

# Gathering Guide

for Communities and Friends  
Next Steps: "To God Be the Glory", October 27, 2019

## The Big Idea

Living for our own sense of comfort and luxury keeps us static, but living for God -a life that gives God glory -moves us forward. From the moment that Paul gave over his life to Jesus Christ, he experienced...and embraced...the very trouble and persecution that he himself had been doling out to the believers. What we learn from Paul and the Scriptures is that following Jesus includes suffering. Giving God glory is what drove Paul to Rome; it's what propelled him forward in the purposes of God.

## Where we are in the Bible

Acts 28:1-6. One night in prison, Paul receives this message from God: "Keep up your courage! For just as you have testified for me in Jerusalem, so you must bear witness also in Rome." On the way, they became shipwrecked on the island of Malta and were forced to receive the hospitality of the natives, and as Paul is placing driftwood on the campfire a viper jumps out and bites his hand. As the natives see this, they begin to guess what kind of prisoner Paul is since death has appeared to catch up with him despite surviving the shipwreck. These are superstitious people, so when time goes by without any detection of poison from the snake bite, "they changed their minds and began to say that he was a god." It *could* be a nice place to stay and live comfortably, but Paul remained faithful to his call.

## Other scriptures to consider

2 Corinthians 11:16-30  
*Paul's Hardships*

1 Thessalonians 2:9-12  
*Life worthy of God*

1 Corinthians 10:31  
*All for the glory of God*

## Finding a bit of ourselves

- What do you find most difficult about being a Jesus-follower?
- Read Paul's litany of hardships in 2 Corinthians 11:16-30. What do you think drives Paul? Does his perspective motivate or overwhelm you?
- What are some obstacles that hinder you from moving forward in God's call?

## Where do we go from here?

- So what is your NEXT STEP in faithfulness to God?
- How can you build in reminders to glorify God that will help move you forward?

## Prayer focus

Please keep in prayer our Next Steps Missions Conference, and the Faith Promise commitments that will go to support ministries and missionaries locally and globally. Pray also for the recipients of that commitment:

EFC-ER/EFM, the mission-sending organizations of the Evangelical Friends

WORLD RENEWAL, a global church-planting organization

NORBU TAMANG, church planter and pastor of Bhutanese-Nepalese churches greater Columbus, Ohio

WORLD VISION, child sponsorship organized by our Children's Ministry

DAVE & SHAUNA GOODE, missionaries serving in Kingston, Jamaica

ABE & DIANE BIBLE, missionaries serving in Ukraine and Russia

PAM BASTER, staff member at Wycliffe Bible Translators

JIM LEAMER, recruiter and staff member at Wycliffe Bible Translators

DAVID BYRNES, director of the Coalition for Hispanic Ministries

ROB WARREN, church planter and pastor in Madison, Wisconsin

BOK & HEIDI CHEW, directors of International Student Fellowship

THE HUMAN COALITION, a pro-life women's care clinic in Cleveland

FRIENDS OF RECOVERY, a residential recovery ministry in Willoughby

DENNIS ANTHONY, director of Friends of Recovery

HANNAH'S HOME, a maternity home for single, pregnant women ages 18 and over

HELPING HISPANICS HOPE, ministry to Hispanics in Lake County.

CATALYST MINISTRIES, a ministry that bridges churches and their communities

