

WEEKLY GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Week of Sunday September 27, 2026

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INTRODUCTION

In **Acts 21**, God is not promising Paul an easy road or removing every obstacle in front of him. He is inviting Paul to trust Him enough to obey even when obedience is difficult, misunderstood, or costly. We often assume that if God is leading us, things should go smoothly—but sometimes faithfulness takes us directly through difficulty. This passage challenges us to stop measuring God's leading by our comfort and instead ask whether we are faithfully following Jesus with what we already know.

Main Passage:

Acts 21:10–36

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Worth The Cost

READ ALOUD

Acts 21:10–36

Opening Question: What is something you knew was the right thing to do, even though you knew it would be difficult?

- What stands out to you about Paul’s response when people warn him about what is waiting in Jerusalem?
- What do you notice about how assumptions about Paul grow into accusations and eventually action?
- What does this passage teach us about the difference between difficulty and being outside of God’s will?
- Where are we most tempted to let difficulty, other people’s opinions, or our own assumptions determine how we respond instead of simply obeying Jesus?

APPLY

- Is there something you already know God wants you to do that you have been delaying because it feels difficult or costly?
- Where are you currently tempted to “fill in the middle”?
- If someone watched how you live this week, where would your actions clearly match what you say you believe, and where might there be a gap?

RESPOND

- What is one specific act of obedience you need to take this week?
- Is there a conversation you need to have, an assumption you need to clarify, or a relationship you need to make right?

DIGGING DEEPER *(optional)*

Acts 21:1–16

- What do you notice about the people surrounding Paul as he travels toward Jerusalem?
- How do Paul's friends balance expressing their concern with eventually walking alongside him?
- What can this teach us about helping someone we love follow God when their obedience may be difficult?

PRAY

Invite the group to pray about any area where fear, comfort, assumptions, or the opinions of others have made obedience difficult. Ask God for courage to obey what He has already made clear and for wisdom to seek truth rather than make assumptions about others. Pray for lives where words and actions consistently point people toward Jesus. Thank Jesus that our obedience is a response to His grace and His love for us.

QUESTIONS FOR FAMILIES

Acts 21:10–14

- Why do you think Paul kept going even though he knew things might be hard?
- What is something Jesus teaches us to do that can sometimes feel difficult?
- Who are people who can encourage you when doing the right thing is hard?
- What is one way our family can obey Jesus this week?

For younger children: Help your child understand that following Jesus means listening to Him and doing what He says, even when it is not easy.

For older kids or students: Where might you be tempted to choose what is easier instead of what you know is right, and what could obedience look like this week?

BIBLE READING PLAN (OPTIONAL)

Scripture to read as you pray this week:

- **Day 1:** Acts 22:1–5
- **Day 2:** Acts 22:6–11
- **Day 3:** Acts 22:12–16
- **Day 4:** Acts 22:17–21
- **Day 5:** Acts 22:22–30

What's Going On?

Acts 21 marks an important turning point in Paul's ministry. Paul travels to Jerusalem knowing that suffering and imprisonment are ahead, yet he remains committed to what God has called him to do. Once there, false assumptions about Paul spread through the crowd and eventually lead to violence and his arrest.

What looks like everything going wrong does not mean God has lost control. Paul's chains will eventually give him opportunities to share Jesus before rulers and ultimately take the gospel toward Rome. The passage reminds us that faithfulness is not controlling the outcome; it is obeying Jesus with what we can control and trusting Him with what we cannot.

A Bit of Background

Paul came to Jerusalem carrying financial help from Gentile believers for Jewish Christians. Because rumors were circulating that Paul opposed Jewish customs, church leaders encouraged him to publicly participate with several Jewish believers who had taken a vow. Paul agreed—not because keeping the law could save him, but because he was willing to limit his freedom for the sake of unity. Ironically, while Paul was demonstrating respect for Jewish customs, people falsely accused him of rejecting them.