



Acts: The Birth of the Church in the World - Week 4: When the Mission Matters More Than Me

Acts 15:36 - 16:10

Discussion Questions for August 2nd, 2026

1. (IceBreaker) Paul is starting on his second missionary journey. Have you been on a mission trip? When did you go and how far away did you travel?
2. **Main Idea: What Happens When the Mission of Jesus Becomes More Important Than My Own Preferences, My Comfort, and My Plans?** What was Paul's motivation in taking this trip? (see verse 36) How is this different than his first missionary journey?
3. **Point #1: Surrender Your Preferences.** Paul and Barnabas had a "sharp disagreement," yet God continued to use both of them. What does this teach us about handling disagreements between sincere Christians? When is disagreement acceptable, and when does it become sinful?
4. Imagine you are Barnabas. You graciously bring Paul into the body of believers in Jerusalem when he was distrusted. Now you are supporting John Mark, but Paul is not trusting him! If you were Barnabas, wouldn't this make you frustrated? Would you consider throwing up your hands? Leaving missionary work altogether? What did Barnabas actually do, and how can this teach us a lesson in 2026?
5. **Point #2: Surrender Your Comfort.** In your own words, describe why Paul asked Timothy to be circumcised before continuing together in ministry? Can you think of any modern examples of a similar nature? How important is it to blend into a particular culture or subculture when you want to share the gospel? When might it seem inauthentic to do so?
6. **Point #3: Surrender Your Plans.** Acts 16:6-10 is recorded by Luke in a very matter-of-fact way, even though we may be curious about the details. Did the Spirit of Jesus appear visibly? How was Paul so confident of the direction? We may not know those answers, but we can pray for clarity in our own lives. Describe a time when

you were VERY confident of direction from the Lord. How did it happen? Was it in alignment with your own plans, or was God re-directing you?

7. In Acts 16:6-10, what is the mission of the trip? Is it the same as it began? What can this teach us about our best-laid plans?
8. Pray that our church always holds the mission of Jesus higher than our preferences, comfort, or manmade plans. May we all listen for the Holy Spirit to guide us in the same way He guided Paul, Timothy, and Silas.