



DIGGING DEEPER

Finish Strong

June 28th, 2026

LEAN IN

- Think about a race, competition, project, or goal you have completed. What helped you stay committed until the finish? What made it difficult?
- Who is someone you know that has "finished well" in their faith? What characteristics stand out about their life?

LOOK UP

Read Acts 20:22-24, 32-38 together

"However, I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me..." (Acts 20:24)

Observation (What does the text say?)

Make some observations about this passage.

- What stands out to you about Paul's attitude toward suffering?
- What words or phrases are repeated throughout the passage?
- What emotions do you see in Paul and in the Ephesian elders?
- What do you notice about Paul's priorities as he prepares for what may be his final journey?
- What role does the Holy Spirit play in this passage?

What evidence do you see that Paul is more concerned with faithfulness than personal comfort?

What details reveal Paul's deep love for the church?

What are you curious about?

Interpretation (What does the passage mean?)

What do you learn about God?

- What does this passage teach us about God's calling?
- What does it teach us about God's grace?
- What does it reveal about God's care for His church?

What do you learn about humanity?

- Why do people naturally avoid suffering and hardship?
- Why is it difficult to stay faithful when life becomes costly?
- What does Paul's example reveal about a life fully surrendered to Jesus?

Why do you think Luke includes so many details about Paul's hardships throughout Acts 20–28?

How does Paul's journey mirror the journey of Jesus?

Consider these parallels:

- Jesus set His face toward Jerusalem; Paul set his face toward Jerusalem.
- Jesus was falsely accused; Paul was falsely accused.
- Jesus stood before rulers and governors; Paul stood before rulers and governors.
- Jesus suffered while accomplishing His mission; Paul suffered while accomplishing his mission.

What do these similarities teach us about discipleship?

Application (What's my response?)

How are you encouraged, challenged, or convicted by this passage?

- Which of the four marks of finishing strong do you most need right now?
 - A clear mission
 - Courage through opposition
 - Endurance in waiting
 - Trust through the storm
- Where are you tempted to prioritize comfort over faithfulness?
- Are there areas where God is calling you to obedience even though it may be difficult?
- What promises of God do you need to trust in your current season?

If someone observed your life today, what would they say your "finish line" is? What are you ultimately living for?

What would it look like to finish this season of your life faithfully, regardless of the outcome?

Reflect

Read 2 Timothy 4:7-8.

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."

Paul eventually reached the end of his life and was able to say he finished the race.

- What do you hope will be true of your life when you look back years from now?
- What habits, priorities, or distractions today could impact whether you finish faithfully?

Read Hebrews 12:1-2.

"Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus..."

- What helps you keep your eyes on Jesus during difficult seasons?
- Who can help encourage you to keep running your race faithfully?

Prayer

Spend time praying through the following prompts together:

Praise

Thank God for His faithfulness and grace that sustains us through every season.

Confession

Confess areas where comfort, fear, discouragement, or distraction have pulled you away from wholehearted obedience.

Surrender

Ask God to help you remain faithful to the mission He has given you, even when it becomes difficult.

Endurance

Pray for those in your group who are walking through seasons of waiting, suffering, uncertainty, or disappointment.

Confidence

Thank God that His promises remain secure even when circumstances are difficult, and ask Him to strengthen your trust in Him.

Practice (STEP OUT)

1. Identify Your Next Step of Faithfulness

Ask God this week: "What is the next faithful step You're asking me to take?" Write it down and share it with someone in your group for accountability.

2. Encourage Someone Who Is Running Hard

Reach out to a person who is faithfully serving, enduring hardship, or walking through a difficult season. Encourage them with a text, note, phone call, or prayer.

3. Pray Through Acts 20:24 Daily

Each morning this week, pray Acts 20:24 and ask God to help you live with the same focus Paul had:

"My only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me." Come back next week prepared to share how God challenged or encouraged you through that prayer.