



## EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

Session 5: Kingdom Work  
Suggested Week of Use: September 29, 2024  
Core Passage: Acts 15:39–16:10

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### News Story Summary

A new study has ranked the worst states for distracted driving. New Mexico, Kansas, and Louisiana topped the list. New Mexico recorded 185 fatalities caused by distracted driving—which is almost forty percent of the state’s total fatal crashes. Other states in the top five included Kentucky and New Jersey. Hawaii, Idaho, Texas, Wyoming, and Washington also ranked high on the survey. The study named a variety of factors that contributed to distracted driving, including smart phone usage, longer driving times in states with expansive rural space, and law enforcement challenges.

At the other end of the spectrum, Rhode Island was named the safest state with no fatalities attributed to distracted driving. Other safer states included Connecticut, Alaska, Mississippi, and Nevada. According to the study, these states have implemented successful strategies to combat the problem. These efforts have included tougher laws, enhanced enforcement, and public awareness campaigns.

For more about this story, search “distracted driving by state 2024.”

### Engage

To supplement the Engage activities, group adults into several small teams and give each team a deck of playing cards. Instruct the group to use the cards to create the highest tower possible in the timeframe of your choosing. As teams work, try to distract them. You can discuss their strategies, sneeze, pepper them with questions, and so forth. Do whatever you can to stop their work without touching or blowing on their cards.

After several minutes, compare the towers and announce a winner. Ask: *What challenges did you face in building your tower? How did you stay focused on your task?* Explain that you purposely tried to thwart their work by distracting them. Say: *In some instances, being distracted is a minor issue without serious consequences. Other times, distractions can result in dire results.* Share the information about the worst states for distracted driving and point out that a lack of focus can be deadly. Say: *Today we will look at a Scripture passage in which a distraction could have caused serious problems for the early church.* Open in prayer.

### Challenge

To supplement the Challenge activities, recall the study on distracted driving. Ask: *What could distract drivers and divert their attention?* (Possible answers: cell phones, wandering thoughts,

people in other cars, billboards, being upset, arguing with someone else in the car, and so forth) Point out how the dispute between Paul and Barnabas could have distracted the advance of the gospel and the mission of the early church. Ask: *What issues or problems could distract our church from its mission to spread the good news of Jesus?* (disagreements over theology or worship styles, political opinions, racism, discouragement, and so forth.) Instruct adults to find a partner and to share other issues that personally distract them from God's mission. Direct the pairs to pray for each other about these distractions.