

Acts 21 “Through the Spirit”
Acts 21:1-14
April 12, 2026

Acts 21:1-14

After we tore ourselves away from them, we set sail straight for Cos, the next day to Rhodes, and from there to Patara. 2 Finding a ship crossing over to Phoenicia, we boarded and set sail. 3 After we sighted Cyprus, passing to the south of it, we sailed on to Syria and arrived at Tyre, since the ship was to unload its cargo there. 4 We sought out the disciples and stayed there seven days. Through the Spirit they told Paul not to go to Jerusalem. 5 When our time had come to an end, we left to continue our journey, while all of them, with their wives and children, accompanied us out of the city. After kneeling down on the beach to pray, 6 we said farewell to one another and boarded the ship, and they returned home.

7 When we completed our voyage from Tyre, we reached Ptolemais, where we greeted the brothers and sisters and stayed with them for a day. 8 The next day we left and came to Caesarea, where we entered the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the Seven, and stayed with him. 9 This man had four virgin daughters who prophesied.

10 After we had been there for several days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. 11 He came to us, took Paul’s belt, tied his own feet and hands, and said, “This is what the Holy Spirit says: ‘In this way the Jews in Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt and deliver him over to the Gentiles.’” 12 When we heard this, both we and the local people pleaded with him not to go up to Jerusalem.

13 Then Paul replied, “What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.”

14 Since he would not be persuaded, we said no more except, “The Lord’s will be done.”

Paul is traveling to Jerusalem despite the expressed concern.

Acts 20:22-24

22 “And now I am on my way to Jerusalem, compelled by the Spirit, not knowing what I will encounter there, 23 except that in every town the Holy Spirit warns me that chains and afflictions are waiting for me. 24 But I consider my life of no value to myself; my purpose is to finish my course and the ministry I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of God’s grace.

Prophecy means to speak or declare.

Edification, exhortation and comfort.

1 Thessalonians 5:19-20

19 Don’t stifle the Spirit. 20 Don’t despise prophecies, 21 but test all things. Hold on to what is good.

1 Corinthians 14:29

29 Two or three prophets should speak, and the others should evaluate.

“We test and discern in community with our Bibles open.”

1 Corinthians 14:24-25

24 But if all are prophesying and some unbeliever or outsider comes in, he is convicted by all and is called to account by all. 25 The secrets of his heart will be revealed, and as a result he will fall facedown and worship God, proclaiming, “God is really among you.”

“For a prophecy to be accepted as valid it should find an echo in the hearts of spiritually mature people.” - John Piper.

Paul understands that this choice remain his own.

Romans 9:1-3

1 I speak the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience testifies to me through the Holy Spirit— 2 that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. 3 For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the benefit of my brothers and sisters, my own flesh and blood.

Acts 21:14

14 Since he would not be persuaded, we said no more except, “The Lord’s will be done.”

You will never be able to sacrifice more for Christ than you gain in Christ.

Life Group Discussion Questions

- 1.) What did God say to you through the Scriptures during our Sunday gathering?
- 2.) Have you ever done something that worked out in the end that others cautioned you against?
- 3.) Have you ever given or received “a word” for someone through a Holy Spirit prompting? What is the challenge in giving these expressions the right amount of significance?
- 4.) Read 1 Thessalonians 5:19-20. How does this Scripture guide us in regards to the prophetic gift?
- 5.) Why is the advice to “test and discern in community with our Bibles open” such good counsel?
- 6.) How can we be more committed to speaking words of edification, exhortation and comfort to one another?
- 7.) How do you understand the position that Paul seems to take, in that, Paul still believes the choice to go to Jerusalem is his to make? What is an appropriate application for us?
- 8.) How can we see Jesus’ own choices and decisions through Paul?
- 9.) Close your Life Group by spending a few moments praying for and encouraging one another.