



**CHRISTIAN  
ENDEAVOUR**  
*for Christ and the Church*



# Early Christians

## I told you so!

### Paul shipwrecked

Acts 27:1 - 28:10

#### Teaching Aim

To show that God can use every situation in life for His benefit.

#### Setting the scene

Have you ever been in a ship on the sea when there has been a violent storm? Paul was on his way to Rome when so great a storm sprang up that the ship was destroyed and the whole crew was in danger of perishing.

#### Paul speaks

Paul was handed over to a centurion to be taken to Rome to appear before Caesar. He was accompanied by two friends Aristarchus, one of Paul's converts, and Luke, the writer of the book of Acts. They made very slow headway and had to shelter in a place called Fair Havens.

Read Acts 27:9-22. The time of the year was not right for sailing so Paul warned them not to set sail or the voyage would end in disaster. The centurion, however, did not listen to Paul but listened instead to the Pilot and the owner of the ship. Paul was never scared to be bold and to speak out.

Can you think of other places where Paul was bold and spoke out?

- Earthquake in Philippi - he stopped the jailer killing himself
- Before Felix
- Before Festus
- Before Agrippa

The sea was raging and all around him people were scared but Paul spoke again. His first words - "Men, you should have taken my advice ..." must have hurt but then he told them to have courage and they would all be saved but the ship would be lost.

#### God in control

Read Acts 27:23-24. God is sovereign in all things. It might have seemed that His servant was going to be lost at sea or simply taken to prison and his witness for God finished. God first strengthened his servant Paul by telling him that he must stand trial. He then assured him that all the crew would be saved along with him. God had already told Paul by the Lord - "Take courage! As you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must also testify in Rome" Acts 23:11.

Why did God send a storm on the sea? - to vindicate his servant Paul before the centurion and the rest of the crew.

## Paul in control

Strengthened by God, Paul then took control of the situation.

What was the first thing Paul did v25? - Witnessed to the people that what God said would happen would come to pass.

How else did Paul witness to the crew v35? - He took some bread and before them all gave thanks to God and then broke some and ate. This simple act encouraged the crew and they also ate. You do not have to do great things for God all the time. Paul was the greatest missionary the world has ever known and yet here he did not preach to the crew but by simple things showed his faith in God.

Eventually the ship was driven towards the land. The bow stuck fast and would not move, and the stern was broken to pieces by the pounding of the surf.

We now see once more the attempts of Satan to destroy Paul. How did he try to do this v42? - have all the prisoners killed to prevent them escaping so that Paul would also die. God used the centurion to save Paul's life.

## Paul witnesses

Read Acts 28:1-10. Everyone was saved and they landed on the island of Malta. Paul was given the opportunity to witness for God.

Why was Paul bitten by a snake? - to prove to the people of the island that there was something special about Paul so that they would listen to him. What great opportunities Paul must have had to tell about the Lord Jesus Christ.

Finally, God first healed Publius' father through Paul and then many of the sick of the island so further opportunity was given to Paul to preach the gospel.

## Summing up

God was in control of the whole situation. It appeared that the boat and all on board were going to be lost in the storm. God, however, had other plans. His servant, Paul, was going to go to Rome to witness there and also, from prison, he was going to write letters which would form part of our Bible. God's plans can never be thwarted.

## Resources

### Discussion

- How would you answer someone who asks, "Why do bad things happen to good people"?
- If you were caught in a life threatening situation, what is the first thing you would do?
- How do you react when your advice is not taken?
- Why do Christians not always take the opportunities they have to tell others about the love of Jesus?

### Prayer Points

Thank God that:

- He can use us to tell others about Him.
- He will give us the courage to speak for Him.

Pray for:

- Those who find it difficult to believe in God because of so much suffering in the world.
- Christians who find it hard to witness for Jesus.