

KEY VERSE:

So keep up your courage for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me. Nevertheless, we must run aground on some island.

Acts 7. 25 - 26



THE PARISH OF CHALFONT ST PETER

Encounter God, Encourage Others, Engage our World
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FOUNDATION CAFÉ SERVICE

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The Church Grows and Spreads 5: Shipwrecked



**CHALFONT
ST. PETER
PARISH CHURCHES**

KNOW WHAT:

- We continue our theme: The Church Grows and Spreads. After Jesus' disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit, they met together, prayed together, and saw God use them to spread the good news of Jesus to all kinds of people in many different places.
- So far we have looked at Peter healing a lame man, Philip meeting a senior official from Ethiopia and Saul changing from persecuting Christians to being a Christian leader.
- Today we look at Paul who spread the Good News of Jesus across Asia and Europe. He was arrested by the Romans and sent for trial in Rome under armed guard. On the way their ship encountered a very heavy storm. God told Paul he would keep them safe if they trusted and obeyed him. Paul stopped sailors trying to save themselves in a lifeboat. They were shipwrecked on an island but all were safe.

SO WHAT:

- For the church to grow and spread they had to travel to new places, sometimes in risky and adventurous circumstances. As we follow Jesus, He may lead us into new adventures which we have not imagined.
- As Paul listened to God, trusted in Him and obeyed, he was kept safe. We can always trust God in risky circumstances. Following Jesus is never dull. He has exciting plans for our lives but He promises that He will always be with us.

NOW WHAT:

- Let us trust God and obey him even if it seems risky.

JIM'S JOTTINGS: Shipwreck: no casualties

In a week which has seen a terrible train crash in Italy we remember that travel has always had risks and still does today, no matter how much we do to stay safe.

Some years ago, in my early 20s, I was driving a minibus with 11 youths in, on a New Year adventure camp when we came across a ford with a stream flowing across the road. My cautious side made me stop and tell my passengers, plus the two following minibuses, that the stream was swollen by winter rain and was not safe to drive through. No-one else agreed; they all told me to proceed but with conflicting advice. So I looked at the road and the stream again and decided to proceed slowly. The road tarmac looked good entering and exiting the ford so I moved forward gently into the water. There was a somewhat alarming lurch as the front wheels left what I had assumed was tarmac all the way through and settled onto a muddy river bed. The rest, as they say, is history. Water flowed under the bonnet and the engine died. The passengers and I climbed out of the windows onto the roof rack and leapt to dry land. Hours later the AA towed the vehicle out, got it started again and returned it to me letting me know in no uncertain terms how foolish I had been.

In today's story Paul is on a boat caught in a winter storm in the Mediterranean. The captain had ignored advice and sailed at the wrong time of year. It looked as if everyone would perish but Paul sought God for help. The result was that the ship was lost but everyone was saved.

In the midst of life's events the lesson of the story remains true. God is with us and will guide us as we trust Him.