

February 1, 2026

Acts 13–20 – Mission Possible

Study Guide: Acts 15:36–16:10

Theme: Learning Spiritual Flexibility

Opening Reflection

Just as our bodies resist stretching, our hearts often resist God's redirection. This passage shows how God works through ordinary plans, unexpected obstacles, and even human conflict to accomplish His mission.

Icebreaker

- Share a lighthearted example of something you've realized you're not as flexible as you once were.
- How might that mirror spiritual flexibility in following God?

1. God Works Even in Our Inflexibility

Read: Acts 15:36–41

Paul and Barnabas, experienced partners in ministry, have a sharp disagreement over John Mark. Instead of stopping the mission, God multiplies it.

Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think both Paul and Barnabas felt strongly about their positions?
2. How does God redeem this conflict and continue advancing His mission?
3. Where have you seen God work *in spite of* your resistance or imperfect decisions?

2. Flexibility in the Ordinary

Read: Acts 15:36; Acts 16:1–5

Paul's plan is simple: revisit churches and encourage believers. God uses this ordinary faithfulness to expand the mission.

Discussion Questions

4. What stands out to you about Paul's original, ordinary goal for this journey?
5. What does Timothy's inclusion teach us about God growing leaders through everyday obedience?
6. Where might God be inviting you to be more faithful or attentive in the ordinary rhythms of your life?

3. Flexibility When Doors Close

Read: Acts 16:6–8

Paul encounters repeated closed doors—clearly directed by God Himself.

Discussion Questions

7. How do you typically respond when your plans are blocked or disrupted?
8. Why is it significant that Scripture credits the Holy Spirit and Jesus with closing these doors?
9. What closed door in your life might God be using to redirect you rather than stop you?

4. Flexibility in Responding to God's Call

Read: Acts 16:9–10

Paul receives the Macedonian vision and responds immediately.

Discussion Questions

10. What do you notice about Paul's response once God's direction becomes clear?
11. What does the shift to "we" in the narrative suggest about others joining God's call?
12. What is one small step of obedience God may be asking of you right now?

5. Grounded in the Goodness of God

Read: Jeremiah 32:41

God promises to act toward His people with *all His heart and all His soul*.

Closing Reflection

- How does trusting God's goodness make spiritual flexibility possible?
- How does remembering God's character help us respond when change feels uncomfortable?