

## HOPE WINS LIFE GROUP APPLICATION WEEK 2 WHEN THINGS GO FROM BAD TO WORSE

### Introduction

In this week's sermon we study the story of Paul's shipwreck and deliverance in Acts 27. The title of the sermon is *Having Hope When Things Go from Bad to Worse*. There are a lot of parallels with our current situation. **Some of the big points for discussion are:**

1. God still has a big plan for hope to win, even when it doesn't happen right away and things go from bad to worse before they get better.
2. One person in a storm can make an incredible difference if they connect with God and the power of His hope.
3. God doesn't want us to just have a "survivor's" mentality. God's purpose in crisis is for His people to be the way those far from God discover the God who rules the storm.
4. Through the power of Christ within us, we can bounce back from anything. You can't keep a spirit-filled man or woman down.
5. Hope wins in situations where things go from bad to worse when we connect with God, activate our faith through obedience, and persevere even when victory comes through the problem and not from it.
6. A big part of hope is embracing the fact that God wants to use suffering to grow the character of hope in our lives.

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Dale said that crises reveal the "players" and the "pretenders". Have you observed certain people rising while others shrink back in this crisis? Why do you think Paul was able to step up as if he was the leader on the ship even though he was technically just a prisoner?
2. Can you think of a time in which you were able to rise above a storm and have joy and peace in the middle of a crisis, by connecting with the Holy Spirit and His resurrection power within you? What did you do to allow that to happen?
3. One of the important points in this sermon is that hope must be activated by choices and decisions we make in the crisis. Hope doesn't come from our circumstances, but from choosing to act on our faith. It was said, "God doesn't give us an overcoming life but the power to choose a life in which we overcome." What is an area in your life you believe God wants you to choose hope in spite of how you feel?
4. People who bounce back and rise up see suffering as an opportunity to grow bigger on the inside than the problem they face on the outside. Take a closer look at Romans 5:3-5, *"Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us."*

Can you give an example of a "Mount Everest"- type of adversity, that you had or are having to climb? What is the value that you can see God bringing out of that? How could your friends pray for you to grow through this present crisis?