

# Further up, Further in

## Resources for Continued Study



LOOKOUT  
MOUNTAIN  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH

### “MOVING TOWARDS SUFFERING” For individual study or discussion

There isn't a Christian in the world who hasn't grappled with this question at one time or another: How do we discern the will of God? In this passage in Acts, we're told that the disciples in Tyre urged Paul "through the Holy Spirit" not to go to Jerusalem. In Caesarea, the prophet Agabus warned Paul that he would be bound and handed over to the Gentiles in Jerusalem. Paul was not to be dissuaded. He believed that the Holy Spirit was directing him to Jerusalem and said he was ready not only to be bound, but to die for the name of the Lord Jesus (v. 13).

- 1) Read 1 Corinthians 14:29-33, Deuteronomy 18:22, Jeremiah 14:14-15, and Ezekiel 33:33.
  - How did prophecy in the Old Testament period differ from prophecy in the early church?
  - Why didn't Paul listen to the disciples in Tyre or to Agabus? Or did he listen but interpret the Spirit's warning differently?
  - How should we find direction when we are trying to make a decision?
  - Evaluate these bits of advice that a friend might give. Is the advice wise? Is the advice biblical? Explain your answers.
    - ◇ You really should forgive your dad.
    - ◇ God has told me that you should stop dating that woman (or man).
- 2) Paul's determined following of Jesus meant that he moved (like his Master before him) towards suffering. How and when are Christians called to suffer?
- 3) The names that Luke mentions in this passage have their own story to tell and when considered can be an encouraging reminder that we follow a God who keeps his promises. Consider what other details about the following people can be found in the Bible and then ask what these stories tell you about God and the building of his Kingdom.
  - The disciples in Tyre (vv. 3-6): Mark 7:24-30
  - Philip and his daughters (vv. 8-9): Acts 2:17, Acts 6:1-5
  - Agabus (vv. 10-11): Acts 11:28-30
  - Mnason of Cyprus (v. 16): Acts 11:19-21
- 4) Several times in this passage we see how hospitable Paul's fellow Christians were when he and his companions showed up in their town.
  - Obviously the current pandemic complicates the practice of hospitality, but why is it so important for Christians to engage in hospitality? (See 1 Peter 4:9, Hebrews 13:2, and if time, this [interview](#) with Rosaria Butterfield on "radically ordinary" hospitality.)

DATE: November 1, 2020

SPEAKER: Brian, Aaron

SERIES: Acts

PASSAGE: Acts 21:1-16

### Family Dinner Table

In George McDonald's book *The Princess and the Goblin*<sup>1</sup>, Princess Irene is given a very special ring by her "fairy grandmother." If Irene is ever afraid, she is to take the ring off, put it under her pillow, and then feel for a thread that will lead her to her grandmother. One night, some goblins get into the castle, and Irene does just as her grandmother instructed and quickly puts the ring under her pillow. To her dismay, the thread that she can so easily feel doesn't lead her straight to her grandmother. It leads instead out of the castle and into the mountains where the goblins live. She continues to follow the thread, however, and eventually finds herself in front of a huge pile of rocks, behind which her best friend is trapped. She frees him, and then he urges her to go in the direction he thinks best. She refuses, saying, "This is the way my thread goes, and I must follow it."

In this passage, Paul listens to his friends, but is ultimately determined to follow the lead of the Holy Spirit (see Acts 20:22-24 and 21:13-14).

How will we know when to say no to friends in order to follow Jesus wherever he would have us go? And how do we get the courage to do that?

#### PRAY FOR HOME MISSIONS

Chattanooga Christian School  
Scholarship Fund

#### PRAY FOR WORLD MISSIONS

Deb and Neal serving in a sensitive area

<sup>1</sup>If you've never read *The Princess and the Goblin*, you can check out a copy from our church library!