



**Educate
+ Engage**



ANCHORS:

principles
(Doctrine)



OVERVIEW

In Acts 27 Paul was in the custody of Roman officers, boarding a ship to Italy to appear before Caesar. It was near winter, and the weather was treacherous. Paul warned about trouble ahead and danger to their lives. He wanted the Roman officials to stop and *drop the anchors*, but the officer in charge did not listen.

As they journeyed on, the weather changed abruptly, and a wind of typhoon strength burst across the island and blew them out to sea. The storm raged for many days. Those on board the ship couldn't see the sun or the stars. They were so fearful, they hadn't eaten for nearly two weeks! Then they noticed they were approaching land and would be thrown on the sharp rocks of the coast.

Scripture Passage

Acts 27:29 (KJV)

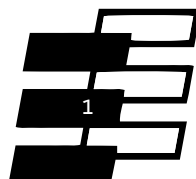
Then fearing lest we should have fallen upon rocks, they cast four anchors out of the stern, and wished for the day.

Knowing that the anchors would have done their job if the men had deployed them when Paul instructed, he chided them, saying, "You should have listened to me in the first place, and . . . you would have avoided all this damage and loss" (Acts 27:21, NLT). Yet, soon the men were shipwrecked on an island and thrown into the sea. Only by the grace of God did they survive and make it to shore.

EDUCATE

Every generation faces challenges to faith. Sometimes these tests feel like powerful storms, attempting to shake you and break you away from God and the truth of His Holy Word. That is why we need some anchors in our lives to help us stay firmly connected to Him before disaster strikes and we have a spiritual shipwreck of our lives.

(Display a boat anchor throughout this series.)



Lesson 1

Many people in our day believe there are no absolutes. They say no true anchors of truth exist to which we should be tied. But the anchor doesn't hold the ship back; it holds the ship steady and safe during dangerous storms and preserves it for the future! Anchors are a **must** for our spiritual survival.

Ephesians 4 explains that leaders must equip and build up the church with the Word of God, and verse 14 (NLT) notes the why: "Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won't be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth."

In our opening story, the ship's crew cast out four anchors to keep them safe. In this series we are going to focus on four different spiritual anchors inspired by Acts 2:42: "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." These anchors are:

- The anchor of principles (doctrine)
- The anchor of participation (fellowship)
- The anchor of perspective (breaking bread, the Lord's Supper)
- The anchor of prayer

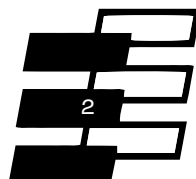
The focus of this particular lesson is the anchor of principles. People whose approach to life doesn't include anchoring principles will wander aimlessly, without purpose and direction, and likely get caught up in the rough, dangerous, and spiritually damaging seas of life.

Jude 1:3–4 (NLT) warns against the danger of false teachers who will try to destroy the principles and doctrines of the Word of God. Jude continued to write that in the last days there will be scoffers and people creating divisions among us (Jude 1:18–19, ESV). More than ever, we must have the anchor of principles.

Five Anchoring Principles

Let's examine five doctrinal principles we all need in our lives!

The first anchoring principle we must never let go of is knowing there is **one** God, and His name is Jesus. Throughout the Bible, we see what God's people clearly recognized in Deuteronomy 6:4: "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD!" Other verses of Scripture that affirm this truth follow:



Lesson 1

- Ephesians 4:5: "One Lord, one faith, one baptism."
- James 2:19: "Though believest that there is one God, thou doest well."
- Revelation 4:2: "A throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne."

Next we must have the anchoring principle of **Scripture**. The Bible is God's inspired and holy Word. Heaven and earth will pass away, but God's Word will never pass away (Matthew 24:35). It is forever settled in Heaven (Psalm 119:89). It will never fail. We should not add or take away from it but accept it entirely. It is powerful, it is true, and it is miraculous. It is timeless and it "is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness (II Timothy 3:16).

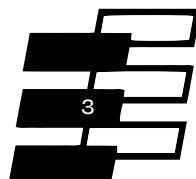
We must also understand the anchoring principle of **salvation**. We receive salvation when we apply the gospel of Jesus Christ to our lives—the death, burial, and resurrection—through repentance from sin, water baptism in Jesus' name, and the infilling of the Holy Ghost with the supernatural sign of speaking in other tongues as explained by Peter in Acts 2:38. Jesus Himself said that "unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God" (John 3:5).

Next, we must also have the anchoring principle of **holiness**. Hebrews 12:14 teaches that without holiness no man shall see the Lord. "Because it is written, be holy, because I am holy!" (I Peter 1:16). It is imperative to exhibit inward and outward holiness.

Finally we must also have the anchoring principle of **separation unto God and from the world**. God's church is called to leave darkness and walk in His marvelous light (I Peter 2:9). God instructed us: "Come out from among the world and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you" (II Corinthians 6:17, NKJV). We are also taught not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers (II Corinthians 6:14). We are called to be a city set on a hill, not hidden (Matthew 5:14). Our lives should reflect the kingdom of God, not the culture of the world.

Closing

We can hear the Word of God and know all about these anchoring principles, but unless we deploy them in our lives, they are useless! An anchor left unused in a boat will become a burden. It will eventually get in the way, and we will begin to despise it. That's why after we understand these anchoring principles, we need to obey them and apply them to our lives. Obeying God's principles give us clarity and strength; disobeying His principles brings moral darkness, instability, confusion, and destruction.



Lesson 1

The Bible gives us examples of this necessity.

James 1:5-8 (NLT): "If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking. But when you ask him, be sure that your faith is in God alone. Do not waver, for a person with divided loyalty is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is blown and tossed by the wind. Such people should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. Their loyalty is divided between God and the world, and they are unstable in everything they do."

ENGAGE

If we willingly reject the knowledge of God's principles, we demonstrate foolishness and our hearts become darkened. We must ask God for help when we need it and be firmly anchored to the principles of His Word.

Think about these five principles: in which principle do you feel you are strongest, and in which principle do you feel the weakest? What will you do this week to strengthen the principle where you feel weakest? Read your Bible to learn more about growing in that area. Talk with God about the help you need in that area. Talk with your pastor or youth pastor for further direction. Study books or videos that will help strengthen you in that area. Let's be like the church in Acts 2—anchored in the principles of God's Word.

