

BGCC Community Group Guide



Acts: Testify

June 14th, 2026

Is Jesus Worth It?

Acts 21-22

Section 1 – Following God When the Road Is Hard

Acts 21:4, 10-14

“I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.”

Summary

As Paul journeys toward Jerusalem, the warnings become increasingly clear. Believers plead with him not to go. A prophet named Agabus dramatically demonstrates that imprisonment awaits him. Even Luke, Paul's close friend, joins those urging him to reconsider.

Yet Paul remains determined. Why? Because he is convinced that God has called him to go.

One of the most challenging realities of the Christian life is learning that God's will is not always the easiest path. Many of us naturally assume that if something is difficult, uncomfortable, or costly, it must not be from God. But throughout Scripture, God often leads His people through hardship rather than around it. Joseph endured slavery and prison. David spent years running for his life. Daniel faced lions. The apostles faced persecution. Even Jesus walked the road to the cross.

As *Dietrich Bonhoeffer* famously wrote, "*When Christ calls a man, He bids him come and die.*" Bonhoeffer wasn't celebrating suffering. He was reminding believers that following Jesus often requires surrendering comfort, control, and personal preferences.

Paul understood something important: difficulty is not always evidence that God is absent. Sometimes it is evidence that we are walking exactly where He wants us to be.

Group Question: Why do you think many Christians struggle to believe that God's will can include hardship, suffering, or even death?

Personal Relevance

Most believers will eventually face moments where obedience and comfort move in opposite directions. It may involve standing for biblical convictions, forgiving someone who hurt you deeply, serving when you feel exhausted, or stepping into a responsibility that feels overwhelming. And you truly never know, it may call you to surrender your life.

In those moments, the question becomes: Do I trust God's wisdom more than my desire?

Flow Question: How do you typically respond when obedience to God becomes difficult or costly?

Reflection Question: Is there an area of your life where you know God is calling you to obedience, but fear or discomfort is holding you back?

Section 2 – Becoming All Things for the Sake of the Gospel

Acts 21:17-40

"I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some." (1 Corinthians 9:22)

Summary

When Paul arrives in Jerusalem, church leaders rejoice over what God has been doing among the Gentiles. However, they are concerned about misunderstandings surrounding Paul's ministry. To preserve unity among believers, they ask Paul to participate in a purification ritual associated with Jewish customs.

Paul does not do this because it earns salvation. He knows salvation comes through Christ alone. Instead, he willingly lays aside personal preferences to remove unnecessary barriers to the gospel.

This reflects a consistent pattern throughout Paul's ministry. He was remarkably flexible on personal preferences but uncompromising on the gospel. He adapted his approach, language, and customs whenever possible if it helped people hear about Jesus more clearly.

In a culture that constantly tells us to insist on our rights, Paul demonstrates a different mindset. His question was not, "What do I deserve?" but rather, "What will help people see Christ?"

As *John Stott* observed, "*The church exists for mission as fire exists for burning.*" The mission of helping people know Christ remained Paul's highest priority.

This kind of humility requires maturity. It means distinguishing between essential truths and personal preferences. It means choosing unity when possible and putting the gospel above our own comfort.

Group Question: Do you ever let your personal preferences or desires compromise the mission of the Gospel?

Personal Relevance

Many conflicts among Christians happen because preferences become more important than the mission. Music styles, traditions, personalities, schedules, methods, and opinions can all become distractions if we're not careful.

Paul challenges us to ask a different question: Am I making it easier or harder for people to encounter Jesus?

Flow Question: What are some personal preferences Christians often elevate above the mission of sharing Christ?

Reflection Question: Is there something you may need to surrender, adjust, or hold more loosely for the sake of unity and gospel influence?

Section 3 – The Power of a Personal Testimony

Acts 22:1-21

“Then I asked, ‘What shall I do, Lord?’”

Summary

After being beaten by a hostile crowd, arrested by Roman authorities, and placed in chains, Paul is given an unexpected opportunity to speak. He stands before people who hate him and want him dead.

What would you say?

Paul could have argued. He could have defended himself. He could have launched into a theological debate. Instead, he tells his story. He simply talks about Jesus. He shares who he was before Christ, how he encountered Christ, and how Christ changed his life. His testimony becomes his message.

One reason testimonies are powerful is because no one can honestly argue with what God has done in your life. People may debate theology, reject arguments, or challenge beliefs, but they cannot deny a transformed life. Paul's story reminds us that evangelism is not always about having every answer. Often it begins with simply telling others what Jesus has done for us.

As John Newton said, "I am not what I ought to be. I am not what I wish to be. But by the grace of God, I am not what I once was."

(side note) Did you notice the language Paul spoke in? He spoke in the language of family .He was showing that they weren't truly enemies, nor were they strangers. These people he was speaking with were family.

Group Question: Why do you think Christians often find it easier to talk about church than to talk about what Jesus has personally done in their lives?

Personal Relevance

Many believers still feel ashamed of their past. They don't want to share past failings. Many believers feel intimidated when they think about sharing their faith. We worry we won't know enough Scripture, answer difficult questions correctly, or explain everything perfectly.

Yet Paul's example reminds us that one of the most powerful things we can do is simply tell our story. People need to hear how Christ has forgiven us, sustained us, changed us, comforted us, and given us hope.

Flow Question: If someone asked how Jesus has changed your life, what would you tell them?

Reflection Question: Who in your life might benefit from hearing your story of God's grace?

Conclusion

At the center of Acts 21 and 22 stands a simple question:

Is Jesus worth it?

For Paul, the answer was clear.

Jesus was worth the hardship.

Jesus was worth the criticism.

Jesus was worth the chains.

Jesus was worth the suffering.

Not because Paul enjoyed pain, but because he had encountered Someone greater than anything he could lose. Paul's obedience was fueled by love. He knew the One who had saved him, forgiven him, pursued him, and transformed him. That relationship changed everything.

As believers, we face the same question. Will we follow Jesus only when it is comfortable, or will we trust Him when obedience becomes costly?

Will we prioritize our preferences, or will we prioritize the gospel?

Will we keep our faith private, or will we tell others what Christ has done in our lives?

The Christian life is not ultimately about avoiding hardship. It is about knowing Christ.

As Paul later wrote:

“I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.” (Philippians 3:8)

This week, consider these three questions:

- Where is God calling me to trust Him despite difficulty?
- What preferences might I need to surrender for the sake of the gospel?
- Who needs to hear what Jesus has done in my life?