

The purpose of this leader's guide is to be a tool for ABF and Life Group leaders to follow the sermon series with their group. Our hope is that this guide will give you a head start for your study and will allow your group to respond to what they've heard and apply it for life.

Acts 27

Context 27: Paul Journeys to Rome by Sea. The last two chapters of Acts are devoted mainly to Paul's journey to Rome. The voyage to Rome (probably began in the autumn of A.D. 59) is given in great detail and with remarkable exactness, consistent with what is otherwise known about sea travel in that time and place. The keynote of the story is God's providence, especially in preserving Paul for his Roman testimony. At a literary level, the story is told to indicate how far and difficult the journey to Rome is, as the gospel heads toward the ends of the earth. Rome, the largest and most splendid of ancient cities, acted like a magnet to its peoples. Rome, the capital and symbol of the Roman Empire, was the center of influence over the whole known world. Though Paul was a Jew, but having inherited Roman citizenship from his father, he must have dreamed since childhood of visiting the city for himself.

Read Chapter 27:

Questions (27:1-44):

- 1) What are the main events of chapter 27?
 - Paul's trip to Rome began. Luke must have accompanied Paul. "we" (1-8)
 - Paul warned of a disaster and was ignored (9-12)
 - The tempestuous sea became disastrous for the ship (13-38)
 - All were saved in the shipwreck at Malta (39-44)
- 2) Paul had great confidence in God, and many others were profoundly affected by it. What promises from God were the foundation for Paul's great confidence that they would all arrive safely in Rome (vv. 23-26)?
 - An angel of God appeared to Paul and told him he must stand before Caesar. He also promised that all those that were with him would survive.
 - This is an interesting contrast with the story of Jonah. Jonah's presence on the ship would assure people's peril, but Paul's presence assured people's safety. Both were promises from God and both Jonah and Paul both feared God and believed His promises.
 - Paul witnessed first hand God keeping His promises multiple times throughout the book of Acts.
- 3) This was a difficult journey for Paul and the crew. How do you see Paul still reaching out to those around him while they traveled (9-10, 21-26, 31-36)?
 - Paul was concerned for everyone and everything and gave warning to the centurion.
 - Although Paul could have used a "I told you so" statement and given up, he continued to encourage them and give hope in their hopeless situation because of his encounter with an angel of God. He also created an opportunity to proclaim God's power and goodness to a crew of pagans.
 - Paul continued to encourage them and give hope. "Not a hair is to perish from the head of any of you" is an interesting phrase that Paul uses. See 1 Sam. 14:45; 2 Sam. 14:11; 1 Kings 1:52; Matt. 10:30; Luke 12:7; 21:18.

- Paul also took bread and gave thanks. Paul's giving thanks was not a celebration of the Lord's Supper but a testimony to his faith in the God who was about to deliver them.
- 4) What kind of care and respect did Paul receive from Julius the centurion (vv. 3, 43)? What does the relationship they had tell you about the apostle Paul?
- Julius treated Paul kindly and allowed him to spend time with friends and have needs met while at Sidon. Julius saved Paul's life when the soldiers were planning to kill all the prisoners.
 - Paul was not just about completing the task while neglecting people. No, He cared and looked out for people. There are aspects of Paul's character within this chapter as a whole which endear him to us as an integrated Christian, who combined spirituality with sanity and faith with works. His trust and godliness did not stop him from seeing either that the ship should not take risks with the onset of winter or that the sailors must not be allowed to escape, or that the hungry crew and passengers had to eat to survive. Paul was a man of God and of action, a man of the Spirit and of common sense.

General Reflection:

- 1) What does this passage teach us about God?
- 2) What does this passage teach us about mankind?
- 3) What is a command to obey in this passage? What has God revealed in your life that needs changing?

Personal Reflection/Application

- 5) Paul had high aspirations to see the gospel proclaimed in Rome. He would stop at nothing to get there. What dreams do you have concerning taking the gospel to others (children, family, friends, neighbors, etc.)? What is keeping you from being obedient to God in this area?
- 6) Paul took God's promises to the bank and his belief in those promises were evident through his actions. What are some examples of God's promises that you have stood upon when going through difficulties in life? What keeps you at times from believing in God's promises?

Prayer

Ask God to give you supernatural confidence in His promises. Pray for Him to give you a zeal to see the gospel penetrate the hearts of your family, friends, and your community.

*Various observations and questions in this study guide are quoted from resources on Acts (John Stott, Tim Keller, ESV study bible, and Crossway).