



THE LIFE OF  
**PAUL**

FAMILY DEVOS

# Journey to Rome

**Scripture:** Acts 27:1-38

**Memory Verse:** Proverbs 3:5

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart,  
And lean not on your own understanding;”

## For My Family:

The last few years had been crazy for Paul. He had been attacked by a mob in Jerusalem, taken prisoner, put on trial before two different governors, and appealed to have his case heard before Caesar. Through it all, he held on to God’s promise that he would preach the Gospel in Rome. Because Paul had appealed to Caesar, Governor Festus sent him to Rome so that he could stand trial. Today we read about his journey.

Paul and some other prisoners were put on a boat to Rome under the command of a centurion named Julius. The boat reached a place called Fair Havens on the island of Crete late in the fall, and there Julius had a decision to make. It was dangerous to sail in the winter, and so Paul recommended that they stay at Fair Havens until the spring, but the sailors wanted to go a little further before stopping for the winter. Now Julius liked Paul and had formed a bond with him, but he listened to the sailors’ advise instead of Paul’s. After all, it didn’t make sense to listen to a prisoner rather than professional sailors. However, this decision proved to be a disaster, and the boat was caught in a massive storm. For three days the boat was tossed around in the sea, and the crew had to throw all the cargo overboard.

Even though the men hadn’t listened to Paul and even though they were in a storm, Paul was not afraid. God had promised him that he would preach the Gospel in Rome, and so nothing could keep that from happening. He told everyone else onboard that even though they had ignored his advice, God had sent an angel to promise that they would all make it off the boat alive. They continued their journey, sailing for almost two weeks before reaching land. During that time, Paul had gone from a prisoner on board to giving Julius advise about what to do. He even warned Julius of some sailors who were trying to escape.

From a worldly perspective, Julius’ choice to listen to the sailors rather than Paul made a lot of sense. After all, who would you listen to for advise about sailing, a sailor or a prisoner? The problem was, Paul’s message was really from the Lord, and so Julius wasn’t actually rejecting Paul’s word, but the Lord’s. We should learn from his mistake and follow the Lord’s commands, even when they don’t make sense to us or someone tells us that we should do something different. Despite Julius’ bad choice, God was merciful to him and the rest of the crew. He had made a promise to Paul that he would make it to Rome, but the Lord didn’t have to rescue any of the others. Yet God showed mercy for Paul’s sake and saved not just Paul, but everyone on board. Even when we make mistakes, our God is merciful.

## Questions for Young Children:

What did Paul say Julius should do? What did the sailors say?

What happened to the boat when they decided to keep sailing?

When people tell us to do one thing but God commands us to do something else, who should we listen to?

## Questions for Teens and Pre-teens:

If you were in Julius' position, who would you have listened to? Why?

Why do you think the Lord decided to have mercy on Julius and the sailors?

Have you ever been in a situation where something seemed like the smart thing to do, but it wasn't what God's Word said? What did you do?