

I'm Hanging On By A Thread, Philippians 4:20-23 – May 5th, 2019

- I want to share with You today about something the Lord has been deeply impressing upon my heart in the last several months.
- It's that of how God will get us through those perilous storms in life when we've given up all hope after hanging on by a thread.
- The reason I chose this title is because the Apostle Paul says something here at the end of his letter that speaks to this truth.

- Notice in verse 22 where Paul says all the saints greet them but it's especially those saints who are of the household of Caesar.
- Because this mention of Caesar's household might seem insignificant at first read, I think we'd do well to know the backstory.
- In order to do that we need to go back to Acts 27, where Paul is on a ship to Rome as a prisoner when they are hit with a storm.

Acts 27:20 - When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days and the storm continued raging, **we** finally gave up **all** hope of being saved.

- It's important to understand Paul had already been shipwrecked three times before this en route to stand trial before Caesar.
- The reason I point this out is because in this storm, Paul has resigned himself to the reality that this will be how his life will end.
- But God! But God, as only He can, sends a message to Paul the night before it seemed everyone including Paul would perish.

Acts 27:23–25 - 23 Last night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve stood beside me 24 and said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul. **You must stand trial before Caesar**; and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you.' 25 So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me.

- This is interesting for a number of reasons not the least of which is Paul had no idea what God had for him on the other side.
- By that I mean God's plan in and through this life and death storm, was to bring many to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.
- In other words, God's higher purpose in saving Paul in that storm was to save the Islanders on Malta and Caesars household.

- You probably already know where I'm going with this so I'll get right to the point, you will make it through that storm you're in.
- This because, God is preparing you for what he's preparing for you to use you in ways that He could not otherwise be able to.
- I would suggest that we all have an ending to the letter of our Christian lives, that can only be written vis-à-vis the storms of life.

2 Corinthians 3:3 - You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.