



Group Guide

The Church Grows Strongly

July 27, 2025

Main Passage: Acts 14:21-23; 16:4-5; 18:18-23

Theological Theme

In the book of Acts, we see Paul and his companions' efforts to strengthen the believers they encountered. The church doesn't just exist to tell others about Jesus, it also exists to strengthen the faith of its members.

Introduction

- ❓ What are some things or experiences that have strengthened your faith?
- ❓ How does the connection of the church serve to strengthen our faith?

1. Strengthening the Disciples (Acts 18:18-23)

The passage begins with Paul in Corinth (18:1), where he had been ministering at least a year and a half (18:11). This is where Paul met his partners in ministry, Priscilla and Aquila, a Jewish couple who had been expelled from Rome, along with all Jews living there (18:2). Just before today's passage, the Jews in Corinth dragged Paul in front of Gallio, proconsul of Achaia (18:12,14). But Gallio refused to engage or make a ruling on a religious matter.

- ❓ What does it mean that Paul was "strengthening all the disciples" (v. 23)?
- ❓ What are some ways we seek to do this for other believers today?
- ❓ Application: What can we learn from Paul's example about strengthening the faith of those around us?

2. Strengthening through Encouragement (Acts 14:21-23)

Luke recorded Paul's first missionary journey starting in Acts 13. At the beginning of Acts 13, the Holy Spirit called for Paul and Barnabas to be set aside for kingdom work (13:2), and they were sent off into the mission field. During this journey, they visited Pisidian Antioch (13:13), Iconium (13:51), and Lystra (14:6).

- ❓ How did Paul and Barnabas strengthen the disciples in this passage?
- ❓ When was a time you were “strengthened” through encouragement?
- ❓ Application: What are some experiences from your life that, through sharing, might encourage believers in our church and community?

3. Strengthening through God’s Truth (Acts 16:4-5)

Paul and Barnabas continued traveling and eventually sailed back to Antioch, where they had first been commissioned for their missionary journey. (This is a different town than Pisidian Antioch, the town detailed in the section above.)

- ❓ What action did Paul and Timothy take in this passage? See chapter 15 for additional context.
- ❓ How would this serve to strengthen the churches they visited?
- ❓ Application: How might we strengthen one another by speaking the truth? Who is God calling you to speak truth to today?

Conclusion

- ❓ Where do you currently feel in need for renewed strength in your faith? How can you rely on Christ to use other believers in this process?
- ❓ How can our group seek to strengthen one another regularly and not only in moments of crisis and desperation?
- ❓ How does this pattern of seeking to strengthen one another in the Lord further encourage us toward gospel conversations with others?