

Transition:

The apostle Paul has had three major missionary journeys in which he has preached, made disciples and planted churches. Now he is convinced that Christ has called him to go to Jerusalem. Though many of Paul's companions and disciples plead with him not to go – even warning him that he would be imprisoned and they would never see his face again – Paul chose to go to Jerusalem and subject himself to the Jewish leaders.

Tell the story:

Tell the story (with passion!) the best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story. Perhaps leave some parts out or make a mistake, just to see if your group catches it!

Rebuild the story:

Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story. Then have someone else tell the story the best they can – just like you modeled the first time.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why did Paul go through with the ceremonial purification and go to the temple?
2. Why did the leaders take an oath and conspire to kill Paul?
3. Does Paul seem to ever take a break? What happened in each place he was taken?

Fundamental:

Grit/Endurance – Grit means to have courage and resolve; strength of character. Endurance is the ability to withstand hardship or adversity. If we read 2 Cor 11:23-30, we get a fuller picture of the endurance of the apostle Paul. As Christians, we are called to not be swayed by circumstances and the outside world. In this life we will have trouble! Many of Paul's companions looked at his life and how much he endured and probably wondered if he was really in the will of God! If God loves you, then why are all these terrible things happening?! As Christ-followers, we must understand how temporary this life is and believe what God has promised us for eternity (Heb 10:36). May we be a people who have grit during hard times and build up one another – may we rejoice together in good times and suffer together in hard times.

1. James 1:2-3 tells us to rejoice in our trials – why?
2. What does Jesus promise us in Hebrews 12:1-2?
3. Read Romans 5:1-11 – Where does our grit/endurance come from?

Homework/Challenge:

1. If you know you are one to easily get discouraged or give up, pray that God would change you. Desire to be the person that everyone can count on, the one who is exhorting others to endure till the end.
2. Please read Ephesians 1 in preparation for next week.

Discipleship Tip:

No one looks forward to hardship, trials and suffering! You may run into differing theology on suffering, but it is always wisdom to prepare your disciples to suffer and to suffer well.

Prayer:

Pray that your people will know and trust God – both for blessings and endurance through the hard times. Pray that God would give us the grit required to endure till the end and receive a beautiful inheritance.

Extras:

Marathon Faith by John Van Pay