

# LIFE GROUP LESSON

When God Moves • Week of July 9

## Introduction

Advice. Lots of advice out there. How many times have we heard people giving us advice? Throughout life, we give advice to friends, family, people we love and care about. Often I think of how I probably should have given my now-adult-children more good advice when they were younger; but even so, at the end of the day, each of us has free will. We have the freedom to choose the advice that is good, and reject the advice that is not so good. Think about a time you were given advice. Did you take it? What is some of the good advice you have been given? Who shared it with you? What about not-so-good advice that you have received... What are some examples of poor advice that we hear in our culture?

## Background

The apostle Paul had friends and fellow believers who gave him advice. In one sense, it was good, had Paul's primary concern been about his own safety and survival. For when Paul arrived back to Caesarea from his second missionary journey, while staying in the home of Philip the Evangelist, "a man named Agabus ... arrived from Judea. He came over, took Paul's belt, and bound his own feet and hands with it. Then he said, 'The Holy Spirit declares, 'So shall the owner of this belt be bound by the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem and turned over to the Gentiles'' (Acts 21:10-11). Paul's traveling companions, fellow believers, and close friends all begged Paul not to go. Yet, Paul was determined to accomplish the Lord's task before him.

## Read Acts 21:1-17

1. What is the Holy Spirit saying to you?

The Holy Spirit had encouraged Paul and revealed to him ahead of time that he would have opportunity to preach in Rome. From the beginning of his conversion, Paul knew that living into this call from the Lord Jesus would mean a life of surrender and suffering. Take some time and read

carefully the following passages. What do you learn about Paul in each passage?

Acts 9:10-20

Acts 18:4-11

Acts 19:13-22

Acts 20:18-37

Acts 23:1-11

2. What are you going to do about what the Holy Spirit is telling you?

Because Paul stayed the course, he was able to preach from a stairwell to the hostile crowd in Jerusalem in their own language (Acts 22:1); to the Jewish high council both in Jerusalem and Caesarea (Acts 23:1 and 24:10-21); and to governors and kings in Caesarea (Acts 24:24 and Acts, chapters 25 – 26). Finally, Paul was able to preach in Rome (Acts 27:1 and 28:30-31); plus, he was a witness for Christ all along the way, such as, to the sailors and fellow prisoners on the ship (Acts 27:21-26), on the island of Malta where they were shipwrecked (Acts 28:7-10), and to large crowds who came to his lodging in Rome (Acts 28:23-24). As with Paul (and all our heroes of faith) hardship most always accompanies our resolve to obey God's call, sometimes to test and refine us, other times to cause us to lean into the Holy Spirit, and sometimes to get others who love the Lord and believe in the mission *on our knees* praying before the throne of God.

3. How can we help you; how can we be a team, on-mission, for one another and all believers around the world who are living into the Lord's call to go and make disciples?

Perhaps the greatest conviction from this weekend's message and lesson is how easily non-essential lures can distract us. We as Christ-followers are called to stay on course and accomplish the work before us. To be sure, not all distractions are ungodly or evil, just as not all advice is bad. Family and work demands are part of life. And hardship is part of the journey. But as we learn from these accounts regarding Paul's life, may the over-arching theme of our energies be to stay focused on Christ. Somehow Paul learned how to invite the Lord into the hardships, enabling him to avoid the lures that could potentially distract him from the mission. God stays focused on us. May we call out to Him. Ask Him to help us keep our eyes on Jesus.

*“When I look at the night sky and see the work of your fingers—the moon and the stars you set in place—what are mere mortals that you should think about them, human beings that you should care for them? Yet you made them only a little lower than God and crowned them with glory and honor. You gave them charge of everything you made, putting all things under their authority—the flocks and the herds and all the wild animals, the birds in the sky, the fish in the sea, and everything that swims the ocean currents. O LORD, our Lord, your majestic name fills the earth!” (Psalm 8:3-9)*

# *when* GOD *moves*

**Text: Acts 20:20-24, 21:1-14**

## **PLAIN TRUTH**

When God moves what is \_\_\_\_\_  
is \_\_\_\_\_.

1. Paul chooses \_\_\_\_\_ over \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Paul’s certain faith gave him both \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ as he faced \_\_\_\_\_.

### **One Year Bible Reading**

July 9: 1 Chronicles 7:1-8:40, Acts 27:1-20, Psalm 7:1-17, Proverbs 18:22  
July 10: 1 Chronicles 9:1-10:14, Acts 27:21-44, Psalm 8:1-9, Proverbs 18:23-24  
July 11: 1 Chronicles 11:1-12:18, Acts 28:1-31, Psalm 9:1-12, Proverbs 19:1-3  
July 12: 1 Chronicles 12:19-14:17, Romans 1:1-17, Psalm 9:13-20, Proverbs 19:4-5  
July 13: 1 Chronicles 15:1-16:36, Romans 1:18-32, Psalm 10:1-15, Proverbs 19:6-7  
July 14: 1 Chronicles 16:37-18:17, Romans 2:1-24, Psalm 10:16-18, Proverbs 19:8-9  
July 15: 1 Chronicles 19:1-21:30, Romans 2:25-3:8, Psalm 11:1-7, Prov. 19:10-12

**July 9, 2023**