

ACTS: To the Ends of the Earth

Study 49: Ready to suffer ... if God wills!

READ Acts 21:1-16 and **LISTEN** to the [sermon](#) by Pastor Craig.

The Apostle Paul resolved to go to Jerusalem to deliver the collection to the church. This is despite the Holy Spirit testifying to him, in every city, that imprisonment and afflictions awaited (20:22-23). Moreover, the churches of Tyre and Caesarea, as well as his followers, sought to convince him not to go to Jerusalem. They couldn't fathom that God's will often includes suffering. Therefore, they interpreted the prediction of suffering as a prohibition. Paul's resolve to go to Jerusalem highlights the importance of obedience to the will of God and the cost of Christian discipleship.

Big idea: Believers must seek to walk so closely with Christ that they can discern and follow His will, even if it means suffering.

Questions:

1. Read vv. 1-16. Consider the importance of the Christian community to Paul as he traveled to Jerusalem. What are some of the ways they ministered to him?

2. A. What were Paul's friends telling him about going to Jerusalem (v4, 12)? Do you think Paul was obedient or disobedient to the Spirit? Explain. See 20:22-23.

B. How did Paul respond to the pressure from his friends (vv. 12-13)? Why?

3. A. Why might it be important to seek the counsel of godly advisers when making large decisions? See Prov 15:22; 20:18. Whose counsel would you seek?

B. How can we know when to go against the counsel of godly people? What principles might apply?

4. From Phil 3:10, what does Paul's attitude regarding suffering and following God's will teach you?
5. Oswald Chambers said, "To choose to suffer means that there is something wrong; to choose God's will even if it means suffering is a very different thing. No healthy saint ever chooses suffering; he chooses God's will, as Jesus did, whether it means suffering or not." Why is this a healthy distinction to make?
6. Do we need to seek God's will for relatively minor decisions (what we wear for the day, etc.)? Why or why not? See Rom 12:1-2 for help.
7. Is feeling a peace (or lack thereof) about something a valid factor in determining God's will? (See 2 Cor 2:12-14)
8. What does the experience of Paul teach you about the importance of following God's will for your life, despite the cost?

STOP AND PRAY:

Praise: God who rules over every aspect of life for Christ's glory and believers' good

Thank: the Lord for guiding His people along the path of His will for their lives

Pray: that you would have faith to seek the will of God above all else, despite the cost