



# STUDY GUIDE

## VOYAGE 08.07.2016

### [set up]

What circumstances in your life right now are giving you reasons to celebrate? What circumstances do you find especially challenging?

Some people tend to make the worst out of the best while others tend to make the best out of the worst. Which are you most like? Plot yourself on the following continuum:

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Victim

Overcomer

Tell a story about your life that explains why you plotted yourself where you did.

### [digging deeper]

**Scan Acts 21-23.** Have someone in the group give a 5-7 minute summary of the story line of these chapters.

Brainstorm a list of reasons for Paul not to trust God with his circumstances. Brainstorm a list of reasons why these indicate that Paul *did* trust God with his circumstances.

**Read the prophecy of Agabus in Acts 21:10-11** (then compare it with the one in Acts 11:27-29). If you didn't know "the rest of the story" would you say Paul was foolish or courageous in his response in Acts 21:13? Why?

When have you made decisions against the wishes of those whom you admired and trusted? What happened? In retrospect, were the decisions wise or foolish?

**Read the following verses about the sovereignty of God: Psalm 115:3, Isaiah 46:9-10, Daniel 4:35, and Ephesians 1:11.** Why is it sometimes difficult for you to believe that God is sovereign and in control and that His will is being accomplished in your life? What are some of the benefits you can enjoy when you truly believe that God is a loving Father and is actually accomplishing all His good purposes for you?

**Read Genesis 50:20.** Ask a member (or two!) of your group to share a life story of how their seemingly negative circumstances were actually used by God to bring about the strategy of God, i.e., a good result.

**Read Philippians 1:12-14.** Discuss why Paul's arrest in Jerusalem and his ultimate deportation to Rome was significant in the spread of the gospel.

Why does Paul's reference to the Gentiles (Acts 22:21) upset the crowd in Acts 22:22, whereas they were not upset about his reference to Jesus in Acts 22:8? What was the real sticking point about the gospel to the Jews?

How do you explain the fierce determination of these men to kill Paul (Acts 23:12)? Why did they think he was so dangerous?

When Paul found out from his nephew (Acts 23:16-22) about the plot to kill him, did sending his nephew to the commander betray a lack of trust in God? Why or why not?

### **[living it out]**

In Acts 22:2-21, Paul shared his story rather than made assertions. Why is your story often most effective and helpful to others? In advance of the LifeGroup meeting, ask one person to share a 3-minute version of their conversion story.

Which of these three 1) Trusting the Sovereignty of God, 2) Seeing the Strategy of God, or 3) Sensing the Security of God is easiest for you? Which is the hardest? Why?

How has God used a hardship you've faced to advance the gospel into places where it would not have gone otherwise?

Identify a person you know who is suffering hardship. Make it a point to pray for them. Then let them know that you are praying that they will sense the security (protection) of God for them.