



## **Punched - Crisis**

### **Sermon Discussion Questions – 08/28/22**

#### ***Scripture Passages:***

**Acts 27:14–15 (NIV84)** <sup>14</sup> Before very long, a wind of hurricane force, called the “northeaster,” swept down from the island. <sup>15</sup> The ship was caught by the storm and could not head into the wind; so we gave way to it and were driven along.

**Acts 27:20 (NIV84)** <sup>20</sup> When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days and the storm continued raging, we finally gave up all hope of being saved.

**Acts 27:22–26 (NIV84)** <sup>22</sup> But now I urge you to keep up your courage, because not one of you will be lost; only the ship will be destroyed. <sup>23</sup> Last night an angel of the God whose I am and whom I serve stood beside me <sup>24</sup> and said, ‘Do not be afraid, Paul.

<sup>25</sup> So keep up your courage, . . . for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me.

**Ephesians 6:12 (NLT)** <sup>12</sup> For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places.

**2 Kings 6:16 (NIV84)** <sup>16</sup> “Don’t be afraid,” the prophet answered. “Those who are with us are more than those who are with them.”

**Acts 27:22 (NIV84)** <sup>22</sup> But now I urge you to keep up your courage, because not one of you will be lost; only the ship will be destroyed.

**Acts 27:25–26 (NIV84)** <sup>25</sup> So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me. <sup>26</sup> Nevertheless, we must run aground on some island.”

#### ***Warm Up***

Just for fun, take some time to think about some actual storms you have witnessed.

Have you ever been in a major storm and if so when was it? What was it like? How did you feel?

### *Discussion*

1. In the beginning of his message Pastor Tom shared the Mike Tyson quote that we've been talking about throughout this series: "Everyone has a plan until they get punched in the mouth."

What are some examples of life circumstances that might cause someone to feel like they have just been hit in the mouth?

2. Pastor Tom showed how a perfect storm included the altering of expectations, faith, loss, and futility.

How would you describe or define each of these elements of the storm? How do each contribute to a perfect storm or crisis?

3. Pastor Tom began his sermon by asking us to make a mental list of people we know who may be in a perfect storm right now. Can you think of anyone who might be in a perfect storm or crisis currently? How can you support them? Are you in one? If so how could you be supported?

4. Read Acts 27:22-26. Paul has perspective on God using the seen and unseen together for good. He saw the presence of God during panic.

How can Paul's example be encouraging to someone in a storm? How might Paul's example impact the way we respond to storms in our own lives? What do you take away from Paul's example?

5. Excerpt from Pastor Tom's Message: Our faith isn't broken and God has not lost control. God has not changed who He is. God is still trustworthy and true. Real faith has the capacity to stand firm in the storm because you trust, know and recognize God's voice. You believe in another agenda, another reality besides the one that is seen."

What are some of your reactions to this statement? What are some times when you have witnessed someone modeling this kind of faith? What was that like?

6. Read Ephesians 6:12 and 2 Kings 6:16.

How might the encouragement to focus on the unseen give clarity to a storm? How could you focus on the things of God that are unseen to help you through a storm?

7. Pastor Tom suggested that the most important question to ask amidst a crisis is what do you truly believe? Do you believe in the love and power of God despite crisis? If so, how might that belief help you in crisis? How might it help you help others who are in a storm?

8. Read Acts 27:22.

How might this show that in a storm we will lose some things but not all things? How could a storm refine you and change what you cling to? How have you seen difficulties in your life alter your devotion for the better or worse?

9. Read Acts 27:25-26.

This verse shows that God may not rescue us from the storm but will be with us in it. How does this truth encourage you despite discouragement? How could you cling to God and use storms to become stronger rather than hoping they become easier?

***Next Steps:***

Steve Deneff writes, “My friend, to believe in things that have not yet happened, to speak of things that are not as though they were, requires a faith that goes deep into our inner core. It is informed, but optimistic. Firm, but flexible. It absorbs the blows. It steadies us. And when the storm finally passes . . . it leaves a depth and a richness that cannot be had except by those who have weathered the perfect storm.”

How in your life could you cling to faith in God and the unseen during a storm, to gain a depth and richness of faith otherwise unattainable? How can you encourage someone who is in a storm right now?