

cases darkness and storm soon came on, and the "ship" was driven at the mercy of the winds and waves ; not forgotten of God however. Then again, as in their case so in ours, the same Apostle administered reproof, and at the same time gave counsel and encouragement.—The ship and cargo would be lost, but the "living people" would all be saved. Then too, the "shipmen" must not desert the ship so long as their presence and aid would be of any service. But when the proper moment had arrived, and *there was no hope of saving the ship, or the people if they remained in it*, the order was given to LEAVE, and the noble-hearted Julius, and the blessed Paul, would, we may rest assured, be among the first to lead the way, as they plunged into the roaring billows and made their way through the surf, "some swimming, and some on boards and broken pieces of the ship."—"And so it came to pass that they escaped all safe to land."

A friend said to me lately, rather sarcastically, "You"—meaning a "Gathering" of "Brethren"—resemble a *church* about as much as a *raft* resembles a *ship*." I replied, "not so much as that: not more than Paul and his companions, while buffeting with the waves at Melita, on their 'boards and broken pieces of the ship,' resembled an orderly ship's crew, or than their means of transit resembled a ship." No doubt there had been "organization" and "order" in abundance on board ; but when they had "committed themselves to the sea," there was but little "organization" and "rule" observed "I ween." It may be fairly questioned whether the "courteous" Julius persisted in wearing his helmet, and in keeping his "horse-tail" flying, or any other badge of office ; and as to Paul, what would he be in the water, or claim to be, more than "less than the least of all saints?"

But there could be *order* even in the "floods" and "billows." They could take care not to interfere with one another ; and the strong could bear the infirmities of the weak ; and each one could help and cheer on his neighbor during the struggle for life. God Himself was most manifestly present in power, superintending the whole movement, and regulating all the details ; aye, and He was present too in power over the "old serpent," disarming him of his "malice" and "venom," after the battered shipwrecked company had reached the shore. There, too, in his grace, He provided for all their wants. The fire, and the food, and the kindness, and the care, were not wanting.