

Radiant Church, April 5, 2020  
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### Acts 20:13-38

**Acts 20:13-15** *But going ahead to the ship, we set sail for Assos, intending to take Paul aboard there, for so he had arranged, intending himself to go by land. And when he met us at Assos, we took him on board and went to Mitylene. And sailing from there we came the following day opposite Chios; the next day we touched at Samos; and the day after that we went to Miletus.*

**Acts 20:16** *For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he might not have to spend time in Asia, for he was hastening to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on the day of Pentecost.*

Pentecost before Acts 2 was a yearly Jewish celebration called Shavuot (the Feast of Weeks) as part of the spring harvest that happened 50 days after Passover. The Greeks called it “Fiftieth” transliterated, Pentecost.

All of the Jerusalem (if not all of the Israeli Jews) would be in the same place

He wanted to finally give the offerings collected from the Gentile believers

Even helping the Jewish Christians to fully celebrate Pentecost

Especially since Pentecost had taken on much greater significance for the Jewish Christians

**Acts 20:17** *Now from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called the elders of the church to come to him.*

Identified group of leaders, called elders, more than one of them.

**Acts 20:18-19** *And when they came to him, he said to them: “You yourselves know how I lived among you the whole time from the first day that I set foot in Asia, serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials that happened to me through the plots of the Jews;*

Paul lived with (identified with) the people

Paul had served them, at great personal cost, which should give validity to his ministry. The Corinthians had already questioned his qualifications

**Acts 20:20-21** *how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you in public and from house to house, testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Paul had left nothing out of the gospel message and its ramifications

Two pillars to the gospel:

Repentance to the God, whom they had sinned against

Faith (not works) in the life and work of Jesus

True faith is the only logical response to God’s grace

Teaching the “whole counsel of God” takes pastoral courage

**Acts 20:22-23** *And now, behold, I am going to Jerusalem, constrained by the Spirit, not knowing what will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me.*

Paul is willingly following the “constraint” of the Holy Spirit, irrespective of the suffering he will endure

Being obedient to the Spirit is more important than personal comfort and safety

“The goal is not to have a long life, but a full life, one lived to the glory of Jesus”

Why can Paul do this without regret?

**Acts 20:24** *But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.*

**Acts 20:25-27** *And now, behold, I know that none of you among whom I have gone about proclaiming the kingdom will see my face again. Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all, for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God.*

Paul claims his innocence

**Ezekiel 3:18-19** *If I say to the wicked, “You shall surely die, and you give him no warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way, in order to save his life, that wicked person shall die for his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand. But if you warn the wicked, and he does not turn from his wickedness, or from his wicked way, he shall die for his iniquity, but you will have delivered your soul.*

Paul also claims he has completed the assignment of making Ephesians disciples

**Acts 20:28** *Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.*

It’s the Holy Spirit who appoints elders

Overseers (elders) pay attention: selves first, then other elders, then to the church

“Pay attention...in order to care well for...”

In contrast to Ezekiel 3:18-19, Jesus did allow His own blood to be “required”

**Acts 20:29-31** *I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears.*

Wolves from the outside, coming into the church

Wolves from within (already in) the church who change their theology

Even inferring that some of those very elders could end up as wolves

The goal of wolves is to move individual sheep away from protection

Paul gives evidence to how he worked to teach and protect the church

Speaks to the necessity of pastoral oversight  
Speaks to the value of the Church

Look at how Paul repeats the same theme to young pastor, Timothy (the lead pastor of the church in Ephesus)

**1 Timothy 4:16** *Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.*

This should prevent pastors from limiting themselves to when they're "on the clock"

**Acts 20:32** *And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.*

Presentation language - Paul is presenting the church to God as approvable

This is like the pronouncement made over a graduating class at Commencement

**Acts 20:33-35** *I coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my necessities and to those who were with me. In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."*

Paul avoided greed, worked hard, displayed generosity

He willingly gave up anything that would have come in the way of people being saved

**Acts 20:36-38** *And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. And there was much weeping on the part of all; they embraced Paul and kissed him, being sorrowful most of all because of the word he had spoken, that they would not see his face again. And they accompanied him to the ship.*

The gospel results in sweet, valued relationships