

What's Next? | Acts 21-23 2021 Fall #6

Announcements: Please send an updated ROSTER to Elizabeth Leonard. Just send a quick email with the names of your group members. We would like an accurate account by the 15th of October. Thank you. elizabeth.leonard@tworiverschurch.org

Tips: People relax and are themselves when they see the leader being transparent. Be willing to share your own real failures and weaknesses and ask for prayer. Be willing to show that you do not have all the answers. It helps people feel safe to ask questions and share half formed ideas without feeling judgment when the leader shows vulnerability. Ask God to help your group become a safe place where people feel authentic.

My Story Questions

These questions help the group know one another and transition to deeper discussion. Choose one.

- 1) Paul endured many physical hardships. When was the most physical pain you have experienced?
- 2) What is one of your favorite Fall activities?

Study Questions

These are meant for personal preparation and group discussion. Use all or pick a few to discuss.

Read Acts 21:1-26 - Paul Travels to Jerusalem

- 1) Who was discouraging Paul from going to Jerusalem? Who was compelling him to go? What was Paul's motivation according to Acts 20:22-24.
- 2) Does Paul's decision seem unwise, maybe even a bit foolish? How does his decision stand in contrast to what we would recommend to our friends?
- 3) When have you felt the Holy Spirit compelling you to an action that others did not think was wise?
- 4) Give other biblical or present day examples of people called to do hard things that were still in God's will.
- 5) How do you see Paul's consistent obedience play out in this story?
- 6) Where have you struggled in the past to do the hard thing God has asked you to do?

Read Acts 21:27-22:30 - Paul Speaks to the Violent Mob

- 7) What do you think the Roman tribune thought of Paul's speech to the mob that just beat him.
 - 8) Why is it significant that Luke portrayed him in such a positive way?
 - 9) What is your attitude toward those outside the faith? How can you show respect to even the most lost.
- #### **Read Acts 23 - Paul Addresses the Sanhedrin**
- 10) How does Paul's treatment by the Sanhedrin compare with his treatment by the Romans? What do you think was the root of their hatred of Paul?
 - 11) Why would vs 11 have been such an encouragement to Paul?
 - 12) How has God encouraged you when friends or family have turned against you? Read Psalms 34:18
 - 13) These events are snapshots of Paul's obedience. What everyday type of faithfulness may have enabled his faith in God to grow to this level?
 - 14) What small steps of obedience might help you see and trust His faithfulness? Read John 14:23

Responding to Jesus

Offer these questions for personal reflection before your group prayer time.

- 1) Lord, what hard thing am I avoiding. How can you help me trust and obey you?
- 2) Lord, How can I build bridges with the people you may be bringing to faith?
- 3) Lord, What are you trying to say to me that might bring comfort in my situation? Help me listen.