

Read: Acts 27:13-26

God Protected Paul Through a Storm

Acts 27:25

So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

We don't hear too much about shipwrecks—unless you live along the water's edge of a lake or ocean. So today's extended Bible reading might seem more like a story about some other people that happened a long time ago.

Actually, though, there's something in it for us all. The guys on the ship were terrified because they were in danger of sinking. They really thought they were going to die. They did everything they could think of to fix the situation. They tied ropes under the boat and threw things overboard to make the boat lighter. But it didn't work. They gave up all hope. That's when Paul told them not to be afraid—that God had a plan and things would work out according to that plan.

We have things that scare us too. Did your parents give you a spray bottle filled with monster repellent to use at bedtime? Some people are scared of snakes or dogs. Maybe you're afraid of more grown-up things like your dad having cancer or your baby brother being in the hospital. Sometimes we might be tempted to try to handle them on our own, and then we give up hope if things don't work out.

God wants you to take heart and know that he has a plan for your life too. He says, "Because you love me, I will rescue you. I will protect you because you know my name. When you call to me, I will answer you. I will be with you when you are in trouble" (Psalm 91:14,15).

When you scream "Dad! Come quick!" because you need him to refill the bottle of monster spray, he comes because you've called for him and he loves you. When you call out "God! I need you!" he's there because you called for him and he loves you. God, who made the entire universe out of nothing, cares about you. His greatest plan was to rescue you from the sinking in sea of your sins through the life jacket of a living Jesus. One of his favorite things is to watch over you, answer you, and protect you—and watch you live out his plans or you.

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- Recall two scary things from today's devotion.
- Discuss how the thought of Jesus makes them less scary.

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- Name someone who is having a tough time now.
- How can we tell them about God's plans for them?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- Discuss: Living life without Christ is like an ancient sailor steering with the sun and stars.
- When life is pitch dark, what thoughts of God and his presence comfort you the most?

Closing Prayer:

Dear God, without me even saying it, you know what scares me. Thank you for caring about me, for telling me that I can talk to you about *everything!* Thank you for answering me all the time, for always being with me, and for having good plans for me. Amen.

Hymn: CW 451:1 – Precious Lord, Take My Hand

Precious Lord, take my hand, Lead me on, let me stand;
I am tired, I am weak, I am worn.
Through the storm, through the night, Lead me on to the light.
Take my hand, precious Lord; Lead me home.