

Speak up, Speak out

Paul the prisoner takes charge

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City after city. Mile after mile. Year after year. Paul travelled far and wide, facing danger every day, just so that people could hear about Jesus.

Was Paul worried? Not at all. In every city he visited he left behind a little church. A group of people who wanted to live like Jesus. But then Paul went to Jerusalem. And that's when he ran into big trouble. The religious leaders didn't like it when Paul said that Jesus was the Special One that God had promised. The religious leaders were angry when he said that Jesus really had come back from the dead.

And at last the religious leaders arrested him and beat him. Some people even wanted to kill Paul, but in the end he was put in chains and sent to Rome to go on trial before the emperor himself.

Was Paul worried? Not at all. He knew that God had said Paul would go to Rome to tell people there about Jesus, and now he was on his way!

Paul was put on a ship with other prisoners and at first the journey went well. But then the wind changed, the ship slowed down, and by the time it reached Crete, it was running late.

Was Paul worried? Not at all. He knew that it wasn't a good time of year to sail, and that if the ship stayed in Crete, everything would be all right. And that's what he told the men in charge. But they didn't want to wait. So off they sailed, across the choppy sea. It didn't take long for Paul's warning to come true. A hurricane blew up and the boat was blown like a toy across the water. The sailors did everything they could. They dropped the anchor, they threw the cargo overboard, they held the battered boat together with ropes. But the storm went on and on until all the food had run out and it looked like everyone was going to die.

Was Paul worried? Not at all! He knew God would keep them safe. Calmly, he stood and spoke to the others: *“I had a visit last night - from an angel! He told me that we would get to Rome safely. The ship will be destroyed - run aground on an island, but we will all survive!”*

And that's just what happened. The ship was wrecked off the island of Malta. At first the soldiers and sailors thought only of themselves, but Paul convinced the men in charge that the angel's promise would only come true if everyone stuck together. So that's what they did, and everyone was saved!

The people who lived on the island took care of the castaways, and after three months they joined another ship sailing to Rome. In that big city Paul had to stay in his house until the trial, so while he waited, he told everyone who visited him about Jesus.

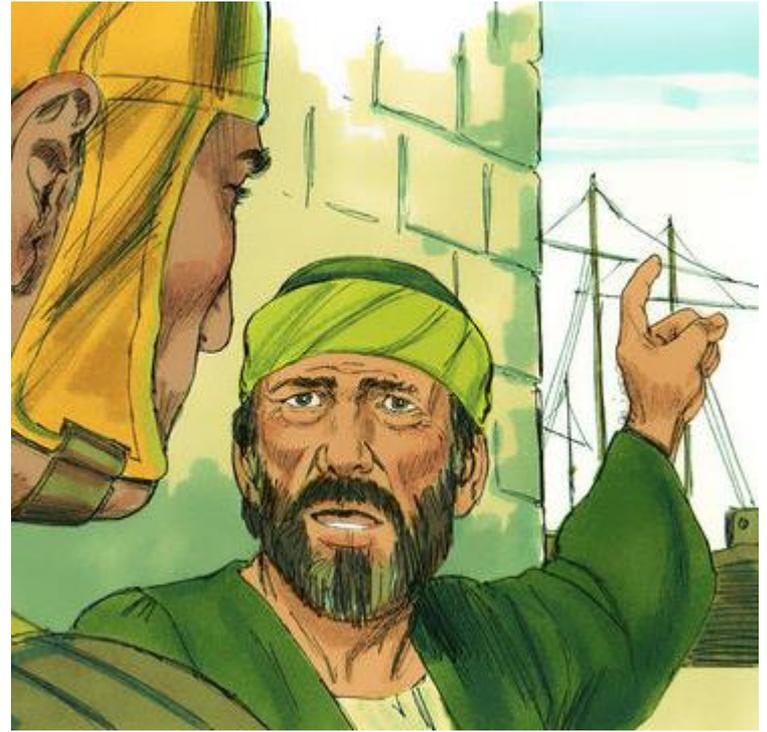
Was Paul worried about what would happen to him? Not at all. Instead he was busy - busy writing letters to the churches he had started all over the world. And in one letter he said: *“Don't be worried. Just be thankful and tell God what you need. Jesus will give you the peace of God, and that will help you to face anything!”*

What does Paul have to offer?

1. Life experiences
2. Rhema word of God
3. Faith – “You say... I believe”



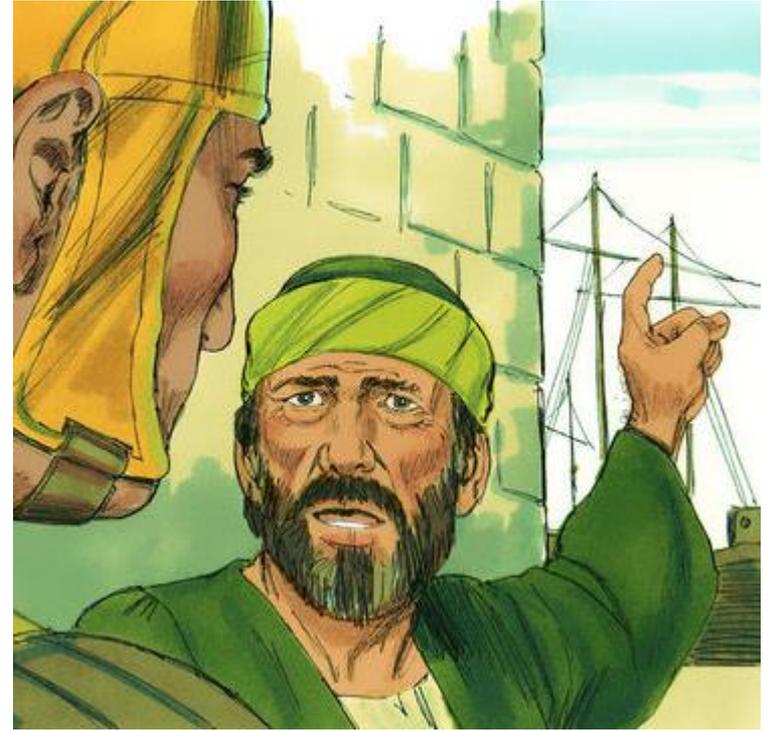
- Paul was a well travelled man
- He had experienced trials of many kinds
- “Men,” he said, “I believe there is trouble ahead if we go on— shipwreck, loss of cargo, and danger to our lives as well.” (Acts 27:10)



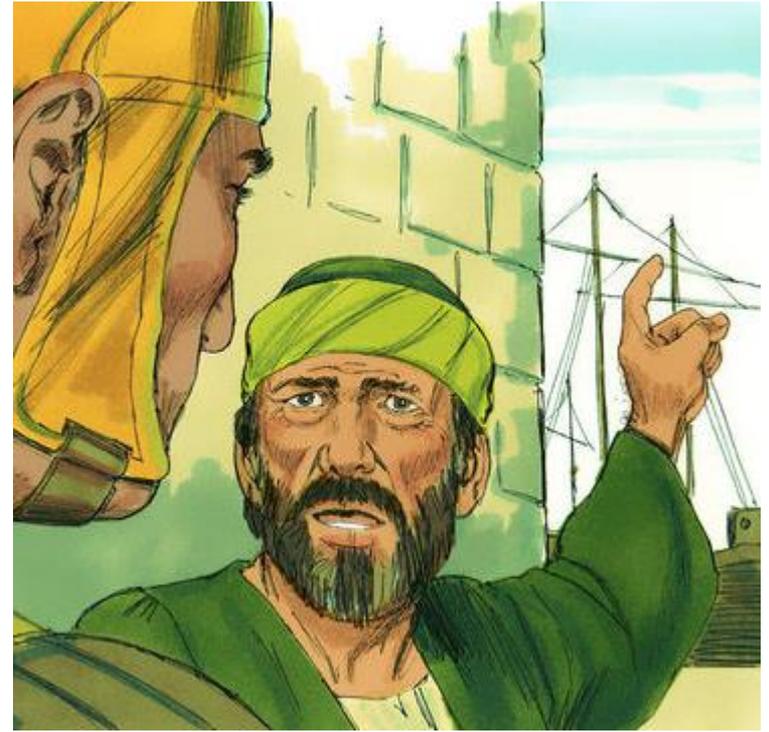
Paul is having to deal with:

- Impatience
- Experts
- There's somewhere better
- Majority vote

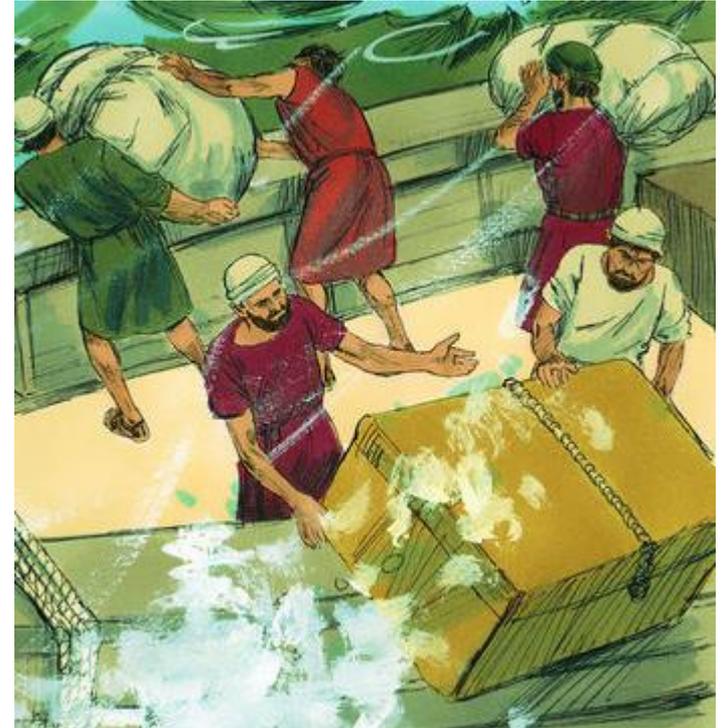
Do we speak up and speak out against popular opinion?



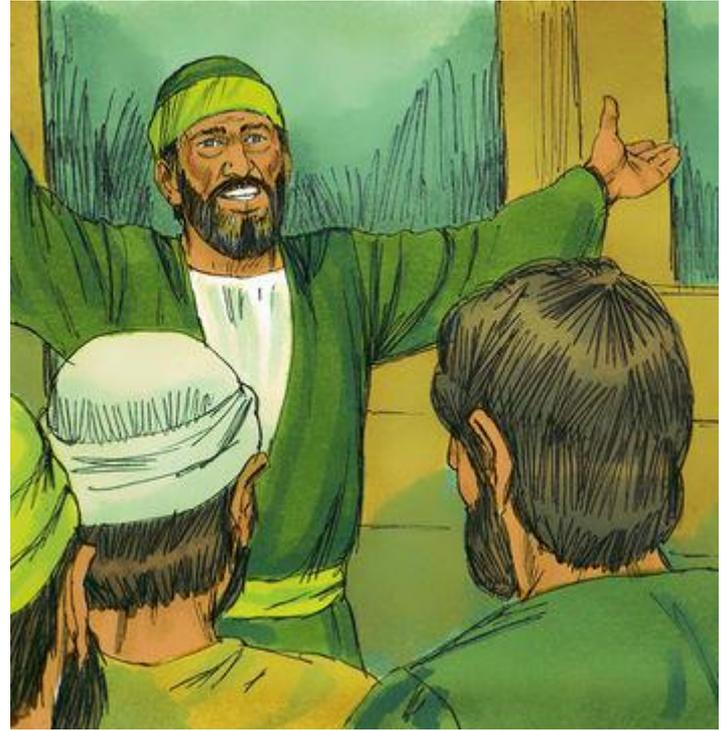
- We need to believe that the life we have in God is worth talking about and is a better alternative to the world.
- Taking church outside of four walls is sharing our life experience in God.



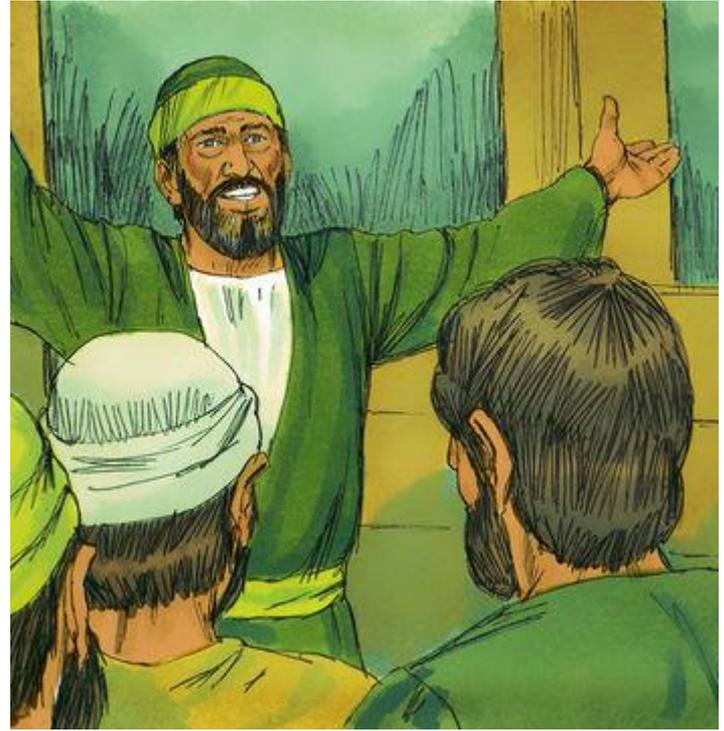
“Men, you should have listened to me in the first place and not left Crete. You would have avoided all this damage and loss. ²² But take courage! None of you will lose your lives, even though the ship will go down. ²³ For last night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve stood beside me, ²⁴ and he said, ‘Don’t be afraid, Paul, for you will surely stand trial before Caesar! What’s more, God in his goodness has granted safety to everyone sailing with you.’ (Acts 27:21-24)



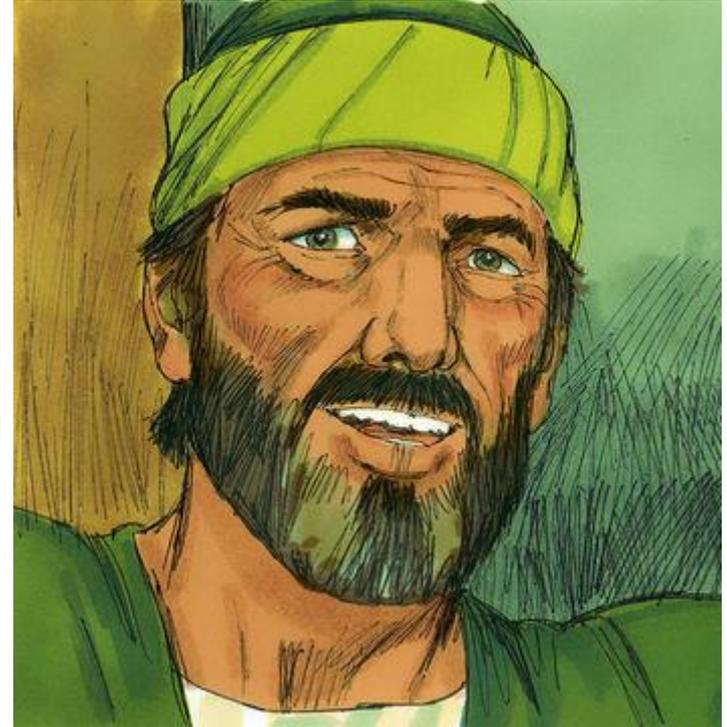
- Paul moves from just speaking from experience to speaking prophetically
- We all need to learn to hear God for the moment and speak it out.
- The sailors were blind (their means of navigation had been hidden)
- Similarly, the world is blind to where it is heading and needs the light of God to bring hope.



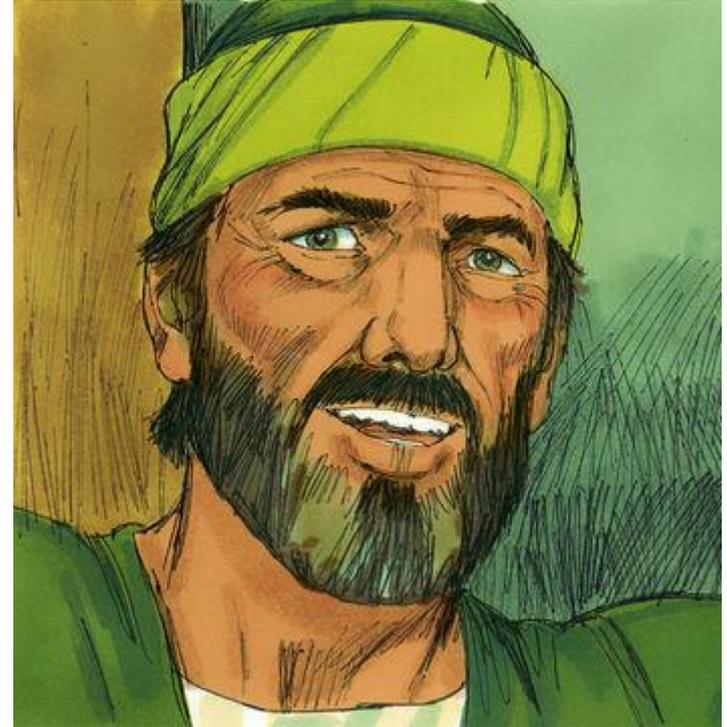
- Taking church outside of the four walls is learning to speak the rhema word of God into situations we find ourselves in.



- “So take courage! **For I believe God.** It will be just as he said.” (Acts 27:25)
- In Acts 19:21 Paul senses the Holy Spirit wants him to travel to Rome.
- When Paul is being threatened by the Jews and interrogated by the Roman officials, God reassures him that he will still go to Rome and preach the gospel.
- Was Paul worried? NOT AT ALL

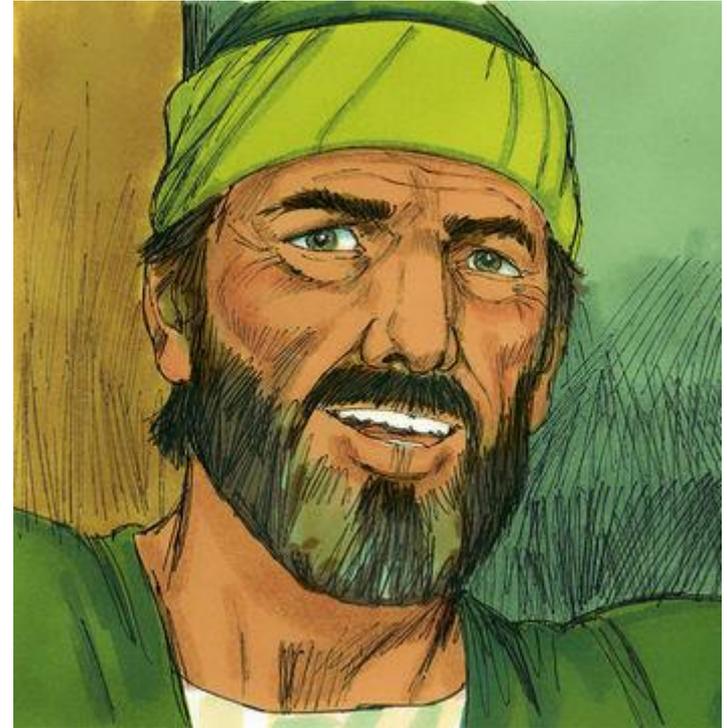


- We should not underestimate the power of our faith on the lives of those around us.
- We can bring hope, encouragement and strength. **BUT WE MUST BELIEVE**
- Taking church outside of four walls is imparting our faith to those around us.



“Church outside four walls”

- We really do have something to offer the broken world around us.
- The world is blind but we can see through the lens of the Holy Spirit
- God said that everyone who was with Paul in the boat would be saved.
- **Who is in your boat?**



And finally...

- Then he took some bread, gave thanks to God before them all, and broke off a piece and ate it. Then everyone was encouraged and began to eat. (Acts 27:35-36)
- Church outside of four walls can take place over a meal.

