



ENDURANCE

HEBREWS 10:36

Enduring Through the Storm with Hope

Adapted from "Shipwrecked" series by Rod Loy

Paul understood storms. While on a ship headed to Rome to stand trial, he wound up shipwrecked. You may not be facing a literal shipwreck but nonetheless you are facing a storm. When you are in the middle of a storm; fear, anger, and discouragement may seem like the emotions you readily exhibit. How do you survive the storms that come your way? Thomas Chisholm reminded us of a powerful way to make it through a storm with a poem he wrote. Read the following history of his great poem "Great Is Thy Faithfulness:"

Thomas Chisholm was born in a simple log cabin in Franklin, Kentucky, in 1866. Lacking a high school education or any college training, he became a school teacher at the age of 16 and later entered the newspaper business.

The following years found him ordained a pastor, but poor health forced him to leave the ministry. After a time of recuperation, he moved to New Jersey to work as an insurance agent.

A prolific writer of poetry, he sent a collection of his poems in 1923 to his good friend William Runyan, a musician associated with Chicago's Moody Bible Institute, who also worked for a hymnal publishing company.

While on a trip to Baldwin, Kansas, Runyan leafed through the poems sent by Chisholm and was immediately taken in by the depth of meaning and lyrical beauty of the words found in the poem "Great Is Thy Faithfulness."

Years later, Runyan recalled, "This particular poem held such an appeal that I prayed most earnestly that my tune might carry over its message in a worthy way."

Out of a simple prayer, Runyan's melody took shape, and the completed hymn was published by Runyan that same year.

The hymn's first verse is a simple expression of God's unchanging faithfulness, based on Lamentations 3:22 (KJV): "It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not."

Verse two continues with an expression of God's faithfulness to us in the natural world He created—the changing of the seasons, the movements of the celestial bodies—all joining together in praise to their Creator.

The hymn culminates in the final verse with the testimony of peace that comes through redemption, God's abiding presence in our daily lives, and the blessed hope of heaven.

The refrain echoes the infinite faithfulness of God to extend mercy and compassion: "They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness" (Lamentations 3:23, KJV).

Looking back on the writing of the hymn, Chisholm recalled in 1941, "My income has not been large at any time due to impaired health in the earlier years which has followed me on until now. Although I must not fail to record here the unfailing faithfulness of a covenant keeping God and that He has given me many wonderful displays of His providing care, for which I am filled with astonishing gratefulness."¹

When storms rage, find a quiet place to get alone with God and His Word. He will faithfully teach you how to endure through the storms of your life with hope. This lesson is designed to help build your faith in the midst of a storm.

¹ Eric Wyse, *The History of "Great is Thy Faithfulness."* January 01, 2014, Lifeway <https://www.lifeway.com/en/articles/the-history-of-great-is-thy-faithfulness> (accessed March 6, 2019).

COURAGE

C1: What are your thoughts as you read/heard the introduction?

C2: List some emotions you have felt when you have gone through a storm in life?

C3: On a scale of 1-4, with 1 being very often and 4 being not very often, how well do you reach out to others when you are going through a storm? Why did you respond the way you did?

C4: Read **Acts 27:25–26 (ESV)** ²⁵ So take heart, men, for I have faith in God that it will be exactly as I have been told. ²⁶ But we must run aground on some island.” and answer the following:

- How does focusing on others help you endure through your storm?
- Why is it hard to focus on others when you are living through your own storm?

STRENGTH

S1: Read **2 Corinthians 12:9 (ESV)** and answer the following:

- When is God's power revealed in your life?
- How does this verse help you endure through the storms of life?

S2: Read **Acts 27:27-29 (ESV)** and answer the following:

- Why do you think Luke wanted you to know that they were in a storm for 14 nights?
- Have you ever been in a storm that lasted an extended time? Where you able to maintain your hope in the midst of storm? Why or why not?

S3: Read **Acts 27:30-31 (ESV)** and answer the following:

- On a scale of 1-4, with 1 being very often and 4 being not often, how often have you tried to take a shortcut when you were trying to endure through a storm? What lessons did you learn from trying to take a shortcut? Why is it hard for you to do what is right in the midst of the storm?

ENDURANCE

E1: Read **Acts 27:33-34 (ESV)** and answer the following:

- On a scale of 1-4, with 1 being very well and 4 being not well, how well do you take care of yourself physically? Write out a plan to improve.
- On a scale of 1-4, with 1 being very well and 4 being not well, how well do you take care of yourself emotionally? Write out a plan to improve.
- On a scale of 1-4, with 1 being very well and 4 being not well, how well do you take care of yourself spiritually? Write out a plan to improve.

E2: Why do you think it is important to take care of yourself when you are trying to endure a storm?

E3: Read **Acts 27:35 (ESV)** and answer the following:

- Paul is in the same storm as the rest of the people, yet Paul gets some bread and before he eats it, he prays in front of everyone. Write out a prayer you think Paul might have prayed while he was trying to endure the storm.
- Take 15 minutes and write out some things you can give thanks for today. What emotions do you feel?
- What are some ways you can stay thankful in the midst of your storm?

E4: Find a quiet room and either sing or listen to the old hymn “Great is thy Faithfulness.” How does hearing this song help you to deepen your love of God?

E5: After going through this lesson, how can you practically help someone with hope who is going through a storm of destruction or pain?