



When Storms Collide - Message 4 DISCUSSION GUIDE

OVERVIEW

In the final message of the series *Storms*, we will learn how to persevere storm after storm and how God can turn our situations around to reach people for Christ – for our good and His glory.

DISCUSSION

- What's your favorite comfort food or activity that helps you get through a tough day?

In **Acts 27**, we read that Paul experienced storm after storm. Yet, he responded well to these storms, grew through each of them, and saw his life make a big impact on others. When Paul was being transported on a ship as a prisoner to Rome, they encountered a storm that seemed impossible to get out of. While everyone on the ship was hopeless and fearful for their lives, Paul spoke God's truth to all. God's promise of protection came about not only for Paul but for all the prisoners, passengers, and crew. In the tough times, we can be a voice of peace and hope to those around us.

What can we learn about navigating storms from Paul's journey?

1. Paul didn't know the details... but knew he could trust God.

God doesn't promise there won't be storms; He promises to be with us and to bring us through every storm. In **Verse 22**, Paul says: ***"And now I urge you to take heart, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship."*** Paul trusted God. He was assured that while it wouldn't be easy, God was with him and those on board, and would see them through the storm.

God is speaking in the storm. We see God's message in **verses 23-24**: ***"For there stood by me this night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve, saying, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must be brought before Caesar; and indeed God has granted you all those who sail with you.'"*** God warned Paul of this impending storm. God was speaking, and Paul was listening. God was preparing him for the storm to come.

It's very important that we don't close our spiritual ears when we are going through difficult storms. We should take our focus off our storms and focus instead on what Jesus is speaking to us.

- Share a time when God spoke to you in a storm.
- How can we position ourselves to hear God's voice?

2. In storms, don't forget to be practical.

Verse 19 says: *On the third day we threw the ship's tackle overboard with our own hands.* Then, we see them lightening the load again in **verse 38**: *So when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship and threw out the wheat into the sea.* Twice they tossed extra weight they were carrying into the sea – first the gear, then their food! When you are in a storm, you often need to do some practical things, to lighten your load. Be willing to adjust the right things in any area of life.

- What are some practical ways we can lighten our load?
- Why is it important to fight to keep the essentials in our lives, such as family time, small groups, reading God's Word, attending church, etc.?

3. God's purpose secures our future.

God promised Paul he was going to Rome to preach. When you are restless in a storm, learn to rest in your purpose. The temptation will arise to bail out. God knew you would be in this storm. Paul said, "If you jump ship, you will lose your life." Paul ordered the soldiers to cut the ropes to the lifeboats, removing all options besides staying on the ship. We should commit to persevering and coming out on the other side of the storm.

- How we can persevere in storms and not miss what God is teaching us?

4. People are watching how you weather life's storms.

Verses 33-36: *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. 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." 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 he began to eat. Then they were all encouraged, and also took food themselves.* Julius, and probably most of the rest of the passengers and prisoners, were not believers, but watching Paul trust God through the storm made a huge impact. Paul didn't just endure the storm, he flourished through it and gave a life lesson to all those watching – how to be thankful for God's provision even amidst the storm.

- Who are the people in your life watching you through your storm? In what ways can you show gratitude and encourage those around you?

5. What looks like a detour could be a part of your destiny.

This whole journey, as tumultuous as it was, was part of God's destiny to get him to Rome. Even after the shipwreck on the island of Malta, we see Paul fulfilling part of his destiny and leading others to Christ.

LIFE CHALLENGE

In life's storms, like Paul in Acts 27, trust God's promises, listen for His guidance, and take practical steps to lighten your load. Paul's faith ensured safety for everyone on board and encouraged those around him. Reflect on how you can be a source of peace and hope to others, even in difficult times.