Colossus-Emma Lazarus

“Give me your tired, your poor,

Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,

The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.

Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,

When there seems to be no way, it's not lady liberty that will deliver us, it is almighty God, the maker of heaven and earth. Yes, **God Will Make a Way.**

Today we are going to see how God makes a way for Paul and his friends when there seems to be no way. Our passage is soaked with hurt, pain, and high drama, it is also drenched in truth, promises, and an appearance of the angel of the Lord.

As we pick up the message that there is good news for all people, we see just exactly what it cost some for the message of the gospel to go forth.

No matter the difficulty it is worth whatever comes his way to fulfill his mission.

When we left off, Paul was found innocent. Chapter 26 closes with Agrippa saying “This man could have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar.”

He could have been a free man, but He chose an audience with Caesar who could have him killed with just one word.

Why would Paul do that?

It’s because He knew his mission, his purpose and his place in advancing the gospel.

Paul had written the letter to the Romans three years earlier, but he had still not been to Rome. Prior to his arrest he personally heard these words from Jesus,

[Acts 23:11](#) (ESV)

¹¹ ... **“Take courage, for as you have testified to the facts about me in Jerusalem, so you must testify also in Rome.”**

Those words would have echoed through his mind while being in prison for two years. Jerusalem was the center of the Jewish world and Rome was the center of the world for everyone else. Rome was the hub of world culture and influence and God was preparing Paul for two years to be his voice to the gentiles.

Let’s see how God makes a way.

[Acts 27:1-12](#) - A Way in our Circumstance

[Acts 27:13-38](#) - A Way in the Storm

[Acts 27:39-44](#) - A Way in our Obedience

Let's see how God makes a way.

[Acts 27:1-12](#) - A Way in our Circumstance

Acts 27:1 ESV

¹ And when it was decided that we should sail for Italy, they delivered Paul and some other prisoners to a centurion of the Augustan Cohort named Julius.

Paul sets sail for Rome and Luke records for us the travel log. He gives us the details of the places along the way, he let's us know who is there and provides the backstory for this epic adventure.

The first detail is that Paul is under the care of Julius, who is a commander of 100 men, but he belongs to a significant regimen. The Augustan Cohort is part of the Imperial Regimen, which is closely connected to Caesar, so it is fitting that Julius would be bringing Paul to Rome.

Acts 27:2 ESV

² And embarking in a ship of Adramyttium, which was about to sail to the ports along the coast of Asia, we put to sea, accompanied by Aristarchus, a Macedonian from Thessalonica.

There are two things to notice here.

First, is that Aristarchus is joining the trip. This is the same Aristarchus who was with Paul when the riot in Ephesus started.

Secondly, the other important piece is that Luke records the fourth “we” section of Acts. Luke is being careful to let the reader know **that he is personally with Paul on this journey**, you will notice this first section is filled with “we.” Paul has at least two close friends accompanying him, two friends that are sharing his tough stuff.

Do you have some one to share the difficulty of life with? Do you have a team, a family, a friend closer than a brother?

As our life questions asks?

Who shares my tough stuff?

We all have tough stuff, difficulties in life, trials, trauma, tribulations. Being a Christian doesn't make you exempt from difficulty, Christ empowers you, sustains you and transforms you through difficulty.

You will continue to experience difficulty as a Christian, however God grows your capacity, He also gives you new brothers and sisters in Christ as He grows your adopted family. He will give you more and more people who can help you, who are there to share your tough stuff.

Who shares your tough stuff?

Here Paul had Luke and Aristarchus. He had close friends to help him through difficult times.

Acts 27:3 ESV

³ The next day we put in at Sidon. And Julius treated Paul kindly and gave him leave to go to his friends and be cared for.

Paul is a prisoner, who is experiencing the blessing and favor of God. Julius allowed Paul to leave the ship and connect with Christians in the city of Sidon. Prisoners, especially prisoners under Roman authority, are not typically given these kinds of privileges. Prisoners don't get shore leave, most sailors don't get shore leave.

Yet, Paul is encouraged and cared for. **The word used here for care is so powerful. It means to show diligent care and concern for someone meeting their needs.** Paul was loved well by the brothers and sisters. He had people to share in his hardship. His needs were being met by people who were sharing in his tough stuff.

Acts 27:4-6 ESV

⁴ And putting out to sea from there we sailed under the lee of Cyprus, because the winds were against us.

⁵ And when we had sailed across the open sea along the coast of Cilicia and

Pamphylia, we came to Myra in Lycia.

⁶ There the centurion found a ship of Alexandria sailing for Italy and put us on board.

The winds were picking up and the weather was not favorable. It's like when you go outside here and you think it's going to be a beautiful day because the sun is shining, but as soon as you go outside you get nearly knocked over by the wind. So you try to find things to block the wind.

That's what the captain of the boat was doing. He was using the land of the island to block the wind, under the lee means under the protection of the land.

They finally get to a place where they transfer to a new boat that is heading toward Italy.

Acts 27:7-8 ESV

⁷ We sailed slowly for a number of days and arrived with difficulty off Cnidus, and as the wind did not allow us to go farther, we sailed under the lee of Crete off Salmone.

⁸ Coasting along it with difficulty, we came to a place called Fair Havens, near which was the city of Lasea.

The weather is getting worse, the wind is picking up and the cold winter winds are upon them. This is not a time to go sailing.

Acts 27:9-10 ESV

⁹ Since much time had passed, and the voyage was now dangerous because even the Fast was already over, Paul advised them,

¹⁰ saying, "Sirs, I perceive that the voyage will be with injury and much loss, not only of the cargo and the ship, but also of our lives."

Paul knows he's supposed to go to Rome, but his experience in traveling as a missionary has given him much wisdom, and the weather is too bad to travel. It's dangerous and Paul gives the leadership some advice.

At this point, if I'm the captain, I'm out. I'm a fair weather sailor and the seas get angry. As soon as Paul says, we lose the cargo, ship and our lives. I would say, find a nice little cottage to hunker down for the winter, we can pick this back up when the weather breaks right?

Acts 27:11 ESV

¹¹ But the centurion paid more attention to the pilot and to the owner of the ship than to what Paul said.

Julius liked Paul, enough to let him go to his friends, but not enough to respect his opinion. After all, what does Paul know about sailing compared to the owner of a ship and the shipmaster?

Do you blame Julius for listening to the advice of the experts? Paul you are out of your element here. Why would anyone listen to you over the experts?

Can I just interject here with this simple truth.

Godly counsel is far greater than expert advice. (2x). Listen to the people who are connected to God, walk with God, and live for His glory. If you want good advice, always seek godly counsel.

You want to know how great expert advice is. How well are the experts doing at running your 401k recently? Likely not well. Seek godly counsel.

Julius didn't do that, he chose the expert advice over the godly counsel.

Acts 27:12 ESV

¹² And because the harbor was not suitable to spend the winter in, the majority decided to put out to sea from there, on the chance that somehow they could reach Phoenix, a harbor of Crete, facing both southwest and northwest, and spend the winter there.

So they journeyed on, they continued to travel despite the weather, despite the warning, they went on.

That's like going outside in the middle of a storm when the sirens are blowing. You head for the basement, you don't go on a boat cruise. Don't do it. God will make a way in our circumstance, but there is also...

A Way in the Storm

[Acts 27:13-38](#)

Acts 27:13-14 ESV

¹³ Now when the south wind blew gently, supposing that they had obtained their purpose, they weighed anchor and sailed along Crete, close to the shore.

¹⁴ But soon a tempestuous wind, called the northeaster, struck down from the land.

Things are getting really dangerous. Now they are in the middle of a storm. A northeaster, we are familiar with those. They usually lead to hurricanes in the summer or blizzards in the winter.

The word for nor'easter is also translated as a euraquillo. Things don't get names unless there is some sort of substance to them. We name hurricanes, and this storm is going to get bigger.

A tempestuous wind. A violently windy storm.

They were experiencing the beginning of a storm of a lifetime.

Acts 27:15-17 ESV

¹⁵ And when the ship was caught and could not face the wind, we gave way to it and were driven along.

¹⁶ Running under the lee of a small island called Cauda, we managed with difficulty to secure the ship's boat.

¹⁷ After hoisting it up, they used supports to undergird the ship. Then, fearing that they would run aground on the Syrtis, they lowered the gear, and thus they were driven along.

The storm is growing in strength and things are progressively getting worse.

Acts 27:18 ESV

¹⁸ Since we were violently storm-tossed, they began the next day to jettison the cargo.

On day two of the storm things are looking dire, to the point of unloading the cargo. The captain is freaking out, the owner of the ship is throwing things of value overboard. This is no normal storm. Sailors don't just start chucking cargo. Then the situation gets even worse.

Acts 27:19 ESV

¹⁹ And on the third day they threw the ship's tackle overboard with their own hands.

Now they throw the ships tackle which is all the equipment and gear. The situation is hopeless, this is absolute despair. There is no way out.

Acts 27:20 ESV

²⁰ 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.

This is it, there is no chance. All hope is gone. The spirit of the crew is crushed. They tried everything they could, they threw the cargo overboard, they cast the ships equipment into the sea and Luke the physician captures the moment perfectly... "all hope of our being saved was at last abandoned."

They have given up.

Have you ever been there? Have you ever been to the point of total despair? Have you ever felt like all hope is lost?

That's what this moment is like, all hope is gone.

But,

God gives hope to the hopeless and that hope is an anchor to the soul.

That hope is Jesus Christ and Paul is holding onto His words "you must testify also in Rome" and Paul knows that even when there seems like there is no possible way, God does the impossible and makes away.

Acts 27:21 ESV

²¹ Since they had been without food for a long time, Paul stood up among them and said, “Men, you should have listened to me and not have set sail from Crete and incurred this injury and loss.

This is Paul’s I told you so moment. Why didn’t you listen, you should have listened. The experts aren’t always right, the experts don’t know what God knows.

ILLUSTRATION-WHEN WE FIRST GOT MARRIED, WE COULDN’T CONCEIVE

God makes a way when there is no way.

Acts 27:22 ESV

²² Yet now I urge you to take heart, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship.

There is good news, no one is going to die, even though it certainly looks like escaping this catastrophic storm looks impossible. That’s great news Paul, but why should we believe you?

Acts 27:23–24 ESV

²³ For this very night there stood before me an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I worship,

²⁴ and he said, ‘Do not be afraid, Paul; you must stand before Caesar. And behold, God has granted you all those who sail with you.’

Paul, you have our attention. We are listening. We can tell that you are a man favored by God. Now you are telling us that angels are delivering you personal messages from God. This is amazing. This is transformational.

Everyone thinks they are about to die, they had given up hope, but the God of Paul will make a way.

We need to assume that these men had become prayerful over the last two weeks. Think about it, that’s what people do in times of desperation. We can understand that all of the sudden these sea-hardened sailors were relentlessly

throwing up prayers to any god they ever heard of. There would likely had been prayers to Zeus and Jupiter and pantheon of other gods.

Yet after two weeks none of those gods answered. None of those idols was going to intervene. None of those gods cared about the men on the boat.

False gods and idols will never save, but the One True God will make a way.

Paul comes with good news. He says, “The God I worship with my whole life, the one whom I serve has sent me a personal messenger and he cares so much about us that we all are going to live.”

Is that a message you need to hear this morning? That God loves you right where you are.

Has the storm of life been beating on you? Have the unrelenting waves of agony been driving you to hopelessness? Have you been out to sea with no end to the hurricane of living?

Life can feel that way sometimes. There is good news.

That good news is the anchor for our soul, and the hope that comes from Jesus Christ and only Him. God cares for you and wants to be in intimate relationship with you. He will answer when you call.

[Isaiah 58:9 \(ESV\)](#)

⁹ Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer; you shall cry, and he will say, ‘Here I am.’

Call on the Lord and He will answer. Cry out in your darkest hour.

[Psalm 50:15 \(ESV\)](#)

¹⁵ and call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me.”

Paul tells the sailors don't be afraid. My God is a God who saves.

Paul has a place to be, he has an important meeting with the most important human on the planet, the leader of the Roman empire and God wants Paul to stand before Caesar. Not only that, but this message is that everyone on the boat will live.

Acts 27:25 ESV

²⁵ So take heart, men, for I have faith in God that it will be exactly as I have been told.

So take heart, keep up your courage. God will do exactly what he says. He is a promise-keeping, way-making God, who is always trustworthy.

Unlike the sailors on the boat, we have an entire book loaded with promises of God, we have page after page of amazing testimonies that prove who God is and how he loves us. Just like Paul will give the facts about Jesus in Rome, we have the facts about Jesus in our hands.

No matter what kind of storm you are in— **He will never leave you nor forsake you.**

[Deuteronomy 31:6 \(ESV\)](#)

⁶ Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them, for it is the LORD your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you.”

He will make a way.

Despite the tragedies of life-nothing, nothing, nothing, can separate you from the love of God that is found in Christ Jesus.

Even in the tempest of life’s turmoil-His grace is more than enough, His steadfast love is continually offered to us and we are more than conquerors through Christ.

We can trust God, because He is as good as His word, which has never been broken. When there is no way, Jesus is the way, the truth and the life.

So take heart, keep up your courage, because God is making a way.

Acts 27:26 ESV

²⁶ But we must run aground on some island.”

God doesn't say He will take away all our difficulty or problems. No we still face adversity.

The sailors were not going to experience the fullness of the ship again, no they would need to run aground. In the boating world that is devastating news about the boat, but great news about their lives.

Acts 27:27 ESV

²⁷ When the fourteenth night had come, as we were being driven across the Adriatic Sea, about midnight the sailors suspected that they were nearing land.

Let's pause for a moment and let this sink in. They are in a 14-day storm. This is monumental. These men have been staring death in the face for two weeks, the adrenaline rush had to nearly kill them. They had lost hope, they are at rock bottom. **They have no where to go (2x)**, but God.

Acts 27:28-29 ESV

²⁸ So they took a sounding and found twenty fathoms. A little farther on they took a sounding again and found fifteen fathoms.

²⁹ And fearing that we might run on the rocks, they let down four anchors from the stern and prayed for day to come.

They prayed. I have to believe that these weren't the same haphazard prayers to the god's of their own imagination. I have to believe that some of these sailors may have begun to pray to the God of Paul.

Even in tragedy God is drawing people to Himself.

Acts 27:30-31 ESV

³⁰ And as the sailors were seeking to escape from the ship, and had lowered the ship's boat into the sea under pretense of laying out anchors from the bow,

³¹ Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, "Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved."

Paul had clear instructions from the angel. Everyone needed to stay on the boat. The sailors still weren't getting it, they began to let their sea-faring, nautical instincts kick in and Paul tells them to "stop, or you will die."

Paul means business, so...

Acts 27:32 ESV

³² Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the ship's boat and let it go.

They obeyed Paul...

Acts 27:33-34 ESV

³³ As day was about to dawn, Paul urged them all to take some food, saying, "Today is the fourteenth day that you have continued in suspense and without food, having taken nothing.

³⁴ Therefore I urge you to take some food. For it will give you strength, for not a hair is to perish from the head of any of you."

Paul says eat, for you will need your strength, because every single person is going to live. What a bold statement. 14 days of terror with eminent death in every wave and Paul confidently says, eat up

Acts 27:35 ESV

³⁵ And when he had said these things, he took bread, and giving thanks to God in the presence of all he broke it and began to eat.

This is familiar language. This is what Jesus did often, a pattern that He established. I think it would be wrong to conclude that this was communion, but I believe this was a chance for Paul to pray, bless the bread and point all on the ship toward God.

Acts 27:36–37 ESV

³⁶ Then they all were encouraged and ate some food themselves.

³⁷ (We were in all 276 persons in the ship.)

Everyone is encouraged, everyone eats some food and in total there were 276 people. This is significant. There 276 souls who had just experienced this high seas drama together and they believe that God will make a way. But they are still out at sea, so what happens.

Acts 27:39-44 - A Way in our Obedience

Acts 27:39–41 ESV

³⁹ Now when it was day, they did not recognize the land, but they noticed a bay with a beach, on which they planned if possible to run the ship ashore.

⁴⁰ So they cast off the anchors and left them in the sea, at the same time loosening the ropes that tied the rudders. Then hoisting the foresail to the wind they made for the beach.

⁴¹ But striking a reef, they ran the vessel aground. The bow stuck and remained immovable, and the stern was being broken up by the surf.

The boat is completely stuck and the waves begin to destroy the back of the boat. May day, May day, this boat is officially shipwrecked.

Acts 27:42–43 ESV

⁴² The soldiers' plan was to kill the prisoners, lest any should swim away and escape.

⁴³ But the centurion, wishing to save Paul, kept them from carrying out their plan. He ordered those who could swim to jump overboard first and make for the land,

The soldiers were about to do what soldiers do, but Julius intervened.

276 souls start jumping from the deck and there are bodies entering the water everywhere.

Acts 27:44 **ESV**

⁴⁴ and the rest on planks or on pieces of the ship. And so it was that all were brought safely to land.

All were brought safely to land. They listened to the voice of Paul who is the ambassador and delegate for God, and it happened exactly as God said.

He made a way, when there was no way and He did it through their obedience. When ships wreck, people die. This is the impossible, but not impossible with God.

[Isaiah 43:15-16](#) **(ESV)**

¹⁵ I am the LORD, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King.”

¹⁶ Thus says the LORD, who makes a way in the sea, a path in the mighty waters,

When there is no way He makes a way.

Kirk Franklin says it this way

More Than I Can Bear

I've gone through the fire
And I've been through the flood
I've been broken into pieces
Seen lightnin' flashin' from above
But through it all I remember
That He loves me
And He cares
And He'll never put more on me
Than I can bear

No God will never put more on you than you can bear, but you don't have to do it alone, in fact your burdens aren't just for you. Your burdens are for us.

We are commanded in Scripture to

[Galatians 6:2 \(ESV\)](#)

² Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

That's the beauty of the church.

Are you tired? Are you poor? Are you worn out? Are you burdened? Come to Christ through His people in His church and find rest for your soul.

That's what Paul did.

The life and ministry of Paul is absolutely remarkable. We can talk about all the difficulty, trauma and persecution he faced for the sake of the gospel, but we can't divorce his trials from his friendships.

He established intentional, purposeful, deep and loving relationships. Paul had people, he had people everywhere, people who cried on his neck, people who greeted him with a holy kiss.

Paul loved so well that at the end of nearly every letter he wrote he closes with a long list of important people in his life.

Romans 16:3-16 ESV

³ Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus,

⁴ who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks but all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks as well.

⁵ Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in Asia.

⁶ Greet Mary, who has worked hard for you.

⁷ Greet Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners. They are well known to the apostles, and they were in Christ before me.

⁸ Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord.

⁹ Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and my beloved Stachys.

¹⁰ Greet Apelles, who is approved in Christ. Greet those who belong to the family of Aristobulus.

¹¹ Greet my kinsman Herodion. Greet those in the Lord who belong to the family of Narcissus.

¹² Greet those workers in the Lord, Tryphaena and Tryphosa. Greet the beloved Persis, who has worked hard in the Lord.

¹³ Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord; also his mother, who has been a mother to me as well.

¹⁴ Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers who are with them.

¹⁵ Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them.

¹⁶ Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

Each of these people is a soul touched by God, each name is a person greatly connected and deeply loved by Paul. This not just a list of names, this is an entourage of people who Paul knows share in his suffering, rejoice in his rejoicing and are there for him, no matter what. These are forever friends, friends that share in Paul's tough stuff.

Friends who were there for him through his imprisonments, and beatings and now he can add to that list with people even in shipwrecks where God continues to make a way.

How can we apply this to our lives.

Application

- Invite people into your life- Get some 2 a.m. friends, people who can share in your tough stuff. Join a connect group or a bible study
- Seek godly counsel- The experts don't always have the right answer. Experts can talk a lot about theory, but when it comes to practice and the complexities of life, they just don't know
- Find music that can minister to you- When life gives you a storm, listen to songs that can help you. Casting Crowns, "I will praise you in the storm" Find new artists, find new songs, ask for music from friends. What song has impacted you and why?
- Memorize promises of God- Put Scripture into your heart and mind so that when difficulty comes, and it will, you have His Word to carry you through.

When we take these practical steps we can better know that God will make a way.

He makes a way in our circumstances, He makes a way in our storms and He makes a way in our obedience.

God will make a way.

Pray with me!

Close and Send-

GOD WILL MAKE A WAY

God will make a way

Where there seems to be no way

He works in ways we cannot see
He will make a way for me
He will be my guide
Hold me closely to His side
With love and strength for each new day
He will make a way, He will make a way