**CHARTING A COURSE FOR SHIPWRECK**

**TEXT:** *Acts 27:6 And there the centurion found a ship of Alexandria sailing into Italy; and he put us therein. 7 And when we had sailed slowly many days, and scarce were come over against Cnidus, the wind not suffering us, we sailed under Crete, over against Salmone; 8 And, hardly passing it, came unto a place which is called The fair havens; nigh whereunto was the city of Lasea. 9 Now when much time was spent, and when sailing was now dangerous, because the fast was now already past, Paul admonished them, 10 And said unto them, Sirs, I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives. 11 Nevertheless the centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship, more than those things which were spoken by Paul. 12 And because the haven was not commodious to winter in, the more part advised to depart thence also, if by any means they might attain to Phenice, and there to winter; which is an haven of Crete, and lieth toward the south west and north west. 13 And when the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained their purpose, loosing thence, they sailed close by Crete.*

**THESIS:** Learning to trust God regardless of the circumstances, the crowd, or comfort.

**INTRO.:**

**A.** The fog was like a wet blanket that covered everything. We were in a small boat and could barely see anything. We could hear the whistle warning us of the rocks, but it was difficult to tell its direction. We had two choices: trust our instincts or trust the compass. The captain decided to trust his instincts and we were CHARTING A COURSE FOR SHIPWRECK. I was fearful and saw the water depth declining and the compass reading “west” instead of east, which would have been out to sea. Besides that, we could hear gunfire from the Coast Guard station in Cape May getting louder. Finally, the Captain decided to trust the compass and came about and headed away from the rock pile! We narrowly avoided a shipwreck!

**B. In *1 Timothy 1:19 God says “holding faith (our compass), and a good conscience, which some, having put away faith have made shipwreck.“*** Then in our text (above) He gives us an account of a voyage which ended in shipwreck. It is not in the Bible just to give us an exciting story, but sets forth principles so believers in every age can avoid their own shipwreck…

**I. YOU ARE HEADED FOR SHIPWRECK WHEN YOU PLACE IMPULSE OVER FAITH: V.7A, 9-11**

**A.** Impatience:

**1.** Someone defined faith as being when the Word of God is enough!

**ILLUS.:** Faith in God’s Word is our compass to help us avoid shipwreck. If we have God’s Word on the subject, we don’t need anything else. We don’t need to tingle, have a feeling, a vision, a miracle, or anything else. But we often need patience. We need to learn to trust Him and not figure it out on our own.

**2.** When things move to slowly for us we have a tendency to become impatient and want to make things happen.

**B.** Impulsiveness:

**QUESTION:** Have you ever become impatient with someone in front of you going to slowly and decide to ignore the double lines and pass anyway…and then get into trouble or nearly have an accident?

**ILLUS.:** On the way inshore from fishing in the Delaware Bay, my wife and I were nearing the inlet. I saw the Cape May – Lewis ferry heading in also and I knew if I didn’t get there first I would have to wait until she docked and lose a lot of time. I decided to race her to the inlet. There were rock pile jetties on either side…the giant ship was really moving quickly, so I gunned the 70hp motor on our 16 ft. boat. My wife nearly went into cardiac arrest, but we just made it before the ferry. If I had miscalculated, or the motor, which had not been running too well, had failed, we could have become shipwrecked on the rocks! Whew! We made it (obviously since I am writing this.)

**1.** In the spiritual realm, it doesn’t ever pay to become impatient or impulsive…we must trust the Lord.

***1 Timothy 1:19 Holding faith (our compass), and a good conscience (our chart); which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck.***

**2.** Spiritual shipwreck is on the horizon if we place impulse over faith.

**ILLUS.:** Abraham and Sarah, because of impatience, acted impulsively and produced Ishmael, instead of waiting on the promise of God’s Word for Isaac. Result? Shipwreck for centuries for the nation of Israel.

**II. YOU ARE HEADED FOR SHIPWRECK WHEN YOU PLACE EXPERIENCE OVER WISDOM: vv.10,11 (text)**

**A.** The Man of Experience: “…the master and owner of the ship” v.11

**1.** The verse doesn’t say the Centurion didn’t believe Paul at all, just that he believed the shipmaster or Captain more.

**2.** He trusted the one who had the most hours sailing over the one who had the most hours praying.

**3.** Experience at the helm won out over experience at Paul’s walking with God.

**ILLUS.:** True wisdom is the ability to see things from God’s perspective. God gave Solomon great wisdom and he in turn wrote the book of Proverbs to impart that wisdom to his son Rehoboam. His son didn’t heed the wisdom of his father or to seek wisdom from the older men even though he consulted them. He decided instead to go to his peers, the young men, and obeyed their counsel. The outcome was that the Kingdom was torn and ten tribes split! Israel’s future was sadly destroyed!

**B.** The Man of God: The Apostle Paul v.11

*Prov. 15:12 A scorner loveth not the one that reproveth him: neither will he go unto the wise.*

**1.** The one who rejects the wisdom of the man of God because he must often reprove, rebuke and exhort, is a scorner of wisdom.

**2.** Faith will seek out the wisdom of God and unbelief will seek out the experience of man. (Compare Paul’s “I told you so” in v.21!)

**ILLUS.:** Many think the music director has more wisdom about the music and atmosphere for preaching than the man of God. Others think that a businessman has more wisdom about church finances than the preacher. If the preacher walks with God, he will have more insight than anyone else who may have experience or is an “expert” in his field. Impulse over faith = shipwreck. Experience over wisdom – shipwreck.

**III. YOU ARE HEADED FOR SHIPWRECK WHEN YOU PLACE COMFORT OVER OBEDIENCE: V.12A**

**A.** Discomfort Beats Shipwreck!

**1.** The word “commodious” means comfortable or convenient.

**2.** The name of this place was “The Fairhavens” v.8, but it didn’t suit the passengers who desired a more comfortable place to winter.

**3.** When people get comfort-minded, they will measure a ministry of a man of God based on that factor alone.

**a.** If he or the ministry makes them uncomfortable, via conviction, service, sacrifice, etc., they will soon be gone.

**b.** But obedience is the criteria, not comfort.

**ILLUS.:** Lot made the more “comfortable” choice than Abraham and lost his home, flocks, herds, wife, sons-in-law, reputation, testimony and what little morality he had left by committing incest with his two daughters!!! Not a good tradeoff!

Folks leave an area and a good church because of the promise of a better job, a couple of more dollars an hour more salary, a company car and benefits and end up losing their kids and their spirituality. Not a good trade off!

**4.** If you make your decisions based on what’s comfortable over obedience, you are CHARTING A COURSE FOR SHIPWRECK!

**IV. YOU ARE HEADED FOR SHIPWRECK WHEN YOU PLACE THE MAJORITY OVER PRINCIPLE: v.12**

**A.** God’s Will is Voted Down: “the more part…”

**1.** There are many things which God never intended for us to vote on.

**2.** God is never concerned about what the majority think, unless the majority agrees with Him & His Word.

**3.** God rarely, if ever, works with the majority.

**4.** The majority are usually as carnal as the devil.

*Exodus 23:2 Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil; neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest judgment.*

**ILLUS.:** If we are to believe the media today, juries are no longer necessary. Defendants are tried in the court of public opinion, after the media tells us what to believe! God says the Israelites were never to pervert justice by being influenced by the crowd.

We do not live in a Democracy; America is a Constitutional Republic governed by principles in a document. A democracy is “mob rule”. The media would like us to believe we are in a democracy because that demands rule by public opinion and public opinion is established by the media! The Christian life is not a democracy. It is a Theocracy governed by principles and truths in a document called the Holy Bible! It is a Bibliocracy!

**5.** Whenever God’s will is put up for a vote, God’s will is voted down.

**V. YOU ARE HEADED FOR SHIPWRECK WHEN YOU PLACE CIRCUMSTANCES OVER GOD’S WILL: v.13a**

**A.** The Only Sure Thing About Circumstances is That They Will Change!

**1.** Because the “south wind blew softly” the majority decided that was an indication that they should set sail for a more comfortable port.

**2.** Over two weeks later, after a horrible storm and sea sickness, and 14 days of eating nothing (v.33), they finally lose the ship and everything they owned, they finally jump overboard, clinging to parts of the ship and barely escaping with their lives, and only then because they decided to listen to God’s man at last!

**CONCL.:** YOU are “CHARTING A COURSE FOR SHIPWRECK” when you get impatient and place impulse over faith, experience over wisdom, comfort over obedience, the majority opinion over Bible principle and circumstances over God’s will! You are CHARTING A COURSE FOR HELL if you reject the offer of salvation and the Savior Who died for you!