

# ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

## Lesson #27 -The Lesson of Circumstance

Scripture Reading: Acts 27:39-44

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### Introduction:

1. Review: Paul and the crew were shipwrecked.
2. Our circumstances can always be used to glorify God.
3. We will examine the various circumstances of Paul and how he used them to glorify God.

## **I. NEGATIVE CIRCUMSTANCE**

### **A. PAUL**

1. The natives of Malta were showing unusual kindness to those shipwrecked
2. It was cold and raining. Paul was gathering sticks for the fire.
3. The viper
  - a. A viper attached himself to the hand of Paul.
  - b. The people assumed he had done some evil that justice would not allow him to live
  - c. They watched him for a long while expecting him to swell up and die.

### **B. OUR CIRCUMSTANCE**

1. Negative events occur in our lives.
2. When this occurs, people seek meaning. They usually assume the worst about a person
3. Example of Job. His friends believed him to be a sinner due to his calamity.
4. Outward circumstance is not our spiritual barometer!

## **II. POSITIVE CIRCUMSTANCE**

### **A. PAUL**

1. After some considerable time went by, Paul did not swell nor did he die!
2. The people came to a different conclusion; he must be a god!
  - a. Luke does not record any dispute coming from Paul on Malta.
  - b. However, we recall in Lystra Paul greatly disputed being equated to a god -Ac 14:13-18

### **B. OUR CIRCUMSTANCE**

1. There are a great number of positive events in our lives (E.g. health, finances, education, family, career, etc.)
2. We, along with others may be tempted to think that all is right with us spiritually also.
3. Note some examples:
  - a. Rich Young Ruler -Mt 19:16-22
  - b. Rich man -Lk 16:19
  - c. Cornelius -Ac 10:1, 2
  - d. Saul of Tarsus -Ph 3:4-6

## **III. USING OUR CIRCUMSTANCE**

### **A. PAUL**

1. He heals Publius' father -28:8
2. He healed many others on the island -28:9
3. Luke does not record any sermon or teaching from Paul at this point.
4. Knowing Paul however, he would never miss an opportunity to preach.

## B. OUR CIRCUMSTANCE

1. The tornado in Tuscaloosa, AL
  - a. The church lost its building
  - b. They used their experience to reach out to the community
2. Positive circumstances (i.e. health, wealth, family, career, etc); give the glory to God

### Conclusion:

1. Remember that our spiritual barometer is the word of God, never our circumstance.
2. Remember also, that every circumstance we find ourselves in can be used to glorify God.