

STUDY NOTES

The Acts of the Apostles

A MESSAGE SERIES AT NEW CITY CHURCH (Summer 2016)

[WWW.NEWCITYPHX.COM/SERMONS](http://www.newcityphx.com/sermons) - BRIAN KRUCKENBERG

The following content is based on the message “Walking and Suffering with Jesus” spoken on 07/10/16 by Brian Kruckenberg at New City Church in Phoenix, AZ. The following is not meant to be a full synopsis of the message but rather a brief look at the main ideas. To use this Study Guide effectively you must listen to the message found at <http://newcityphx.com/sermons/>.

Leaders using these Study Notes for group study and reflection should read the Biblical text thoroughly before beginning, using this resource as assistance and not relying solely on this material for insight. We encourage all leaders to pray and ask the Spirit for revelation as they lead their respective communities.

PRAYER

Pray and ask God to lead the discussion as everyone gets to share.

NOTE to leader: Today’s discussion leads people into a lot of vulnerability. It might be wise to start the discussion with a funny question to get people comfortable with conversation.

THE SCRIPTURE: ACTS 21:1-16

WHAT IS PROPHECY?

In this account, prophecy is brought up multiple times. A prophet or prophetess is one who proclaims inspired utterances on behalf of God—an inspired preacher. Prophecy can include elements of telling future events or occurrences. In **Acts 20:22; 21:4; 21:12**, there seems to be different “prophesies about Jerusalem”.

- *What are some experiences that you have had with one Christian telling you one thing in the name of Jesus, and another Christian telling you something else in the name of Jesus?*

CONFIRMING PROPHECY

Scripture teaches us some things about confirming prophecy:

1 Corinthians 14: 29 — Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others weigh what is said. 30 If a revelation is made to another sitting there, let the first be silent.

1 Thessalonians 5:19 — Do not quench the Spirit. 20 Do not despise prophecies, 21 but test everything; hold fast what is good.

- *How does someone test a prophecy?*
- *Why is it important to test prophecy?*

PROPHECY FOR PAUL: SUFFERING

God doesn’t contradict himself, but the Spirit’s role is best seen as informing them of those coming hardships for the apostle. It was clear. Paul was going to face suffering. The very natural reaction of his friends was to urge him not to go.

- *Share about a time in your life, when God called you to something that wasn’t easy.*
- *How did other people respond to how difficult your situation was?*
- *What can you learn from your own situation about how to respond to people?*

As followers of Jesus, we order our lives around God’s principles. That means we put our lives in God’s hands. In some ways that means: our marriages aren’t ours, our dating relationships aren’t ours., our money isn’t ours, our kids aren’t ours, and etc.

- *Where is God calling you to “go”? What if go means stay? For example, is He calling you to go deeper into your marriage—into the painful parts? What has God said about your situation? Start there if you can.*
- *If you don’t know what God is calling you to do, what can you do?*

MISSING OUT ON GOD’S PLAN

Romans 8:17 says that Christians will suffer. However, we don’t want people to get hurt or to suffer! That is normal! It is a HUMAN thing not just a western American thing to want to avoid suffering.

- *How do you feel about God prophesying suffering for Christians?*
- *God says that suffering will happen, but how do you think He feels about it? Do you think there are some things that are straight evil?*

If Paul hadn't gone to Jerusalem, and he tried to avoid suffering, he would have missed all the opportunities to testify to the most powerful people in the Roman Empire about Jesus. Instead of asking "what will happen to me if I go?", what about asking, "what might I miss if I don't go?"

- *If you are facing a difficult situation and someone says, "what might you miss if you don't go?", how do you think you would REALLY respond to that?*
- *Besides just their answer, what might you need from someone who says, "what might you miss if you don't go?"?*
- *How does knowing that God works in difficult situations strengthen your faith?*

REFLECTING ON JESUS

Paul lives his life with the example of Jesus in view. It was clear that Jesus had to go to Jerusalem to suffer. People didn't want him to go, but he followed the Holy Spirit even though it was difficult. Paul was following the Holy Spirit's leading to Jerusalem even though people didn't want him to suffer.

- *What does reflecting on Jesus' example do for you in your own life? What does it do for you to know that He isn't asking us to do something that he didn't do himself?*
- *Pray together for strength to submit to Jesus in the face of suffering.*