

SERMON NOTES

SERIES: Acts: To Be Continued
TITLE: Dealing with “Detours”
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In Acts, Luke shows Jesus’ friends continuing the kingdom mission that Jesus started in his earthly life and ministry. The Book of Acts is all about Jesus’ followers continuing his mission in the world. We are the ones God has entrusted with carrying the message of Jesus forward.

In this message, we look at Acts 28:1-16. Paul is on a journey from Caesarea to Rome, and in this passage we see yet another detour. We take another look at Paul’s journey to further answer the question, “How do we navigate the storms and shipwrecks of life—the detours and dead-ends of life—in calm and confidence in God?”

Set-up of Acts 28:1-16:

- The word *safely* is repeated in the last verse of chapter 27 and the first verse of chapter 28. The take-away? You can’t go over it—you can’t go under it—but God will bring you *safely through*. ***Safely through doesn’t mean easily, but that we finish the race just as God intends.***
- Storms and shipwrecks take their toll on us: physically, emotionally, spiritually.
- You go nowhere by accident.
- Most of the time detours feel like wandering and you can’t see the purpose—the WHY in the WHAT—until much later when you are way down the road looking in the rear view mirror.
- Always remember that:
 - Following Jesus means being led by Jesus.
 - Being led by Jesus means he has a destination in mind for each one of us.
 - But, how and when we get there will probably be different and more difficult than we expect.

Summary of Acts 28:1-16:

- After being blown off-course, Paul and his shipmates are stranded on the island of Malta (which means refuge).
- Paul is unharmed even after a viper came at him from sticks he was putting onto a fire.
- Paul heals the chief man of the island, and then others come to him for healing.
- After three months on Malta they finally set sail for Rome, by way of Syracuse, Rhegium, and Puteoli.

- In Puteoli and Rome, Paul is greatly encouraged by the community God brings around him to encourage him

Application from Acts 28:1-16:

- Paul doesn't focus on "where he should be," only where he is. **One of the easiest ways to miss the point of your life is to waste your days obsessed with getting to the right place.**
- Paul shows us how to live within a detour, so we see who else is in the "frame" with us. **One of the most important things you can do in a detour is to look for opportunities to serve the people you meet there.**
- As he serves others, Paul finds evidence of God's grace within the detour.
- Here's the curveball: If you are a follower of Jesus, there's really no such thing as detours and dead ends—only who and what God puts in front of you.
- In Philippians 1:12, Paul reflects back on this "detour" and says, "I want you to know that what has happened to me has really served to advance the Gospel." **Life is not about what happens to you. Life is about how you interpret what happens to you.**
- BIG FRAME: **You can survive any WHAT if you have a big enough WHY.** Always live your life—your WHAT—in a way that puts Jesus on display so the Gospel continues to move forward in our generation. In this way, you will be brought safely through whatever storms you face in life.

For Discussion:

1. Name something you've considered a detour or roadblock to getting where you want to be. How does it change your perspective if there's no such thing as a detour or roadblock for a Christian?
2. Have you experienced any "detours" lately? Who is in the frame with you to serve?
3. Paul is saying, "I can go through a storm, but you can't take my why... I can shipwreck and wash up on some unknown beach, but you can't take my why... You can throw me in prison and put me in chains, but you can't take my WHY." Can you say that?