

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

SUPPORT (ACTS 20:1-6) AFTER THE RIOT

After things had settled down, Paul encouraged the people of Ephesus and then traveled through Asia Minor. Paul's work was done in Ephesus, he wanted to meet up with Titus in Greece, and also collect money for the church in Jerusalem.

- Once Paul got to Corinth, the “Jews plotted against him,” so he ended up traveling back up north before heading to Syria. While in Corinth, Paul wrote Romans. Paul wrote 6 books of the Bible during his 3rd trip; Galatians, 1 & 2 Corinthians, 1 Timothy, Romans, and Titus.

COLLECTING MONEY FOR THE HOME BASE

In 3 of the books he wrote on his 3rd trip he mentions carrying funds for the church in Jerusalem. This money was to help the poor in Israel. We see a precedent set that **the Church is not confined to the local assembly, but is global.**

PAUL HAD A TEAM WITH HIM

Paul took a large group that served two purposes: 1) They offered protection since he was traveling with a lot of money. 2) They were a great example of the diversity of leaders that were coming from Christianity in “Gentile world.”

GOOD LUCK (ACTS 20:7-12)

A REFERENCE TO SUNDAY SERVICES

v7 is one of several references to Christians worshiping on Sunday, not Saturday, the traditional Sabbath day of the Jews. Luke records they not only came to worship, but to “break bread,” meaning take communion. Here we see **the 3 basic functions of the weekly assembly: worship, teaching, and communion.**

LONG INTO THE NIGHT

Since many people worked on Sunday, the services were often held at night. Paul knew that the church had to be flexible because the “secular” often isn't.

- Sabbath and worship can be flexible. **The point isn't that one day is more important than the other, but that we take the time to worship corporately.**

SLEEPING DURING CHURCH

The services were at night, lengthy, and in a room lit by lamps that could deplete oxygen. One of the nights Paul was teaching, a young man name Eutychus, which means “good luck,” fell from a third story window and died because he fell asleep during the lesson. Paul “embraced him and said, “Don't be alarmed, because he's alive.” Paul prayed and Jesus miraculously brought Eutychus back to life.

- Luke's record of this dramatic event is pretty nonchalant. A man falls 3 stories to his death, gets miraculously revived, everyone goes upstairs and eats a snack, and Paul preaches until morning. Imagine how awake everyone was after the miracle!

MODELING (ACTS 20:13-24)

ON TO THE NEXT MAJOR EVENT

Paul stayed in Troas then walked to Assos about 20 miles south to meet up with his team and from there they went to Mitylene a little further south than Assos.

- Paul was eager to get back to Jerusalem for the Feast of Pentecost that celebrated the coming of the Holy Spirit.

CALLING FOR THE ELDERS OF THE CHURCH

Traveling even further south into Miletus, Paul “summoned the elders in Ephesus” to share with them one more important meeting before leaving them forever.

- Paul wanted to remind them of everything he had **not only taught them, but modeled for them** since he came to that region.

NOT JUST WHAT I SAY, BUT WHAT I DO

Paul reminded the leaders in Ephesus about his **credibility displayed in his daily life.** From his day-to-day **integrity**, Paul moves onto his **service, humility**, and **sacrifice** for the church.

- **This is how we touch the hearts of mankind: not just by speaking truth, but modeling it in every facet of our daily lives.**

HUMILITY AND HARD WORK GO VERY FAR!

Paul exemplifies not only a biblical principle, but a standard that, if all people would follow it, would change their lives and countless others. Paul says we are to be “serving the Lord with all humility.”

- **Servitude and humility are a part of the bedrock of Christian living. Without these, we fail to be Christ followers.**

“I DID NOT AVOID PROCLAIMING TO YOU...”

Not only did Paul model it, he clearly taught the truth of Christ. He knew people would be bombarded by false teaching and idolatry, and in order for people to be saved and strengthened, they needed to know truth.

- The truth can be uncomfortable, but **we're doing a grave disservice when we fail to point others to Christ!**

CHRIST LEADS TO REPENTANCE OF SINS

Paul said he modeled Christ, he told people about Christ, and also that he addressed sin and taught repentance.

- Look at the whole objective: **we live the teachings of Christ, tell others about Jesus**, and **clearly identify sin** and teach the need to **ask forgiveness** and **make lifestyle changes.**

AND WE DO THIS REGARDLESS OF THE COST

Paul says though “chains and afflictions” await him, he's been “compelled by the Spirit” to keep moving forward. The key to achieving this lies in his phrase, “I consider my life of no value to myself.”

- **When we understand that our life belongs to God, we can move forward with His plan for our life.**

RESPONSIBLE (ACTS 20:25-31)

NEVER SEEING THEM AGAIN

Paul was convinced that this would be the last time he would get to hang out with the leaders of the Ephesian church. In light of that, he declared that he had done all he could to teach and prepare them.

- **We are all responsible for what we have learned. We're also responsible for passing on that knowledge.**

LOOKING OUT FOR THE FLOCK

Paul encourages them to not only “Be on guard for yourselves,” but also “for all the flock which the Holy Spirit has appointed you as overseers.”

- Though Paul is talking to church leaders, all **Christians are called to guard other believers and make sure the “flock” is safe.**

WE ARE A VALUED PURCHASE

Paul reminds the leaders that Christians were “purchased with His [Jesus] own blood” and this should cause them to **not only protect other Christians, but lead them into a closer relationship with Jesus as well.**

The last instruction is to **warn the flock of potential danger—false teaching and unrighteous living.**

SACRIFICE (ACTS 20:32-38)

GOD IS THE LEADER

Paul leaves the Ephesian leaders with an important reminder—he is just a vessel, the true Helper is Jesus Christ.

- **As Christians we are to create relationships, nurture, educate, and assist people, but ultimately it is God's grace and His promise of salvation that carries us through.**

WE MUST NOT GET DISTRACTED

Paul reminds the leaders that he didn't “covet anyone's silver or gold or clothing.” This teaches us that it is easy as Christians to get enticed by the world's pleasures.

- **Coveting other people's things and being materialistic are sins and should not be a characteristic of the Christian.**

EVENTUALLY WE LET THE NEXT GENERATION LEAD

Paul **taught, trained, led**, and most importantly **loved** his disciples. We witness a touching scene as his successors were “grieving...because they would never see his face again.”

PASSING THE TORCH

- We're to **model the Christian faith more than just talk about.**
- God has given us the responsibility to **guard** (protect), **shepherd** (direct), and **warn** (instruct them on right and wrong) the people we have influence with.
- In this we **love others correctly** and set them up to carry the light further than we did.

A GLASS CAN ONLY SPILL WHAT IT CONTAINS

- We can only effectively lead and love others if we are **full of God's Spirit.**
- So many people are so misdirected because we've become selfish and consumed more from the world than we have from the things of God. **We have improperly fed our souls.**