

## Working with God



Working with God isn't always easy or smooth. He will take you out of your comfort zone in different seasons to build your character and deepen your trust in Him. But if you follow the Lord and step into the mission He gives you, it becomes a true adventure.

Paul the Apostle was sent on such an adventure as a prisoner on a difficult voyage to Italy under a centurion named Julius. Despite challenging winds and slow progress, they continued sailing, changing ships along the way. Paul warned that the journey would end in disaster, but his advice was ignored. Soon after, a violent storm arose, and the ship was driven off course, forcing the crew to struggle to keep it afloat by lightening the load.

Acts 27.19 On the third day we threw the ship's tackle overboard with our own hands. 20 Now when neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small tempest beat on us, all hope that we would be **saved was finally given up.**

21 But after long abstinence from food, then Paul stood in the midst of them and said, "**Men, you should have listened to me, and not have sailed from Crete and incurred this disaster and loss.** 22 And now I urge you to take heart, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. 23 For there stood by me this night an **angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve,** 24 saying, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must be brought before Caesar; and indeed **God has granted you all those who sail with you.'** 25 Therefore take heart, men, **for I believe God** that it will be just as it was told me. 26 However, we must run aground on a certain island."

27Now when the fourteenth night had come, as we were driven up and down in the Adriatic Sea, about midnight the sailors sensed that they were drawing near some land. 28And they took soundings and found it to be twenty fathoms; and when they had gone a little farther, they took soundings again and found it to be fifteen fathoms. 29Then, fearing lest we should run aground on the rocks, they dropped four anchors from the stern, and prayed for day to come. 30And as the sailors were seeking to escape from the ship, when they had let down the skiff into the sea, under pretense of putting out anchors from the prow, 31Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, **“Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved.”** 32Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the skiff and let it fall off.

33And 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. 34Therefore 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.” 35And 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. 36Then they were all encouraged, and also took food themselves. 37And in all we were **two hundred and seventy-six persons on the ship**. 38So when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship and threw out the wheat into the sea.

When it was 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. 40And they let go the anchors and left them in the sea, meanwhile loosing the rudder ropes; and they hoisted the mainsail to the wind and made for shore. 41But striking [i]a place where two seas met, they ran the ship aground; and the prow stuck fast and remained immovable, but the stern was being broken up by the violence of the waves.

42And the soldiers’ plan was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim away and escape. 43But 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, 44and the rest, some on boards and some on parts of the ship. **And so it was that they all escaped safely to land.]**

### **What Can We Understand**

1 Following God is an adventure. Storms in life will come and go, and God doesn’t always remove them, but He walks you through them. Storms appear in different guises, health, finances, housing, work, family and the list goes on. However, stay focused, don't get distracted and keep working with God and He will guide you through the storm.

2 When you are walking in God’s purpose, it doesn’t just affect you—others around you are often being saved and blessed. Paul was on the ship in God’s will, all 276 people were spared. When you commit your life to God, it can impact and help save others in many situations.

3 God also confirms His purposes in different ways. He may use signs, encouragement, dreams, visions or even angels—as He did with Paul—to strengthen and guide you to keep moving forward. We can all know the will of God for our life, we just ask Him

4 We are encouraged to take communion regularly. In the middle of the storm, Paul took bread, gave thanks to God, and ate in front of everyone. This reflects the heart of communion—acknowledging God, giving thanks, and finding peace even in trouble. It shouldn't only be done in crisis, but as a regular part of our walk.

5 Working with God takes full commitment. It cannot be half-hearted—it requires intention, endurance, and faithfulness to the end. It is counting the cost and not giving up along the way, knowing that the Lord is watching over you, so that the mission and life He has called you to can be fulfilled and completed.

### **How Are You Working With God?**

#### **End in a time of prayer, reflection and direction**

The Lord has given us all at least 1 talent to put to use, start to ask the Lord in this season to either help you understand what that may be or to use what you already have. The Holy Spirit will bring to your remembrance