

ROCHFORD CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

Welcome to

Church at Home

Sunday 14th June 2020

Read through this outline and join with everybody at 11am

They cut loose the anchors (v40) and the rope that held the rudder

There was no Plan B – it was God’s way forward – all the way!

The last five words of the chapter sum up the great truth that we can depend upon what the Lord says in his Word totally, “...**everyone reached land in safety**”.

The Lord brought them through the storm and the shipwreck to fulfil His purposes. What was God’s purpose? To spread the good news of the gospel through Paul and the Church – to Malta, to Rome, to the rest of the world, including Rochford.

In doing so, the Lord also taught those on board – as well as you and me – a lesson about total surrender to His Word in life’s storms.

They had tried to hold things together themselves (v17) but as they let go of all but the Lord and His Word, they were delivered to God’s prescribed destination for them. They put everything “**down**” but were then able to keep “**up**” their courage (v22 & v25) – and be encouraged (v36)

How are you sailing? Are you passing through stormy seas? We all are on board the pandemic ship – are we trusting God’s Word and taking courage from our Lord who is able to still the storm and /or bring us safely through. Amen.

Pastor Andrew

Homework?

Who could you ring / text / email / write a letter to, this week to encourage your fellow sailor(s)?

BENEDICTION

“Peace to the brothers (and sisters), and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with an undying love.” (Ephesians 6.23-24)

HYMN (To sing or read)

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in His excellent word,
What more can He say than to you He hath said,
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?

Fear not, He is with thee, O be not dismayed,
For He is thy God, and will still give thee aid:
He’ll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,
Upheld by His righteous, omnipotent hand.

In every condition, in sickness, in health
In poverty’s vale, or abounding in wealth,
At home or abroad, on the land, on the sea,
As thy days may demand shall thy strength ever be.

When through deep waters He calls thee to go,
The rivers of grief shall not thee overflow,
For He will be with thee in trouble to bless,
And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress.

When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,
His grace all-sufficient shall be thy supply,
The flame shall not hurt thee, His only design
Thy dross to consume and thy gold to refine.

The soul that on Jesus has leaned for repose
He will not, He will not, desert to its foes,
That soul, though all hell should endeavour to shake,
He’ll never, no never, no never forsake.

PRAYER

*Our Gracious God and loving Heavenly Father,
Thank you for access into your presence through what your Son, our Saviour,
Jesus Christ went through for us. I come before you to worship, to thank you
for my life and ask you to continue to guide me in it during these
unprecedented times.*

*Bless all who are working to make life better at this time. Give us patience in
the restrictions we still face. Grant wisdom as to the way forward for us as a
country and as your Church.*

*Help those who I miss fellowshiping with in our Church services – especially
(Insert names). Help any who are sick, lonely, or afraid. I thank you for the
way you speak into my life through your Word, do that again today by your
Holy Spirit. In Jesus Name. Amen.*

THE LORD'S PRAYER

*Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name
Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven
Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive
those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us
from evil, for Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory,
forever and ever, amen.*

BIBLE VERSES FOR THIS WEEK

**“He got up and rebuked the wind and the raging waters; the storm
subsided, and all was calm. “Where is your faith?” he asked his disciples”
(Luke 8.24b-25)**

**“So keep up your courage men, for I have faith in God that it will happen
just as he told me” (Acts 27.25)**

“...the word of the Lord stands forever” (Isaiah 40.6-8; 1 Peter 1.25)

Read Acts 27.13-44

“Keep up your courage...”

The Gospels record how Jesus calmed storms with His mighty, powerful word. To have Jesus with them gave His disciples security in what they were facing. I am reminded of the chorus:

“With Jesus in the boat, you can smile at the storm...”

However, sometimes the Lord takes us through the storm and the damage it brings. In Acts 27 we have the record of Paul's shipwreck off the Island of Malta. The Lord didn't calm that storm outwardly but gave Paul a confidence inwardly of how He would bring Paul and the ship's crew through it. The storm arose and buffeted the ship for fourteen days – getting worse by the day. The chapter reveals how the crew did all they could to prevent the shipwreck by lightening the ship of its load and use of the anchors, yet to no avail.

In their darkness they prayed for daylight (v29). They strengthened themselves with food (v33f) after Paul led them in giving thanks to God (v35). How wonderful it is to take everything to the Lord in prayer? How important to feed our faith as well through God's Word.

Paul had a word from the Lord that he held on to and sought to share with his shipmates to aid their courage (v25) Everything else can go – but not our courage produced by faith in God's Word!

They let go of the cargo and the ship's tackle.

What matters? What do you need or what don't you need?

In the storm of the pandemic we are in – it has helped many to focus on what is important and what isn't. Much of our pre-pandemic “baggage” has had to be discarded.

They let go of the lifeboat (v32)

In doing so, they were totally committed to Paul's God-given plan. Only God's rescue plan is infallible. Jesus – the only Saviour.

They threw the grain into the sea (v38)

In doing so, they were expressing faith that the plan would soon be fulfilled