

FOOD TIME: (30-45 minutes) – Remember to give some direction for this time.

MEETING TIME: (45 minutes)

As the closing of the book of Acts comes, we come upon Paul who is now en-route to Rome for his meeting with Caesar that he had requested from Festus. The voyage is not an easy one and the ship itself is on the verge of being sunk into the sea. The closing of chapter 27 shows a couple of things that are going to be part of the discussion this week. We see Paul's continued confidence in that even at the point of shipwreck, Paul is still confident in what God is doing in the moment. We also see that because of Paul's living testimony, there are those who are listening to him and seeing that God is working in every situation.

READ Acts 27:33-44

33 And as day was about to dawn, Paul implored them all to take food, saying, "Today is the fourteenth day you have waited and continued without food, and eaten nothing. **34** Therefore I urge you to take nourishment, for this is for your survival, since not a hair will fall from the head of any of you." **35** And when he had said these things, he took bread and gave thanks to God in the presence of them all; and when he had broken it, they had begun to eat. **36** Then they were all encouraged, and also took food themselves. **37** And in all we were two hundred and seventy-six persons on the ship. **38** So when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship and threw out the wheat into the sea. **39** When it was the day, they did not recognize the land; but they observed a bay with a beach, onto which they planned to run the ship if possible. **40** And they let go the anchors and left them in the sea, meanwhile losing the rudder ropes; and they hoisted the mainsail to the wind and made for shore. **41** But striking a place where two seas met, they ran the ship aground; and the prow struck fast and remained immovable, but the stern was being broken up by the violence of the waves. **42** And the soldiers' plan was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim away and escape. **43** But the centurion, wanting to save Paul, kept them from their purpose, and commanded that those who could swim should jump overboard first and get to land, **44** and the rest, some on boards and some on parts of the ship. And so it was that they all escaped safely to land.

FACILITATE Discussion Questions

1. How does Paul's concern over everyone on board reflect to how he continues to live for the kingdom of God?
2. Why does someone caring for us tend to bring us encouragement just like it did for the people on board here?
3. Why is the centurion protecting Paul important?
4. How can we use this passage to encourage others who may be walking through their own storm?
5. Paul's trust in the Lord is so strong even in the midst of disaster; how can we show trust in the Lord?

PRAY- Take the last 10 minutes to pray about the needs of the group.

APPLICATION- Paul shows a very strong trust in the Lord, and shows that he is willing to adapt to any situation that God has for him throughout the book of Acts. As an application this week, use this story to reflect on a situation that felt like it was going to be a disaster. Reflect on that situation and look to see how God provided in that situation. Sometimes, we just need someone to be there for us and to encourage us in the moment. After reflecting, think about how you can be like Paul in someone's life. How can you help someone seek the Lord even in the midst of difficult things?