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SHIPWRECKED, NOW WHAT?

Dr. Vanessa Dantzer Ussery | February 1, 2017

I was reading Acts 28 this week and it struck me that sometimes we face shipwreck in life at the hands of others decision making and we need to see that God is in the plan and has a kingdom purpose to fulfill. Paul was a prisoner on a ship heading to Rome. He warned the people on board of the danger of leaving under such severe conditions. They ignored him, sailed anyway and eventually they ended up shipwrecked on Malta. In the process of this disastrous event, Paul was comforted by the Lord that no one would be lost at sea if they remained on the ship. The fascinating thing is before reaching their ultimate destination (Rome), being shipwrecked on Malta served a noble purpose. In this place, Paul was able to reveal the power of the living God by healing diseases of the natives that lived there. The natives even saw Paul bitten by a viper and not suffer any adverse reaction. Paul also visits the Magistrate, Publius, and heals his father who was very sick. The natives and the Magistrate were very grateful so they honored Paul and those with him in many ways. Several months later Paul and the others finally got to Rome, their final destination.

The unpleasant experience of being tossed, driven and shipwrecked and therefore delayed in reaching one's destination can be frustrating for anyone. There are those of us who know what God has revealed as the destiny for our lives or the goal we will reach. The present circumstance is not caused by us, yet we have landed somewhere unexpected and are docked there because we cannot go any further at the moment. That means it's time to be a blessing to others where we are. Allow the glow of the glory of God in you to shine so others can see the greatness of your God. Where you see a need, step in and allow God to use you to meet that need. Those you help will honor you in many ways for taking time to help them. We should not allow our destiny/goal to be shaped into a selfish objective. If that destiny/goal is God inspired, then it should be God-driven and not self-driven. The ship of life will make many turns, twists and stops before we reach the final destination. Paul told the men to stay on the ship to be saved. We can't jump the ship of life when it appears to deviate from what we had in our finite mind. Just like God comforted Paul by telling him, "Do not be afraid," these same words from God are being shared with you and me today. The detour has been seen by God and accounted for in the equation of our life. It doesn't matter how long it takes to fulfill our destiny/goal. Though shipwrecked for a while, we must always be ready to serve others for His glory!

Residing in Los Angeles, CA, Dr. Vanessa Dantzer Ussery is the Emeritus Pastor of Home Assembly Church in Los Angeles, is the founder of "Celebrate Change Ministries" and the author of "My Be Attitude: Who Be You?", which is available online in softcover or eBook at MyBeAttitude.org, Xulon Press, Amazon and Barnes & Noble. Dr. Ussery is available for national speaking engagements, empowerment seminars, and lectures. For more information, CelebrateChange.org | Info@CelebrateChange.org | 310-436-6336 x216.

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