



A *rise* Ω

reaching all people

LIFE
GROUPS

WEEK 39 • JAN 18

NORTHSHORE'S COMPELLING STATEMENT

Hope changes everything.

ICE BREAKER

What is a hard-learned lesson from your life?

BACKGROUND

The end of Acts 20 completes Paul's third missionary journey, as he and his followers bid a sorrowful farewell to the elders in Ephesus. Chapter 21 begins by describing their journey back to Jerusalem, where Paul will give a report on his activities and present the "love gift" he has collected from the Gentile Christians for the church in Jerusalem. Along the way, they are greeted at various times by fellow Christians, most of whom Paul had never visited on one of his journeys. This demonstrates just how expansive Jesus' gospel message had become.

While in the city of Tyre, Paul is informed of the potential dangers concerning his return to Jerusalem. The Judaizers who had been following him throughout his most recent missionary journey are also highly prevalent in Jerusalem. Upon arriving in Caesarea, they stay with Philip the evangelist and his four daughters. The prophet Agabus arrives from Judea and delivers a warning from the Holy Spirit to Paul, both through words and symbolic actions. Paul's followers encourage him not to continue his journey, but he refuses.

Paul and his group arrive in Jerusalem and stay at the house of Mnason of Cyprus. The next day, they meet with James and the elders of the church, where Paul relates all that has occurred in God's name through his ministry. After glorifying God for Paul's work among the Gentiles, they express concern regarding Paul's reputation among some of the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem. This concern arises from false rumors spread by false teachers and Judaizers in the city.

The leaders of the Jerusalem church then give Paul poor advice on how to address the issue. They suggest that Paul agree to join and sponsor four Jewish Christians in a Nazirite purification rite. The desired result of appeasing those who were upset with Paul is not achieved; instead, the crowd attacks Paul and beats him. He is temporarily saved by Roman soldiers and placed in protective custody. This situation ultimately provides Paul with several opportunities to witness for Christ.

REVIEW

What was meaningful from the above context or the sermon from last Sunday?



KEY VERSES: Acts 21:13

Then Paul answered, “What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be imprisoned but even to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.”

READ: Acts 21:1-26, 32




HEAD LEVEL: *What does it say? These help us to examine what the Word tells us.*

1. Who was Philip the evangelist? (see Acts 6:1-6; 8:4-43; 8:26-40).
2. What did Agabus predict about Paul, and how did Paul respond (Acts 21:10-14)?
3. What did the Jewish Christians from Asia do to Paul in the Temple (21:27-30)?




HEART LEVEL: *What does it mean? These questions help us shape our beliefs around the objective truth of God's word.*

1. What does the interaction between Paul and the disciples in Tyre reveal about Christian fellowship?
2. Paul was cautioned in Tyre against going to Jerusalem and Agabus's prophecy revealed the outcome to him. Was the Holy Spirit against Paul going there?
3. How does Paul's journey to Jerusalem exemplify his obedience to God's will?
- 4. Digging Deeper:** Why was Paul in favor of a Jewish custom here in Acts 21:23-26, but he was opposed to it in other cases (Galatians 2:3-5 and Colossians 2:16-23)?

 **HANDS LEVEL:** *What does it mean to me? These questions help us commit to live out the truth in our everyday lives and commit to potential next steps.*

1. How can we discern God's will amid opposition or challenges, as Paul did?
2. What is an appropriate response when efforts to promote peace are met with hostility, as was the case with Paul in Jerusalem?
3. What strategies can we learn from Paul when faced with misunderstandings about our beliefs?

 **MEMORY VERSE:** Acts 9:15-16
But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name."

PRAYER REQUESTS

(Please remember that these requests are confidential and need to stay within the group.)