



# From Shipwreck To Leadership In Christ

**“And he shook off the beast into the fire, and felt no harm” (Acts 28:5).**

Bulletin VCAT83

23 July 2025

“And when they were escaped, then they knew that the island was called Melita. 2 And the barbarous people shewed us no little kindness: for they kindled a fire, and received us every one, because of the present rain, and because of the cold. 3 And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid them on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on his hand. 4 And when the barbarians saw the venomous beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves, No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live. 5 And he shook off the beast into the fire, and felt no harm. 6 Howbeit they looked when he should have swollen, or fallen down dead suddenly: but after they had looked a great while, and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds, and said that he was a god. 7 In the same quarters were possessions of the chief man of the island, whose name was Publius; who received us, and lodged us three days courteously. 8 And it came to pass, that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever and of a bloody flux: to whom Paul entered in, and prayed, and laid his hands on him, and healed him. 9 So when this was done, others also, which had diseases in the island, came, and were healed: 10 Who also honoured us with many honours; and when we departed, they laded us with such things as were necessary” (Acts 28:1-10).

## Introduction

Leadership in Christian ministry is not forged in comfort but in crisis. The Apostle Paul, having just survived shipwreck, stands not as a broken man but as a servant of power. From **Acts 28:1–10**, we uncover lessons for becoming strong Christians—men and women fit for leadership and ministry.

## 1. Remain Servants Even in Crisis

“And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid them on the fire...” (Acts 28:3).

**“So when this was done, others also, which had diseases in the island, came, and were healed” (Acts 28:9).**

Paul, though an apostle, gathers sticks. Leadership in the Kingdom is never above servanthood. Even after trauma, Paul serves the cold and weary. He admonished believers:

*“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men” (Philippians 2:5–7).*

A true Christian leader must serve when it's inconvenient, when tired, and even when recovering from stormy seasons.

## 2. Shake Off Satanic Attacks

“And he shook off the beast into the fire, and felt no harm” (Acts 28:5).

The viper—representing the enemy's attack—fastened itself to Paul's hand. But Paul shook it off. Leadership in ministry demands spiritual resilience. Attacks will come, but they must not deter us. Stand by scriptural promises, such as the ones below, in spiritual warfare:

- “No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord...” (Isaiah 54:17).
- “Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you” (Luke 10:19).

Spiritual leaders must not only survive at-

tacks—they must model how to overcome them.

### 3. Endure Misjudgement Without Bitterness

*“And when the barbarians saw the venomous beast hang on his hand... they said among themselves, No doubt this man is a murderer...” (Acts 28:4).*

The people misjudged Paul. One moment a murderer, the next a god (v.6). But Paul didn't respond in pride or offence. The same is true of Jesus Christ:

*“Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously” (1 Peter 2:23).*

*“The discretion of a man deferreth his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression” (Proverbs 19:11).*

A mature Christian leader must not be swayed by public opinion, but remain anchored in God's call and character.

### 4. Be Channels of Healing and Power

*“To whom Paul entered in, and prayed, and laid his hands on him, and healed him” (Acts 28:8).*

**Paul moved from surviving to serving in the miraculous. God uses those who are available in crisis to bring healing to others.**

- *“And these signs shall follow them that believe... they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover” (Mark 16:17–18).*
- *“Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him... and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up...” (James 5:14–15).*

Those called to leadership must be equipped with spiritual power, not only for preaching but for ministering to the broken.

### 5. Leave a Legacy of Honour

*“Who also honoured us with many honours; and when we departed, they laded us with such things as were necessary” (Acts 28:10).*

Paul's leadership bore lasting fruit. He left Melita not in shame or scarcity but with honour and provision. True Christian leadership produces blessing wherever it is faithfully exercised.

- *“A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold” (Proverbs 22:1).*
- *“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 5:16).*

Christian leaders must strive to leave behind more than words—they must leave behind an impact.

### Conclusion: From Fire to Fruitfulness

Paul's experience on the island of Melita reveals the journey of every Christian leader:

- Serve in the storm.
- Shake off the serpent.
- Stay humble amidst opinions.
- Stand in the Spirit's power.
- Shine as a testimony to all.

Let us not fear the shipwrecks or the vipers, for they are but stepping stones to leadership ordained by God.

*“If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work” (2 Timothy 2:21).*

May the Lord make us strong Christians, fit for leadership, ready for ministry, and **fruitful in every season—even after the storm.**

Amen.