



LIFE Group Discussion Guide

April 12, 2026

Acts 27:1-44

CONVERSATION STARTERS

- What are some highs or lows you experienced this past week?
- What Scripture has been shaping you recently?
- Where have you seen God moving in your life this week?
- What did you hear in today's sermon OR read in today's passage that you would like to discuss?
- What did you learn about yourself in today's sermon/passage?
- What did you learn about God in today's sermon/passage?
- What convicted you as you listened to today's sermon OR read in today's passage?

OPENING

Have you ever had a moment where everything felt overwhelming — like too much pressure, too many problems, or no clear way forward?

That's what this story felt like for the people on the ship. The difference was Paul chose faith instead of fear.

Trusting God doesn't mean storms don't happen. It means we're not facing them alone.

SCRIPTURE

Read **Acts 27:1–44** together. As you read, look for:

- What people do when they are afraid
- What Paul says that shows his trust in God
- How God provides help even before the storm is over

PASSAGE SUMMARY

Paul is being taken to Rome on a ship when a huge storm hits. The sailors are terrified and think they are going to die. Paul tells them not to be afraid because God promised that everyone would survive. Even though the ship is destroyed, every single person makes it safely to shore. This story shows that we can trust God even when life feels completely out of control.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Why were the sailors so afraid during the storm?

They believed everything depended on them and their situation looked hopeless.

What made Paul so calm when everyone else panicked?

He trusted what God said more than what he saw.

How can trusting God change the way we handle stress or fear?

It gives us peace even before situations improve.

What does this story show about God's power?

He is in control even when life feels chaotic.

How did Paul encourage others during the storm?

He reminded them of God's promise and acted with confidence.

Who do you know that needs encouragement right now?

What is one "storm" students commonly face today?

School pressure, friendships, anxiety, identity struggles.

What would it look like to trust God in that situation this week?

DIG DEEPER

Read Mark 4:35–41. How is Jesus calming the storm similar to Paul trusting God in this storm?

What do these stories teach us about fear and faith?

Why might God use hard situations to grow our trust in Him?

APPLICATION

What is one worry you need to give to God right now?

What is a practical way you can turn to God first when stress hits (pray, read Scripture, talk to a leader)?

How can your attitude during hard times show others that you trust God?

CLOSING THOUGHT

The storm didn't mean God had abandoned them. It meant God was going to show His faithfulness in a way they would never forget. The same is true for us — God is trustworthy in every storm.

LOOKING AHEAD

Next week we will study **Acts 28:1–16**, where Paul experiences God's protection on Malta and continues his journey toward Rome.

PRAYER FOCUS

- Thank God that He is with us in every storm of life.
- Ask Him to help us trust His promises instead of our fears.
- Pray specifically for the invitation portion of our worship services—that hearts would be open, the Spirit would move powerfully, and people would respond in obedient faith.

COMMENTARY

Acts 27:1-44

27:1-12. Paul was sent to Rome under the custody of a Roman centurion named Julius. Luke accompanied them, as is indicated by the “we” that runs throughout Acts 27. They sailed from Caesarea to Myra on the southern coast of modern Turkey. There they transferred to a larger vessel bound for Rome, probably a grain carrier under lease to the Roman emperor. The ship encountered difficult winds and was unable to follow the usual route that ran north of Crete to Sicily. Instead, they were blown to the south side of Crete to a small harbor named Fair Havens. Against Paul's advice, the crew decided to make for Phoenix, a larger harbor 30 miles west on the Crete coast.

27:13-17. When a gentle south wind arose, they started out for Phoenix. That was a mistake. Suddenly the ship was shaken by a violent storm, the dreaded “northeaster.” They were blown south to a small island called Cauda in the middle of the Mediterranean. As the ship came under the shelter of the island, the sailors began to take elaborate measures to ride out the storm. They tied down the lifeboat and ran

cables underneath the ship to hold the timbers together. Apparently they put out drift anchors from the stern to slow the progress of the ship as the wind propelled it along. In any event, they knew that to the south lay the treacherous shoals of the North African coast known as the Syrtis. They had to avoid those at all costs.

27:18. On the second day of the storm, as it intensified, the crew took even more desperate measures. They began to throw the cargo overboard. In all likelihood their cargo was grain. Egypt was the bread-basket of the Roman empire. Alexandrian ships such as theirs usually carried cargoes of grain. If water leaked into a full hold, the grain could swell and burst the timbers of the ship. Dumping the grain would both eliminate that hazard and lighten the ship.

27:19-21. On the third day, they threw the ship's tackle overboard, which probably refers to the main yard, the huge beam that carried the ship's mainsail. This was a desperate measure. Without a main yard, the ship would not be able to sail. Still, it was better to have no sail than to sink. The storm continued. Everyone went without food. They had no appetite in the tossing seas, especially since they assumed they soon would be drowned. In the midst of the seemingly hopeless situation, Paul offered a word of encouragement.

27:22. Paul was about to give them even more explicit words from God. They would be well-advised to heed them. He assured his fellow voyagers that they would be delivered. Not a soul would perish. The ship would be lost, he said, but none of them would be harmed.

27:23. Paul explained that an angel of the God to whom He belonged and whom he served had given him a special message in a night vision. God earlier had directed Paul by means of such visions. At Troas, the Lord had called him to a new field of witness through the vision of a Macedonian (16:10). At Corinth in a night vision the Lord assured Paul that He would protect his ministry there (18:9). The Lord again had spoken to Paul as he lay imprisoned in Jerusalem, assuring him that he would be delivered to testify in Rome (23:11).

27:24-25. In the middle of the storm's turmoil, the Lord again assured Paul he would live to appear before Caesar. God was preserving him for that special witness. Also, everyone aboard the ship would be saved. Paul had trusted the Lord's promises before. The Lord had never failed him. He had no reason to believe He would fail him now. Paul told his fellow travelers that he had placed his faith in God; he was sure things would turn out just as God had told him. Therefore, they should keep up their courage as well. Paul's faith was a key to his effective ministry.

27:26. A final detail from his vision would soon be confirmed by the actual events: They would run aground on some island. The details about the location of the shipwreck were not revealed to Paul. The certainty of it was.

27:27-32. Paul's predictions soon came true. After 14 days of storm, the crew could hear waves crashing on rocks and knew that they were near land. As they took soundings and realized they were sailing into ever more shallow waters, they put out four anchors from the stern to hold the ship and direct it toward the shore. The sailors recognized that the waters were treacherous and decided to abandon ship and make for land in the small lifeboat. They pretended that they were going to put out an anchor from the bow. Paul saw through their ruse and reported it to the centurion, who by then fully trusted Paul. The centurion made sure that the sailors would remain on board to help in the beaching operations; he had his soldiers set the lifeboat adrift.

27:33-34. After two weeks without a decent meal, Paul urged everyone on board to eat some food. God had already warned him that the ship would be lost (27:22); so he knew that no easy course lay ahead and that all on board would need their strength. Paul reminded them of his earlier vision—none of them would be lost. Now Paul gave an even stronger assurance—none would suffer any harm, not even the loss of a hair from his head.

27:35-36. Paul was confident that they would be delivered. He set the example himself, being the first to take food. He gave thanks over the food, following the same pattern of blessing so often exemplified by Jesus. He took bread, gave thanks, and broke it before them all. It was the familiar pattern that Jews followed in giving thanks before each meal. Thanking God before the pagans aboard ship was a means for Paul to remind them of the God who was delivering them. When everyone saw Paul's confidence and hope in God, they all joined in and ate to strengthen themselves.

27:37-38. A large party was on board ship, 276 people in all. Not all were crew. Probably, most were passengers. The Roman world had no passenger vessels. Travelers depended on merchant vessels. Ships such as this cargo vessel often carried large groups of passengers. They obviously had not thrown all the grain overboard on the second day of the storm (27:18). Now they did so, in order to lighten the ship as much as possible for the attempt to beach it.

27:39-44. Spotting a sandy beach, the crew prepared to run aground there, but the ship ran onto a sandbar and stuck fast. Everyone had to abandon ship and proceed to the land in the water. Fearing for their own lives if they lost their prisoners, the soldiers decided to kill them rather than risk their escape. Completely confident in Paul, the centurion kept them from doing so. Everyone reached land safely. God had kept His promises to Paul.

Paul would live to make his defense before Caesar. God also had preserved the lives of all on board, just as He had said He would.