

I. Getting at it

A. Journey to Jerusalem (vs 1-3)

1. Travel in Paul's day was dependent on the commerce pattern of ships
2. The disciples got to their destinations by piecing together wherever ships needed to go.
3. *Basically they would hitchhike at the mercy of where stuff was going. (Not totally unlike airline travel today.)

B. A week in Tyre (vs 4-6)

1. Major harbor city
2. Consistent message to Paul: what awaits him in Jerusalem is incarceration and torture
 - a. These new friends at Tyre heard that same thing from the Spirit.
 - b. They interpreted, do not go to Jerusalem.
3. Question: Is Paul disobeying the Spirit's warning or guidance? Let's keep going.
4. Prayer on the beach

C. Arrival at Caesarea (vs 7-14)

1. Philip (deacon/Acts 8)
 - a. Four daughters of marriage age who were single (low status in society)
 - b. Significantly involved in church ministry/leadership at Caesarea (not sure exactly what, but Luke makes note of them and there is an absence of confrontation from Paul)
2. Agabus warning (v 10)
 - a. Prophet from Judea
 - b. Illustrate a warning for Paul
 - c. *Consistent message about what is waiting for Paul in Jerusalem - definitively from the Spirit
3. The believers urged Paul not to go.
 - a. Are the people right?
 - b. Luke includes himself in the group.
4. Paul's resolve (v 13)
 - a. Prison and even death for the name of Jesus
 - b. "We trust God and will leave your care up to Him."

D. Arrived in Jerusalem

1. *Did Paul disobey?
2. Acts 9:15-16 To Ananias ...

But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine to carry My name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of My name."
3. Through Paul, but **to** Paul first

II. Obedience or disobedience; descriptive or prescriptive?

- A. We have been prepared for success, not for suffering.

1. Is suffering/dying for Jesus something that is describing Paul's journey or is it prescriptive of anyone who wants to follow Jesus?
 2. Answer lies in what Jesus says about following Him.
- B. What Jesus says
1. Luke 9:21-24

And He strictly charged and commanded them to tell this to no one, saying, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised." And He said to all, "If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it."

 - a. Jesus must suffer.
 - b. Deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow Jesus.
 - c. Lose life for Christ's sake
 2. Luke 14:25-33

Now great crowds accompanied Him, and He turned and said to them, "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.' Or what king, going out to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and deliberate whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? And if not, while the other is yet a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace. So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be My disciple."

 - a. Hate family and even own life or don't follow Jesus
 - b. Renounce all, become a disciple
 - c. *Jesus needs to hire a consultant to polish His recruitment strategy if He wants to be successful.
 3. According to Jesus, following Him/discipleship is no less than surrendering everything I am, I have, and I do.
 4. *So, is suffering/dying for Jesus' sake something that is descriptive of Paul's journey or is it prescriptive of anyone who would follow Jesus?
- C. Clarification
1. Sometimes, God's will includes going toward clearly visible suffering, pain, danger, and hardship and sometimes, it does not (Acts 16:6-7) but God's will always includes costly, sacrificial surrender.

And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. And when they had come up to Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them. (Acts 16:6-7)

2. When the Holy Spirit warns that something is going to go wrong, it is not necessarily the case that He is saying not to go.
 - a. The Spirit will often give us warnings or information to help us with our discernment and obedience but still guides us to make the decision, even very hard decisions.
 - b. Open doors, closed doors
 - 1) Closed doors – the Spirit clearly said there was a danger, but didn't say no.
 - 2) Warnings from God may be more about expectations than about our decisions. Warnings can be sobering preparation for what God is directing you to endure.
3. *The problem is when we don't understand what it means to follow Jesus, be His disciple, we assume more often that safety/wisdom equals obedience. God's will is being completely aligned with the person of Jesus Christ.