

GROUPS DISCUSSION GUIDE

Get Into The Word



Week of Sunday June 22, 2025

Table of Contents

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Discussion Questions
- 3 Application Questions
- 4 Question for Families, NT 260 Reading
- 5 Resources
- 7 Commentary
- 8 Sermon Notes

**Living out our God-given calling as
we follow Jesus and make
disciples every day.**

Introduction

Pain is not just an obstacle but a divine instrument that shapes our character and faith. Acts 20:17-23 shows us that like Paul, who embraced pain for the sake of the Gospel, we, too, can view our struggles as opportunities for progress/growth, protection, and preparation. By understanding that pain can train us, prepare us, and even convey powerful messages to others, we can redefine how we perceive life's challenges. Let's explore how enduring pain aligns with God's purpose and deepens our relationship with Him.

Disciple Measure

Humble Guide: Who are you discipling currently? Who is currently discipling you?

Discussion Questions

Pain: God’s Greatest Teacher

HIGHLIGHT

Have someone read aloud...

Acts 20:17-23

EXPLAIN

Discuss the following questions...

Opening Question: Share about a challenging experience in your life that ended up teaching you an important lesson.

1. How did the pain Paul endured affect his ministry and the spread of the gospel?
2. How does Paul illustrate the concept of embracing pain for a greater purpose, and what can we learn from Paul's example of enduring hardships?
3. How does the idea that God is more concerned with your development than your comfort challenge or affirm your view of God?

Have someone read aloud Genesis 3:16 and Revelation 21:4.

4. How is the concept of pain presented in these passages, and what transition do these two verses suggest about the biblical narrative of pain and redemption?
5. How do we see God use trials and pain to help people grow and advance the Kingdom of God throughout the Bible?

Notes:

Have someone read aloud **Philippians 1:12**.

Discuss the following questions...

1. In light of the idea that personal suffering can advance the gospel and inspire others. How can this perspective influence the way we view our own struggles?
2. How does the idea that "God whispers in our pleasures and shouts in our pain" resonate with your own experiences?
3. How can we support each other as a group when members are going through painful experiences?

Force for Good: How can the way you address pain and suffering in your life affect the legacy that you leave, and advance the Gospel to those around you?

Lord, help us to see pain through Your eyes. Give us the strength to endure challenges, the wisdom to learn from them, and the faith to trust Your purpose in all things. Use our pain to make us more like Christ and to advance Your kingdom. Amen.

Questions for Families

Here are some questions you can discuss with the whole family.

Acts 20:17-23

What do you think this Bible passage shows us about what God is like?

For younger children, explain that God cares for us even when things are tough. For older kids, discuss how God uses difficult situations to teach and protect us.

How do you think Paul felt when he was facing hard times, and what does that tell us about ourselves?

For younger children, encourage them to think about feeling sad or scared and how they might find comfort knowing God is with them. For older kids, explore the idea that everyone experiences tough times and that it's okay to learn and grow from them.

What can we do when we face something difficult?

For younger children, suggest simple actions, like praying or talking to someone they trust. For older kids, encourage them to think about finding strength in their faith and looking for lessons that might help them grow.

NT 260

WEEK: 26

- Acts 22
- Acts 23
- Acts 24
- Acts 25
- Acts 26

MEMORY VERSE: Matthew 6:5-6

Resources

Resources to Listen to

BEMA - The Acts Epilogue



Join Marty Solomon as he gives an overview of [Acts](#) and how it bridges between the Gospels and Epistles..
(27 min)

Resources to Watch

Bible Project Guide - The Book of Acts



See a collection of videos and articles to guide you through the book of [Acts](#).
(20 min)

Life Group Resources

We have a variety of resources and are continually adding new ones. Some of our resources include group launch guides, on-demand training modules, and curriculum resources. To request a resource, reach out to us at groups@longhollow.com.

D-Group Resources

If you or someone you know would like to start a D-group, we have everything you need, including reading plans, journals, and a launch guide to walk you through the first four meetings.



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Commentary

Notes:

What’s Going On?

In the sermon, we focus on a portion from the Book of Acts, specifically Acts 20:17-23. This passage is part of a larger narrative where the Apostle Paul is on his missionary journey and is preparing to say farewell to the church leaders from Ephesus. This section highlights the bonds he forged with these leaders and his dedication to spreading the message about Jesus. Here, Paul is honest about the struggles and hardships he has faced, but he embraces them as part of his mission.

This passage is significant because it shows Paul's commitment to his faith and his acceptance of suffering as a part of his journey. The story demonstrates Paul's unwavering trust in God’s plan even when faced with severe challenges. This literary context sets up a powerful message on how Christians might find strength and purpose even in their struggles.

A Bit of Background

The historical background here is key to understanding why Paul's story resonates so deeply. During the time of the early church, Christians often faced persecution and hardship.

Biblical Timeline



Notes:

Paul himself was no stranger to this; he faced numerous trials including being imprisoned and threatened. This context of adversity is important because it underscores the reality of early Christian life. They didn't have the freedoms many enjoy today, and their faith often came with great risk.

Paul's journey in the Book of Acts takes us through real struggles he endured in spreading the Christian message across the Roman Empire. Miletus, where Paul delivers this farewell, is a city in modern-day Turkey and was a significant trade center in ancient times. It was a place where Paul's message could reach diverse groups of people. The culture of the time was heavily influenced by Roman practices, where idols and various gods were worshipped, making Paul's singular devotion to Christ stand out starkly.

This background helps us appreciate the courageous steps Paul took and the sincere warnings he gave the elders in Ephesus about staying strong in their faith. These warnings were meant to prepare them for the challenges they would face after he left. This section provides a backdrop that shows how the early Christians were asked to remain steadfast in their beliefs despite ongoing trials and demonstrates the enduring power of faith in difficult times.

Acts Written 70-80 AD

Today's highlighted passage and other related passages

Birth of Christ

Crucifixion and Resurrection

Book of Revelation

Sermon Notes

Acts 20:17-23 CSB

Now from Miletus, he sent to Ephesus and summoned the elders of the church. When they came to him, he said to them, “You know, from the first day I set foot in Asia, how I was with you the whole time, serving the Lord with all humility, with tears, and during the trials that came to me through the plots of the Jews. You know that I did not hesitate to proclaim anything to you that was profitable and to teach you publicly and from house to house. I testified to both Jews and Greeks about repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus. “And now I am on my way to Jerusalem, compelled by the Spirit, not knowing what I will encounter there, except that in every town the Holy Spirit warns me that chains and afflictions are waiting for me.

(Get digital notes on your mobile device at notes.longhollow.com)

Living out our God-given calling as we follow Jesus and make disciples every day.

Spirit-Led Follower

A disciple who walks with Jesus daily, anchoring their lives to God's Word and obediently following the Holy Spirit where He leads.

Intentional Friend

A disciple who is always looking for ways to care for others and meet their needs. This is a practical way to be present in the lives of those around us.

Humble Guide

A disciple who is a humble guide takes every opportunity to help people take their next step closer to Jesus. This is someone who is constantly looking for opportunities to have Gospel conversations and speak truth into someone's life.

Force For Good

When a disciple lives out their God-given calling, they naturally become a force for good where they live, work, and play. This type of person is looking for opportunities to meet needs, heal brokenness, and bring tangible hope to the people in their life and in their community.



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