

LIFE GROUP SERMON SUMMARY QUESTIONS

Acts Series

These questions are for the **February 21, 2021** sermon, "Ready to Move Forward." Please read the sermon passage (Acts 21:1-16) together out loud.

Sermon Outline

WHEN WE PURSUE GOD WHOLEHEARTEDLY, WE SHOULD ANTICIPATE . . .

1. The loving concerns expressed by believers. (1-6)
 - a. Paul is convinced that it is God's will for him to bring a financial gift to the church in Jerusalem from Gentile believers. He believes this will not only relieve suffering (providing money for food), but also bring unity amidst a growing cultural divide.
 - i. The Holy Spirit has shown Paul that he will face persecution. (20:22-23)
 - ii. The disciples warn him not to go (21:4)
 - b. Paul is committed to his course of kingdom-building action even if his life is threatened.
 - c. Well-meaning Christian friends warn him, attempting to preserve/comfort his life.
 - d. "Lord, what thou wilt, where thou wilt, when thou wilt." -Richard Baxter
2. The forceful warnings delivered by believers. (7-14)
 - a. "The brothers" send in a prophet named Agabus to increase the intensity.
 - i. Agabus offers a warning to Paul.
 - ii. The brothers warn him, "Do not go."
 - b. Well-meaning Christian friends may often attempt to reduce perceived danger.
3. The valuable fellowship offered by believers. (15-16)
 - a. Paul does not relent from his conviction to go to Jerusalem.
 - b. With opposite convictions about what to do, and opposite intentions,
 - i. There still remained unbroken fellowship (they share Jesus together) and
 - ii. Intense emotional commitment (they still cared deeply for one another).

Life Group Discussion Questions

1. Based on #1, above: Both the disciples (21:4) and the brothers (21:12) warn him not to do what he was convinced God had called him to do (20:22-23). Have you ever been convinced that a certain course of action was "God's will" even while a group of friends tried to convince you otherwise? How did you handle the decision? How did you handle your relationships?
2. Based on #1, above: Though we rarely feel it in the US, it is more dangerous to stand for Jesus Christ today (based on global martyrdom statistics) than it was in Paul's day. When you make a decision, how much weight is placed upon "faithfulness to the mission" and how much is placed upon "personal comfort and convenience" (avoiding danger)? How do you feel risk each day?
3. Based on #2, above: When you are convinced of a mission-critical course of action against Christian counsel, how can you move forward with grace and without bitterness?
4. Based on #3, above: Sometimes our affections for those who disagree with us are lessened, but not Paul and friends. They had opposite convictions, but mutual love and respect. Is there someone in your life that holds an opposite conviction that does not prevent mutual affection?