



# Book of Acts

## Chapter 20

*Theme: Third missionary journey  
Of Paul concluded*

**Michael Fronczak**  
**Bible Study Resource Center**  
**564 Schaeffer Dr.**  
**Coldwater, Michigan 49036**  
**[www.biblestudyresourcecenter.com](http://www.biblestudyresourcecenter.com)**

**Copyright © 2009**

Inappropriate chapter division, verse 1 should be part of Chapter 19.

The narratives of Acts 20 and Acts 27 presuppose correct data on the length of travel between the places listed and take into account seasonal wind patterns and so forth. In short, they read like the report of an eyewitness.

After Paul's experience in Ephesus, he continues on to Macedonia, to Philippi, back to Troas, and to Miletus. The elders of the church in Ephesus meet him in Miletus and they have a tender reunion and a touching farewell.<sup>1</sup>

This section of the apostle's life, though peculiarly rich in material, is related with great brevity in the History. Its details must be culled from his own Epistles.<sup>2</sup>

### **Acts 20:1**

**And after the uproar was ceased, Paul called unto *him* the disciples, and embraced *them*, and departed for to go into Macedonia.**

Exhortation: sufficiency not of ourselves (2 Cor 1:8-11).

Luke's brevity requires culling details from epistles. Many visits not recorded: Albania and Yugoslavia (Illyricum).

Paul had dispatched Titus to Corinth, but now anxious to meet him in Troas (anxious to know what effect his first epistle had); his concern for his being overdue causes Paul to leave for Macedonia; he lands at Philippi. At length, Titus arrives, with better tidings than Paul had dared to expect (2 Cor 7:6,13).

Paul writes his 2nd Epistle to Corinthians, dispatching Titus with it (2 Cor 2:12, 13; 7:5-8).

**[uproar]** Of Acts 19:24-40; cp. Acts 21:34; Acts 24:18; Matthew 26:5; Matthew 27:24; Mark 5:38; Mark 14:2.

**[embraced]** Greek: *aspazomai* (GSN-782), translated "greet" 14 times (Romans 16:2-11; 1 Cor. 16:20; 2 Cor. 13:12; Phil. 4:21; Col. 4:14; 1 Thes. 5:26; 2 Tim. 4:21; Titus 3:15; 1 Peter 5:14; 2 John 1:13; 3 John 1:14); "salute" 37 times (Matthew 5:47; Matthew 10:12; Mark 9:15; Mark 15:18; Luke 1:40; Luke 10:4; Acts 18:22; Acts 21:7,19; Acts 25:13; Romans 16:5-23; 1 Cor. 16:19; 2 Cor. 13:13; Phil. 4:21-22; Col.

---

<sup>1</sup>McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (4:601). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>2</sup>Jamieson, R., Fausset, A. R., Fausset, A. R., Brown, D., & Brown, D. (1997). *A commentary, critical and explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments*. On spine: Critical and explanatory commentary. (Ac 20:1). Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

4:10-15; 2 Tim. 4:19; Titus 3:15; Philemon 1:23; Hebrews 13:24; 1 Peter 5:13; 3 John 1:14); take leave of (Acts 21:6); and embraced (Acts 20:1; Hebrews 11:13).<sup>3</sup>

**Barnes: Embraced them.** Saluted them; gave them parting expressions of kindness. Comp. Luke 7:45, Romans 16:16, 1 Corinthians 16:20, 2 Corinthians 13:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:26, 1 Peter 5:14. The Syriac translates this, "Paul called the disciples, and consoled them, and kissed them."<sup>4</sup>

[**Macedonia**] He no doubt visited Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, and other places.

**Clarke: After the uproar was ceased**—The tumult excited by Demetrius apparently induced Paul to leave Ephesus sooner than he had intended. He had written to the Corinthians that he should leave that place after Pentecost, 1 Corinthians 16:8; but it is very probable that he left it sooner.<sup>5</sup>

**BBC: 1-2.** Hinted in Acts only at Acts 24:17 but clear in his letters, Paul's purpose is to collect the offering of the Macedonian (Philippi, Thessalonica) and Achaean (Corinth) churches to help the poor Christians in Jerusalem, to demonstrate the unity of Jewish and Gentile Christians (see comment on "Romans 15:26; "1 Cor. 16:1, "1 Cor. 16:5; "2 Cor. 8-9). He may have gone through Illyricum from Macedonia's Via Egnatia (Romans 15:19; cf. comment on "Acts 16:9); if so, many months pass before he reaches Achaea.<sup>6</sup>

**LAN 1-3:** While in Greece, Paul spent much of his time in Corinth. From there he wrote the letter to the Romans. Although Paul had not yet been to Rome, believers had already started a church there (Acts 2:10; Acts 18:2). Paul wrote to tell the church that he planned to visit the Roman believers. The letter to the Romans is a theological essay on the meaning of faith and salvation, an explanation of the relation between Jews and Gentiles in Christ, and a list of practical guidelines for the church.<sup>7</sup>

**Chuck Smith:** Macedonia, of course, was the northern area of Greece. Greece was divided after the death of Alexander the Great into four divisions. You have Greece, Macedonia, and then the Syria and Egypt. So then Paul, rather than causing any further, he'd been in Ephesus for three years, and his heart now is sort of stirring to go back to Jerusalem. But when he goes back to Jerusalem, he desires to take to the church in Jerusalem an offering from the Gentile churches. For the church in Jerusalem had become very poor. And so Paul was seeking to show the brotherhood of Christianity, and really the support of the . . . really he was trying to show the oneness of the body of Christ, where there is neither Jew nor Greek, one member suffers, they all suffer. So in Paul's Corinthian epistle he told them when they gathered together on the first day of the week that each man was to bring an offering as he purposed in his own heart. They should give willingly and not by pressure, for God loved a cheerful giver. So Paul wanted now to go

---

<sup>3</sup> Dake Study Notes, Dake's Study Bible

<sup>4</sup> Barnes' Notes on the New Testament

<sup>5</sup> Adam Clarke's Commetnary on the New Testament

<sup>6</sup> Bible Background Commentary: New Testament

<sup>7</sup> Life Application Notes

through Macedonia and Greece and collect these offerings that he had asked them to take up for the poor saints in Jerusalem. In order as Paul returned to Jerusalem he could take the offerings for the poor brethren there from the Gentiles.

So he embraced those from Ephesus, and he sailed across again to Macedonia, where, of course, was the church of Philippi and Thessalonica and Berea.

### **Acts 20:2**

**And when he had gone over those parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece,**

Six years had elapsed since Paul's 1st visit to Macedonia.

[Greece] In Greece he perhaps visited Athens, Corinth, and Cenchrea.

**Barnes: Over those parts.** The parts of country in and near Macedonia. He probably went to Macedonia by *Troas*, where he expected to find Titus, 2 Corinthians 2:12; but not finding him there, he went by himself to Philippi, Thessalonica, etc., and then returned to Greece Proper.

**Clarke: [He came into Greece]** Into Hellas, Greece properly so called, the regions between Thessaly and Propontis, and the country of Achaia. He did not, however, go there immediately: he passed through Macedonia, Acts 20:1, in which he informs us, 2 Corinthians 7:5-7, that he suffered much, both from believers and infidels; but was greatly comforted by the arrival of Titus, who gave him a very flattering account of the prosperous state of the Church at Corinth. A short time after this, being still in Macedonia, he sent Titus back to Corinth, 2 Corinthians 8:16, 17, and sent by him the second epistle which he wrote to that Church, as Theodoret and others suppose. Some time after, he visited Corinth himself, according to his promise, 1 Corinthians 16:5. This was his third voyage to that city, 2 Corinthians 12:14; 13:1. What he did there at this time cannot be distinctly known; but, according to St. Augustin, he ordered every thing relative to the holy eucharist, and the proper manner in which it was to be received.

**Barnes: Into Greece.** Into Greece Proper, of which Athens was the capital. While in Macedonia, he had great anxiety and trouble, but was at length comforted by the coming of Titus, who brought him intelligence of the liberal disposition of the churches of Greece in regard to the collection for the poor saints at Jerusalem, 2 Corinthians 7:5-7. It is probable that the Second Epistle to the Corinthians was written during this time in Macedonia, and sent to them by Titus. See Note of Doddridge.

**BKC:** This segment of the third missionary journey is covered briefly by Luke. Second Corinthians 2:12-13; 7:5-7 gives further information about Paul's stop at Troas for evangelistic purposes and of his desire to see Titus for a report on the Corinthian church.

Subsequently Paul went to **Macedonia** (cf. Acts 19:21), met Titus, and wrote 2 Corinthians.

During this time Paul probably ministered as far as Illyricum, corresponding roughly to modern-day Yugoslavia (Rom. 15:19; cf. 2 Cor. 10:13).<sup>8</sup>

“One activity that especially concerned Paul at this time was collecting money for the relief of impoverished believers at Jerusalem . . . Paul viewed it as a symbol of unity that would help his Gentile converts realize their debt to the mother church in Jerusalem.” (Longenecker)

### **Acts 20:3**

**And there abode three months. And when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria, he purposed to return through Macedonia.**

Epistle to the Romans written from this stay at Corinth.

**[return through Macedonia]** Return to Philippi (Acts 20:6).

**Clarke: Abode three months**—Partly, as we may suppose, at Corinth, at Athens, and in Achaia; from which place he is supposed to have sent his epistle to the Romans, because he continued longer here than at any other place, and mentions several of the Corinthians in his salutations to the believers of Rome.

**Clarke: When the Jews laid wait for him**—Paul had determined to go by sea to Syria, and from thence to Jerusalem. This was the first object of his journey; and this was the readiest road he could take; but, hearing that the Jews had laid wait for him, probably to attack his ship on the voyage, seize his person, sell him for a slave, and take the money which he was carrying to the poor saints at Jerusalem, he resolved to go as much of the journey as he conveniently could, by land. Therefore, he returned through Macedonia, and from thence to Troas, where he embarked to sail for Syria, on his way to Jerusalem. The whole of his journey is detailed in this and the following chapter.

**BBC:** Paul wrote Romans from this area (Romans 15:26-28). Although some sailors and shipowners were Jewish, most were Gentiles. On a ship to Syria, however, many travelers may have been Jewish—especially if the ship planned to reach Syria-Palestine by Passover.

**ESV:** Paul stayed at Corinth for **three months**, likely the winter months (see 1 Cor. 16:6), when sea travel was more dangerous. Syria. Paul's goal was to sail to a Syrian port, with Jerusalem as the final destination (Acts 19:21). Paul wrote Romans (c. a.d. 57) during this final Corinthian visit (see Introduction to Romans: The Ancient City of Rome; and note on Rom. 16:1–23). In it he explained that his reason for going to Jerusalem was

---

cf. *confer*, compare

<sup>8</sup>Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-c1985). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (2:412). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

to take a collection from his Gentile churches to the needy Christians in Jerusalem (Rom. 15:22–29; for other references to this collection, see Acts 24:17; 1 Cor. 16:1–4; 2 Corinthians 8–9). Gathering this collection was one of the purposes behind this final visit to the churches of Macedonia and Achaia. he decided to return through Macedonia. This would take Paul back once again to the churches of Berea, Thessalonica, and Philippi.<sup>9</sup>

**Chuck Smith:** Now at that time it was the feast of the Passover and Paul was probably wanting to get back to Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover. But thousands of Jews would come for the feast of the Passover from all over. And there would be many chartered type ships coming from Greece, from Athens, from . . . to go to Jerusalem, they would be filled with Jews coming for the feast. And Paul, no doubt, got wind of a plot to throw him overboard from one of these ships filled with Jewish pilgrims that were coming back for their holy days. And so rather than getting on a ship and being thrown overboard in the middle of the night, Paul took the wise course and rather than coming by ship back to Syria to go to Jerusalem, he went up then again through Macedonia and he went by land on up again to Macedonia. And evidently, the churches there realized that there were real threats being made upon Paul's life, and so there were several brethren from the different churches that accompanied Paul, in order, no doubt, to afford him a certain amount of protection.

#### **Acts 20:4**

**And there accompanied him into Asia Sopater of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus.**

Seven companions (messengers? 1 Cor 16:3,4) (Messengers of seven churches?)  
Carrying love offerings (protect vs. robbers). Fellowship, assistance, etc. It was usual for some of the disciples to attend the apostles in their journeys.

Slaves numbered their children: Secundus (2nd), Terius (3rd) etc..

**[Sopater of Berea]** Only mentioned here.

**[Aristarchus and Secundus]** Acts 20:4; Acts 27:2; Col. 4:10; Philemon 1:24.

**[Gaius of Derbe]** There is a Gaius mentioned in Acts 19:29. If a Macedonian, then he is not the one mentioned in Acts 20:4, nor the one in Romans 16:23; 1 Cor. 1:14.

**[Timotheus]** See Timothy.

**[Tychicus]** One of the trusted companions of Paul (Ephes. 6:21; Col. 4:7; 2 Tim. 4:12; Titus 3:12). Tychicus was the bearer of the Epistles of the Colossians and Ephesians (Col 4:7,8; Eph 6:21,22).

---

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.esvstudybible.org>

**[Trophimus]** Another companion of Paul (Acts 20:4; Acts 21:29; 2 Tim. 4:20). Trophimus was, according to tradition, one of the seventy disciples, and after the death of Paul, was beheaded under Nero.

Just as prominent representatives from each of the Jewish communities would bring the annual temple tax to Jerusalem, so Paul has traveling companions from different Christian communities serving the poor in Jerusalem (Acts 20:1-2). This offering would show the Jerusalem church that the Gentile Christians still recognize the Jewishness of their faith (see Romans 15:26-27).

**LAN:** These men who were traveling with Paul represented churches that Paul had started in Asia. Each man was carrying an offering from his home church to be given to the believers in Jerusalem. By having each man deliver the gift, the gifts had a personal touch, and the unity of the believers was strengthened. This was also an effective way to teach the church about giving, because the men were able to report back to their churches the way God was working through their giving. Paul discussed this gift in one of his letters to the Corinthian church (see 2 Cor. 8:1-21).

**McGee:** The men named are all believers who had come to Christ under the ministry of Paul. He has quite a delegation now. These men have become missionaries.

We need to recognize that when Paul went through Greece and Macedonia, he visited all the churches which he had founded there. He would have stopped at Athens and Corinth, at Thessalonica and Berea and Philippi. So he retraced his steps and visited all the churches that were in Europe—or at least in the European section of his third journey.

**BKC: 4-6.** The mention of these seven men implies what is stated elsewhere: Paul was concerned for the collection for the saints in Jerusalem. As representatives of various churches they carried funds. Three men were from Macedonia (Sopater . . . Aristarchus, and Secundus) and four were from Asia Minor (Gaius . . . Timothy . . . Tychicus [cf. Eph. 6:21; Col. 4:7; 2 Tim. 4:12; Titus 3:12], and Trophimus [cf. Acts 21:29; 2 Tim. 4:20]). Their rendezvous point was Troas. In Acts 19:29 Gaius is said to be “from Macedonia,” whereas in 20:4 he is said to be from Derbe. Probably these are two different men (cf. a third Gaius, from Corinth; 1 Cor. 1:14).

In Acts 20:5-6 Luke resumed another section. Luke was left at Philippi in chapter 16 and evidently remained there until this point. Then he rejoined the party to accompany Paul to Jerusalem. The Feast of Unleavened Bread was in the spring. They made the 150-mile trip from Philippi to Troas in five days.

**ESV: accompanied him.** In discussing the “collection for the saints” in 1 Cor. 16:1-4, Paul noted that it would be accompanied by official representatives from the churches. Their presence would give safety from robbery and also would provide a public guarantee of Paul's integrity in handling the funds. The men listed here (Acts 20:4) as

---

cf. *confer*, compare

accompanying Paul represent all the areas of his missionary work. **Aristarchus**. See note on 19:29.

### **Acts 20:5**

**These going before tarried for us at Troas.**

“Us” = Luke rejoins. Constant companion; at the end, “only Luke is with me...” (2 Tim 4:11).

**McGee:** You may remember that Troas was the springboard from which Paul leaped into Europe on his second missionary journey. Now he comes back to Troas on his last missionary journey.

The “us” indicates that Dr. Luke is still with Paul while the others go ahead of them to Troas.

This is quite a group of men, missionaries, who worked with Paul. I take it that these men had been traveling with Paul before. When Paul would have a ministry in a place like Corinth, probably these men would radiate out and have a ministry in the countryside and the small towns. We read in the Epistle to the Colossians about the fact that the Word of God had sounded out in that day to the whole world. That sounds unbelievable, but it was true. It was no oratorical gesture. Of course “the whole world” means the Roman world because that was the world of that day. The Word of God had spread throughout the Roman world. We get some insight here and recognize that there were other people working with the apostles. Acts traces the work of Peter and Paul as the dominant ones—Peter as the Apostle to the Jews and Paul as the Apostle to the Gentiles. What we have here in the Book of Acts is a very limited account of the missionary work that was going on.

### **Acts 20:6**

**And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days.**

**Clarke: Days of unleavened bread**—The seven days of the passover, in which they ate unleavened bread. See the account of this festival in the notes on Exodus 12:1-51. It is evident, from the manner in which St. Luke writes here, that he had not been with St. Paul since the time he accompanied him to Philippi, Acts 16:10-12; but he now embarks at Philippi with the apostle, and accompanies him to Troas, and continues with him through the rest of his journey.

**Clarke: To Troas in five days**—So long they were making this voyage from Philippi, being obliged to keep always by the coast, and in sight of the land; for the magnetic needle was not yet known.

**Barnes: In five days.** They crossed the Aegean Sea. Paul, when he crossed it on a former occasion, did it in two days, Acts 16:11,12; but the navigation of the sea is uncertain, and they were now probably hindered by contrary winds.

**BBC:** The “we” picks up where it left off; Paul had left Luke in Philippi. They spend the week in Philippi for the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread. When one adds the remaining days (with parts of days reckoned as wholes, as generally in antiquity) presumed in the narrative, from their arrival in Philippi to their arrival in Jerusalem requires over thirty days. Thus they would arrive in Jerusalem before Pentecost (fifty days after Passover) and would still make one of the three major pilgrimage festivals (Acts 20:16). “Five days” (i.e., parts of five—perhaps four) was a slow voyage to Troas (Acts 16:11) but may include the half-day land journey from Philippi to Neapolis.

Jewish believers celebrated the Passover (which was immediately followed by the Feast of Unleavened Bread) according to Moses’ instructions (see Exodus 12:43-51) even if they couldn’t be at Jerusalem for the occasion.

**McGee:** It is interesting that the trip that took them five days to make can now be made by tourists in about fifty minutes. How different transportation is today! Transportation is more efficient, but our ministry is certainly not as effective.

**JNTC: After the days of *Matzah*,** that is, after Passover. See Mt 26:2N, 26:17; 1C 5:6–8&N. Sha’ul, the observant Jew (13:9), kept *Pesach*.<sup>10</sup>

**Chuck Smith:** Now the trip from Troas to Macedonia when Paul received his vision; saw the man of Macedonia saying come over and help us, and immediately they got a ship and sailed from Troas to Macedonia, that took them only two days. And so here a trip that had only taken Paul two days in the past, took them five days this time, evidently sailing against the wind and probably under adverse circumstances. And it could be some very rough seas and all. And so they came to Troas where they stayed for seven days.

### **Acts 20:7**

**And upon the first *day* of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.**

First day of the week: Saturday evening at sunset.

**[break bread]** Matthew 26:26-30; 1 Cor. 10:16-22; 1 Cor. 11:17-34; Acts 2:42,46; Acts 20:7. It was sunset the end of the Sabbath and the Supper was eaten here. It is likely that they received a common meal together. The phrase “break bread” is not quite equivalent with “eating a meal” but came to mean this *since the meal could not be served until the initial blessings were said*. As such, “to break bread” came to mean “to begin the meal.”

---

<sup>10</sup>Stern, D. H. (1996, c1992). *Jewish New Testament Commentary : A companion volume to the Jewish New Testament* (electronic ed.) (Ac 20:6). Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications.

The phrase was used to describe when “the father of the household gave the signal to begin the meal” The phrase “break bread” refers to the opening of the meal at which time the *berachah* (blessing) is said.

Having looked briefly at the phrase “break bread” and noted each occurrence in the Apostolic Writings, what is the conclusion? First, the phrase “break bread” is a Jewish idiom for beginning a meal, and was not a common phrase among the Greeks. Its use by the later church therefore reminds us of the original Jewishness of the early church. Secondly, each time the phrase is found in the Apostolic Writings, it describes the initiation of a meal and not a congregational ceremony like the Lord's Table or Eucharist. To equate “breaking bread” with the Lord's Table is to impose a liturgical ceremony upon a phrase that simply describes the initiation of a meal. If we are to find the origins of the Lord's Table in the Scriptures, it will have to be elsewhere than in those texts that utilize the phrase “to break bread.”

**[until midnight] Dake:** Longest sermon on record, at least 6 to 10 hours long (Acts 20:7,9,11).

**Clarke: Continued his speech until midnight**—At what time he began to preach we cannot tell, but we hear when he concluded. He preached during the whole night, for he did not leave off till the break of the next day, Acts 20:11, though about midnight his discourse was interrupted by the fall of Eutychus. As this was about the time of pentecost, and we may suppose about the beginning of May, as Troas was in about 40 degrees of north latitude, the sun set there at seven P.M. and rose at five A.M., so that the night was about eight hours long; and taking all the interruptions together, and they could not have amounted to more than two hours, and taking no account of the preceding day's work, Paul must have preached a sermon not less than six hours long. But it is likely that a good part of this time was employed in hearing and answering questions.

**McGee:** Paul was going to leave them the next day; so he preached all the way to midnight. Now, I do not know any congregation that would listen to me until midnight. I'm of the opinion that there aren't many preachers who would preach until midnight in these days in which we live. However, this is Paul's last visit. It is a tender meeting. He is getting ready to leave and he will not be back. This gives him an excuse to preach that long.

I tell congregations very frankly that I'm a long-winded preacher. I'm known as that. I love to teach the Word of God. I have a system of homiletics that I never learned in the seminary. I picked it up myself—in fact, I got it from a cigarette commercial. This is it: It's not how long you make it but how you make it long. I believe in making it long; my scriptural authority for it is that Paul did it. He spoke until midnight. You can't help but smile at that.

**JNTC:** *Motza·ei-Shabbat* in Hebrew means “departure of the Sabbath” and refers to Saturday night. The Greek text here says, “the first day of the *sabbaton*,” where Greek *sabbaton* transliterates Hebrew *Shabbat* and may be translated “Sabbath” or “week,” depending on the context. Since *Shabbat* itself is only one day, “the first day of the *sabbaton*” must be the first day of the week.

But what was meant by “the first day of the week”? Or, to make the question’s relevance to Messianic Judaism clearer, were the believers meeting on Saturday night or on Sunday night? (It is clear from the verse that the meeting was in the evening.) A Saturday night meeting would fit more naturally with Jewish *Shabbat* observance, wherein the restful spirit of *Shabbat* is often preserved into Saturday evening, after the official end of *Shabbat* itself, which occurs after sunset when it gets dark enough to see three stars. It would be natural for Jewish believers who had rested on *Shabbat* with the rest of the Jewish community to assemble afterwards to celebrate their common faith in Yeshua the Messiah. The Gentile believers who came along later would join in the already established practice, especially since many of them would have been “God-fearers” (10:2) already accustomed to following the lead of the Jews in whose company they had chosen to place themselves. And since by Jewish reckoning days commence after sunset, the sense of the Greek text seems best rendered by “*Motza·ei-Shabbat*,” not “Sunday.”

In various places this commentary notes the Christian Church’s tendency to expunge Jewish influences, and I think an instance arises when the present verse is understood to refer to Sunday night. A Sunday night meeting would imply a break of one full day of work between the Jewish *Shabbat* and the gathering at which Sha’ul spoke. Although Sha’ul cautions Gentiles against being “Judaized” into legalistic observance of the Jewish Sabbath (Co 2:16–17&NN, and possibly Ga 4:8–10&N), although he asks the believers in Corinth to set aside money for the Jewish poor of Jerusalem also on “the first day of the *sabbaton*” (1C 16:2&N), and although Yochanan at Rv 1:10 speaks of what most translators render as “the Lord’s day” (I translate it “the Day of the Lord”; see note there), nevertheless the meeting in Ephesus must have been on Saturday night. For in this city, as in other places, Jewish believers constituted the core of the congregation—Sha’ul “took the *talmidim* with him” from the synagogue (19:8–9), with many Gentiles coming to faith later (19:17, 20). The Jewish believers, as explained, would have been accustomed to prolonging *Shabbat*, so that they would probably not have minded Sha’ul’s **talking till midnight**. A Saturday night meeting would continue the God-oriented spirit of *Shabbat*, rather than require the believers to shift their concern from workaday matters, as would be the case on Sunday night.

I do not find the New Testament commanding a specific day of the week for worship. There can be no objection whatever to the practice adopted later by a Gentile-dominated Church of celebrating “the Lord’s Day” on Sunday, including Sunday night; but this custom must not be read back into New Testament times. On the other hand, Messianic Jews who worship on Saturday night rather than Sunday can find warrant for their practice in this verse.

### **Acts 20:8**

**And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together.**

## **Acts 20:9**

**And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep: and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead.**

Numerous lights: large group (also note that the lights would be consuming oxygen).

Paul addressed for six hours! (Preaching = art of talking in someone else's sleep.)

Greek: Plainly indicates that he was taken up lifeless.

**Clarke: There sat in a window**—This was probably an opening in the wall, to let in light and air, for there was no glazing at that time; and it is likely that Eutychus fell backward through it, down to the ground, on the outside; there being nothing to prevent his falling out, when he had once lost the power to take care of himself, by getting into a deep sleep.

**The third loft.** The third story.

**BBC:** Open windows were generally blocked off in the winter, but during summer one would sit in them to cool off. Either the heat from the lamps (midnight in April at Troas was not normally hot) or the crowdedness of the room had forced Eutychus to take a window seat. If he was old enough (cf. Acts 20:12; but the term translated “boy” or “lad” there could also mean “slave”), he may have been tired from a hard day’s work. Homes in much of the empire were a single story, but they were often two stories in more crowded urban areas. This is a fall from what Americans would call the second floor (which most languages call the “third floor”), which is not necessarily fatal; but Eutychus may have landed headfirst or hit his head on a hard object.

**BKC: A young man named Eutychus** (lit., “fortunate”) proved to be true to his name. Luke, the physician, affirmed that Eutychus was picked up dead after he had fallen from a third-story window. It was normal for the larger rooms to be on the top floor of a building (see comments on 1:13). After the manner of Elijah and Elisha (1 Kings 17:21; 2 Kings 4:34-35), Paul embraced Eutychus and the young man came alive.

**ESV:** The story has a touch of humor and a happy outcome. The etymology of the name Eutychus is “lucky, fortunate.” The “many lamps” (v. 8) and long sermon likely led “Lucky” to seek air in the window, but he fell asleep anyway and fell three stories. Taken up dead (not “as dead”) indicates his actual death.

**LAN: 8-9** The many lamps were candles in lanterns. The combination of the heat from the candles and the gathered number of people in an upstairs room probably made the room very warm. This no doubt helped Eutychus fall asleep, as well as the fact that Paul

---

lit. literal, literally

spoke for a long time. Eutychus was probably somewhere in the range of 8-14 years old (the age of a “young man”).

### **Acts 20:10**

**And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing *him* said, Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him.**

Paul’s approach of falling on this young lad is the same thing that:

Elijah, dead son of woman of Sarepta (1 Kgs 17:21);

Elisha, dead son of Shunammite (2 Kgs 4:34);

Jesus, (Mk 5:39; Lk 8:52).

**[and fell on him]** Paul resurrected him in the same way Elijah (1 Kings 17:17-24) and Elisha (2 Kings 4:33-35) brought back the dead.

Peter had earlier raised Tabitha to life (9:40). Now Paul raises Eutychus. Luke on a number of occasions draws parallels between the ministries of the two apostles to show God’s blessing was equally upon both.<sup>11</sup>

**Spurgeon:** Remember, if we go to sleep during sermon and die, there are no apostles to restore us. The word of God deserves our wakeful attention. (His name was lucky)

### **Acts 20:11**

**When he therefore was come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed.**

This incident further illustrates early Christian fellowship. They ate and talked until morning. They treasured every moment with God’s people. Sleep was secondary to insights gained through Christ’s grace.<sup>12</sup>

### **Acts 20:12**

**And they brought the young man alive, and were not a little comforted.**

The Greek implies that he was raised from the dead, not just unconscious.

**Barnes:** **Not a little comforted.** By the fact that he was alive; perhaps also strengthened by the evidence that a miracle had been wrought.

**McGee:** Paul raised this boy from the dead. You will remember also that Simon Peter raised Dorcas from the dead. This was a gift that belonged to the apostles. After the

---

<sup>11</sup> Believer’s Study Bible

<sup>12</sup> Believer’s Study Bible

canon of Scripture was established, the sign gifts were not manifested—they disappeared from the church. When Dr. Luke writes that they “were not a little comforted,” he means they were really thrilled that this precious young man had been raised from the dead and was back in their midst. And now Paul continues to preach through the night even until daybreak. What a rebuke that is to us! In some churches there is a chorus of complaint if a pastor preaches ten or even five minutes longer than usual. These early believers sat up all night listening to Paul. I know someone is going to say, “If I could listen to Paul, I’d listen all night, too.” Probably Paul was nothing more than a humble preacher of the gospel. We do know that Apollos was an eloquent man, but that is not said of Paul. These believers simply wanted to hear the Word of God. How wonderful that is!<sup>13</sup>

**Chuck Smith:** Now I am certain that the Lord has allowed at times the miracles of bringing back a person to life. We know that this happened in the ministry of Jesus. We know that it happened with the ministry of Peter when he went and brought back to life through prayer Dorcas. But I am also certain that the miracle of restoring life was never for the person but for the people around who were grieving because they were gone. Here it says, “And they were much comforted.” It didn’t say that Eutychus was. But the people that were there were comforted by the fact that he was brought back to life. And that miracle that God works in bringing a person back to life is really never for that person’s benefit. But for the benefit of those that would be sorrowing. And I say that because if ever the Lord should see fit to take me and I am there reveling in His presence, and suddenly I feel my spirit returning to my body, and when my eyes flicker, and when I open them up and I see you with hands laid upon me praying, “Oh God, restore life to him,” the first thing I’m gonna do is bust you in the mouth. We may pray that the Lord restore a person’s life for our benefit, but it surely doesn’t benefit them. “For to be absent from this body is to be present with the Lord.” And so for the sake of the people, God performed this miracle on Eutychus.

“And they were not a little comforted.” I mean, they were really comforted. Actually in the Orient, at death they start shrieking. And the women have a particularly shrill shriek at the time of death. And so when Eutychus fell out the window and they rushed down there and saw that he was dead, these Oriental women probably started their shrieking. And that’s why Paul went down and said, “Oh hush, hush, hush, he’s alright, his life is still in him,” and as God restored life to Eutychus.

### **Acts 20:13**

**And we went before to ship, and sailed unto Assos, there intending to take in Paul: for so had he appointed, minding himself to go afoot.**

35 miles by sea (around Cape Lectum); 20 by land: desire for privacy, prayer and solitude.

---

<sup>13</sup>McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (4:603). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

**[go afoot – Dake] [departed, and went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia]**

Paul's third missionary journey:

1. Went by land again through Syria, Cilicia, Galatia, and Phrygia (Acts 15:41-16:6 with Acts 18:23)
2. Ephesus, Ionia, Asia Minor (Acts 19:1-41)
3. Macedonia (tour of churches, Acts 20:1)
4. Greece (tour of churches, Acts 20:2)
5. Macedonia (tour of churches, Acts 20:3)
6. Philippi, to Troas, Mysia, across the Aegean to Asia Minor (Acts 20:4-12)
7. Assos, Mysia (Acts 20:13)
8. Mitylene, Isle of Lesbos (Acts 20:14)
9. Trogyllium (Acts 20:15)
10. Miletus, Caria, Asia Minor (Acts 20:15-38)
11. Isle of Coos (Acts 21:1)
12. Isle of Rhodes (Acts 21:1)
13. Patara, Syria (Acts 21:1)
14. Tyre, Phoenicia (Acts 21:2-6)
15. Ptolemais, Galilee (Acts 21:7)
16. Caesarea, Samaria (Acts 21:8-14)
17. Back to Jerusalem (Acts 21:15-23:30)

**Clarke: Sailed unto Assos**, according to Pausanias, *Eliac.* ii. 4, and Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* xxxvi. 27, was a maritime town of Asia, in the Troad. Strabo and Stephanus place it in Mysia. It was also called Apollonia, according to Pliny, *Ib. lib. v.* 30. The passage by sea to this place was much longer than by land; and therefore St. Paul chose to go by land, while the others went by sea.

**Clarke: Intending to take in Paul**, To take him in AGAIN; for it appears he had already been aboard that same vessel: probably the same that had carried them from Philippi to Troas, Acts 20:6.

**Barnes: Sailed unto Assos.** There were several cities of this name. One was in Lycia; one in the territory of Eolis; one in Mysia; one in Lydia; and another in Epirus. The latter is the one intended here. It was between Troas and Mitylene. The distance to it from Troas by sea was much greater than by land, and accordingly Paul chose to go to it on foot.

**Spurgeon:** A quiet lonely walk of twenty miles suited Paul, it would give him space for prayer and meditation, and help him to shake off some of the depression which had gathered over his mind while he waited at Philippi. Those who labor much for the Lord must have their times of retirement for self-examination, prayer, communion with God, and preparation for future efforts.

### **Acts 20:14**

**And when he met with us at Assos, we took him in, and came to Mitylene.**

**Came to Mitylene**—This was a seaport town in the isle of Lesbos:

**Barnes: Came to Mitylene.** This was the capital of the island of Lesbos. It was distinguished by the beauty of its situation, and the splendour and magnificence of its edifices. The island on which it stood, Lesbos, was one of the largest in the Aegean Sea, and the seventh in the Mediterranean. It is a few miles distant from the coast of Aeolia, and is about one hundred and sixty-eight miles in circumference. The name of the city now is *Castro*.

### **Acts 20:15**

**And we sailed thence, and came the next day over against Chios; and the next day we arrived at Samos, and tarried at Trogyllium; and the next day we came to Miletus.**

Paul chose a ship that deliberately did not stop at Ephesus. He goes to Miletus and sends for the Ephesian elders.

**Over against Chios**—This was a very celebrated island between Lesbos and Samos, famous in antiquity for its extraordinary wines. At this island the apostle did not touch. Chios, called also Coos, an island in the Archipelago, between Lesbos and Samos. It is on the coast of Asia Minor, and is now called *Scio*. It will long be remembered now as the seat of a dreadful massacre of almost all its inhabitants by the Turks in 1823. Chios was the birthplace of Homer.

**Clarke: Arrived at Samos**—This was another island of the Aegean Sea, or Archipelago. It does not appear that they landed at Samos: they passed close by it, and anchored at Trogyllium. This was a promontory of Ionia, which gave name to some small islands in the vicinity of Samos: before Trogyllium is situated an island of the same name. Strabo, lib. xiv. p. 635. Pliny also mentions this place, Hist. Nat. lib. v. cap. 31. Near this place was the mouth of the famous river Maeander.

**Barnes: At Samos.** This was also an island of the Archipelago, lying off the coast of Lydia, from which it is separated by a narrow strait. These islands were celebrated among the ancients for their extraordinary wines.

**Barnes: Trogyllium.** This was the name of a town and promontory of Ionia in Asia Minor, between Ephesus and the mouth of the river Meander, opposite to Samos. The promontory is a spur of Mount Mycale.

**Clarke: Came to Miletus**—A celebrated city in the province of Caria, about twelve or fifteen leagues from Ephesus, according to Calmet. Miletus is famous for being the birthplace of Thales, one of the seven wise men of Greece, and founder of the Ionic sect

of philosophers. Anaximander was also born here, and several other eminent men. The Turks, who lately possessed it, call it Melas.

**Barnes: Miletus.** Called also Miletum. It was a city and seaport, and the ancient capital of Ionia. It was originally composed of a colony of Cretians. It became extremely powerful, and sent out colonies to a great number of cities on the Euxine Sea. It was distinguished for a magnificent temple dedicated to Apollo. It is now called, by the Turks, *Melas*. It was the birthplace of Thales, one of the seven wise men of Greece. It was about forty or fifty miles from Ephesus.

### **Acts 20:16**

**For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia: for he hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost.**

Overland trip due to plot discovery. Paul was too hasty: trip to Jerusalem cost two precious years of his life.

[Asia] Asia Minor, as in all other places.

**To sail by Ephesus**—Not to touch there at this time.

**To be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost**— One of the three feasts days that all men had to go to Jerusalem. It would also give him the opportunity of preaching the kingdom of God to multitudes of Jews from different places, who would come up to Jerusalem at that feast; and then he no doubt expected to see there a renewal of that day of Pentecost in which the Spirit was poured out on the disciples, and in consequence of which so many were converted to God.

**BBC:** They take the customary sea route, across from the island of Chios (probably near Cape Argennum), enabling them to avoid a longer voyage hugging the coast of the long promontory jutting forth into the Aegean Sea between Smyrna and Ephesus. From Chios it was much quicker to sail by the island of Samos and straight to Miletus, rather than cutting in toward the Asian coast to Ephesus. They put in at the Lion Harbor at Miletus, which sported a temple of Apollo; the city also had a sizable Jewish community (as did Samos, where the worship of Aphrodite and Isis was prominent).

**LAN:** Paul had missed attending the Passover in Jerusalem, so he was especially interested in arriving on time for Pentecost, which was 50 days after Passover. He was carrying with him gifts for the Jerusalem believers from churches in Asia and Greece (see Romans 15:25-26; 1 Cor. 16:1ff; 2 Cor. 8-9). The Jerusalem church was experiencing difficult times. Paul may have been anxious to deliver this gift to the believers at Pentecost because it was a day of celebration and thanksgiving to God for his provision.

**McGee:** Paul wants to be in Jerusalem for the feast of Pentecost; so he is in a hurry. However, he was determined not to miss Ephesus. He stops at Miletus which is the port of Ephesus. A good map will show you that Ephesus was actually a little inland. The river there slowly filled up the harbor at Ephesus. Today the city of Ephesus is actually inland about two or three miles from the water's edge. A great part of the city is as much as five miles inland. Miletus is right down on the coast. Paul sent for the elders of Ephesus to come to Miletus to meet him there.

**JNTC:** *Shavu'ot* ("Weeks," Pentecost; see 2:1). Sha'ul's desire to hurry to Yerushalayim for *Shavu'ot* shows that as a Messianic Jew he remained devoted to the *Torah* and to Jewish practice (see 13:9). We can see this also from the fact that on another occasion he felt he had to justify a decision to remain in Ephesus and *not* go up to Jerusalem for this pilgrim festival (1C 16:8–9&N).

**Spurgeon:** By these descriptions of Paul's activity we are taught to be active and energetic for our Lord. We can never do enough for him to whom we owe our all. What are we doing? There is a sphere for each one of us, whether old or young: are we filling it? Are we in earnest, or are we incurring the guilt of unprofitable servants?

## **Acts 20:17**

**And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church.**

[**Miletus**] About 25 miles south of Ephesus. He perhaps did this to save time and to prevent renewed rioting as recorded in Acts 19. Stayed for 3, 4 days.

[**elders of the church**] [**elders**] Greek: *presbuteros* (GSN-4245), elder. The word "elders" in the Old Testament meant the heads or rulers of the tribes, cities, and nations. In the Gospels and Acts it generally refers to the Sanhedrin (Matthew 15:2; Matthew 16:21; Matthew 21:23; Matthew 26:3; Acts 4:5,8,23). In the early church elders were the ministers and deacons, or preaching elders and business elders of the local churches (Acts 11:30; Acts 14:23; Acts 16:4; Acts 20:17,28; Acts 21:18; 1 Tim. 5:17; Titus 1:5; James 5:14). All apostles were elders (Acts 11:30; 1 Peter 5:1; 2 John 1:1; 3 John 1), but all elders were not apostles (Acts 15:2,4,6,22,23; Acts 16:4). The elders of Acts 20:17, were the overseers of Acts 20:28. The elders of 1 Tim. 5:17; Titus 1:5-10; 1 Peter 5:1-2 were preaching elders or bishops. The business elders were deacons (Acts 6). Bishops and deacons are mentioned in Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:1-13. See notes, <sup>□</sup> Matthew 20:26-27; note, <sup>□</sup> Acts 20:28. The word *presbuteros* is also used of older men and women (Luke 15:25; John 8:9; Acts 17; Acts 4:22; 1 Tim. 5:2). It is used also of heavenly ranks (Rev. 4:4,10; Rev. 5:6,8,11,14; Rev. 7:11,13; Rev. 11:16; Rev. 14:3; Rev. 19:4). It is found 68 times and is translated "elder" except in John 8:9; Acts 2:17; Acts 4:22.<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup> Dake Study Notes, Dake's Study Bible

**ESV:** Paul Addresses the Ephesian Elders at Miletus. Paul's Miletus address is the sole example in Acts of a major speech to Christians. Of all Paul's speeches in Acts, it has the most in common with his letters, which were addressed to Christians. Paul held out his own ministry as an example for the Ephesian elders (vv. 18–21), spoke of his future prospects (vv. 22–27), warned of coming heresies (vv. 28–31), and encouraged a proper attitude toward material goods (vv. 32–35).

### **Acts 20:18**

**And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons,**

#### **Farewell Address to the Ephesian Elders**

Most poignant of all his utterances.

Met in home...

**Barnes:** **And when they were come to him.** The discourse which follows is one of the most tender, affectionate, and eloquent, which is anywhere to be found. It is strikingly descriptive of the apostle's manner of life while with them; evinces his deep concern for their welfare; is full of tender and kind admonition; expresses the firm purpose of his soul to live to the glory of God, and his expectation to be persecuted still; and is a most affectionate and solemn farewell. No man can read it without being convinced that it came from a heart full of love and kindness; and that it evinces a great and noble purpose to be entirely employed in one great aim and object -the promotion of the glory of God, in the face of danger and of death.

**Barnes: Ye know.** From your own observation. He had been with them three years, and could make this solemn appeal to themselves, that he had led a faithful and devoted life. How happy is it when a minister can thus appeal to those with whom he has laboured, in proof of his own sincerity and fidelity! How comforting to himself, and how full of demonstration to a surrounding world, of the truth and power of the gospel which is preached! We may further remark, that this appeal furnishes strong proof of the purity and holiness of Paul's life. The elders at Ephesus must have had abundant opportunity to know him. They had seen him, and heard him publicly, and in their private dwellings. A man does not make such an appeal unless he has a consciousness of integrity, nor unless there is conclusive *proof* of his integrity. It is strong evidence of the holiness of the character of the apostles, and proof that they were not impostors, that they could thus appeal with the utmost assurance to those who had every opportunity of knowing them.

#### **BBC: Paul's Farewell Speech 18-35**

Farewell speeches developed a standard form in antiquity, related to the literary form called "testaments" (in which a dying or departing figure left important, wise instructions for his children or followers). The language of the speech is more like Paul's than Luke's. Although historians tended to rewrite speeches in their own words, regular rhetorical training included practice in imitating others' styles (*prosopopoiia*). Because Luke presumably had little access to Paul's letters (they were not collected from

various churches till long after Paul's death), he must have learned Paul's style from direct contact with him.

**LAN: 18-21** The way of the believer is not an easy road; being a Christian does not solve or remove all problems. Paul served humbly and "with tears," but he never quit, never gave up. The message of salvation was so important that he never missed an opportunity to share it. And although he preached his message in different ways to fit different audiences, the message remained the same—turning away from sin and turning to Christ by faith. The Christian life will have its rough times, its tears, and its sorrows, as well as its joys, but we should always be ready to tell others what good things God has done for us. His blessings far outweigh life's difficulties.

### **Acts 20:19**

**Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews:**

Condition of the apostle in Ephesus was one of great danger (1 Cor 15:31, 32; 2 Cor 1:8-10).

**[humility]** Greek: *tapeinophrosune* (GSN-5012). Only here; Ephes. 4:2; Phil. 2:3; Col. 2:18,23; Col. 3:12; 1 Peter 5:5.

**[temptations]** Greek: *pierasmos* (GSN-3986). This is the usual translation except in 1 Peter 4:12. Here it refers to trials, as in Luke 22:28; 2 Cor. 11:26.

**Clarke: Serving the Lord with all humility, etc.**—This relates not only to his zealous and faithful performance of his apostolic functions, but also to his private walk as a Christian; and shows with what carefulness this apostle himself was obliged to walk, in order to have his calling and election, as a Christian, ratified and made firm.

**Barnes: Serving the Lord.** In the discharge of the appropriate duties of his apostolic office, and in private life. To discharge aright our duties in any vocation is serving the Lord. Religion is often represented in the Bible as a service rendered to the Lord.

**Barnes: With all humility.** Without arrogance, pride, or a spirit of dictation; without a desire to "lord it over God's heritage ;" without being elated with the authority of the apostolic office, the variety of the miracles which he was enabled to perform, or the success which attended his labours. What an admirable model for all who are in the ministry, for all who are endowed with talents and learning, and for all who meet with remarkable success in their work. The proper effect of such success, and of such talent, will be to produce true humility. Eminent success in the work of the ministry tends to produce lowliness and humbleness of mind; and the greatest endowments are usually connected with the most simple and childlike humility.

**Barnes: And with many tears.** Paul not unfrequently gives evidence of the tenderness of his heart, and his regard for the souls of men, and his deep solicitude for the salvation of sinners, Acts 20:31; Philippians 3:18, 2 Corinthians 2:4. The *particular* thing, however, here specified as producing weeping, was the opposition of the Jews. But it cannot be supposed that those tears were shed from an apprehension of personal danger. It was rather because the opposition of the Jews impeded his work, and retarded his progress in winning souls to Christ. A minister of the gospel will

- (1.) feel, and deeply feel, for the salvation of his people. He will weep over their condition when he sees them going astray, and in danger of perishing, He will
- (2.) be especially affected with opposition, because it will retard his work, and prevent the progress and the triumph of the gospel. It is not because it is a personal concern, but because it is the cause of his Master.

**Barnes: And temptations.** Trials, arising from their opposition. We use the word *temptation*, in a more limited sense, to denote inducements offered to one to lead him into sin. The word in the Scriptures most commonly denotes *trials* of any kind.

**JNTC: You yourselves know how ... I was with you ... serving ... with much humility.** Sha'ul does not indulge in self-praise but appeals to the judgment of the Ephesian congregation's elders, who had known and experienced him for three years (v. 31). While often accused, even in the New Testament itself (2C 10:1–13:10), of pride in his accomplishments, nevertheless, like Moses, who could write that he was “the meekest of all men on the face of the earth” (Numbers 12:3, Mt 11:28–30&N), Sha'ul had reached a point where he could speak of himself without either undue praise or undue modesty. (He had also learned not to be unduly affected by physical circumstances and possessions, Pp 4:12.)

**Chuck Smith:** Paul said, "You know that how from the very first day when I came into Asia, the way I lived among you. For I have been serving the Lord with all humility of mind." Paul always saw himself as the servant of the Lord. And I think that that is an important mental attitude for everyone who is in the ministry to maintain. I am a servant of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, everything that I do, I must do to the glory of God. I should not be doing anything for the glory of man. For whatever I do, word or deed, do all to the glory of God. Not seeking to be a man pleaser, but seeking to please the Lord, knowing that of the Lord I am going to receive my rewards. And so Paul said, "You know that my attitude the whole while I've been with you is one of a servant of the Lord, serving Him in all humility of mind."

The man who has received a true vision of the Lord is a man who has humility of mind. That man who is proud has not had a true encounter with God. No man can have a true encounter with God and still maintain a prideful position. In seeing God, in really seeing God, I see myself. And I realize how nothing I am. Isaiah said, "In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord high and lifted up, sitting on the throne. And His glory filled the temple. Then said I, woe is me" (Isaiah 6:1,5). Hey, that's always what a man says when he really sees God, "Woe is me!" Peter, when he saw the Lord, said, "Depart from me, Lord! I'm an unclean man" (Luke 5:8). Daniel, as he talked about his vision and all, he said "Then my beauty was turned into corruption" (Daniel 10:8). Seeing God is an

important thing. Jesus said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:3). But that poverty of spirit always comes to the man who has had a true encounter with a living eternal God. You cannot stand in the consciousness of the true and the living God and still maintain that prideful state. And so, "I've been serving you," Paul said, "with all humility of mind, and with many tears. And in real trials, tribulations, because the Jews were always lying in wait to ambush me."

### **Acts 20:20**

**And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have showed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house,**

Note here Paul notes that he preached house to house.

[**kept back nothing**] Greek: *hupostello* (GSN-5288). Only here; Acts 20:27; Galatians 2:12; Hebrews 10:38. A medical word used of withholding food from patients.

**Clarke: I kept back nothing**—Notwithstanding the dangers to which he was exposed, and the temptations he must have had to suppress those truths that were less acceptable to the unrenewed nature of man, or to the particular prejudices of the Jews and the Gentiles, he fully and faithfully, at all hazards, declared what he terms, Acts 20:27, the whole counsel of God. "Behold here," says the judicious and pious Calmet, "the model of a good shepherd—full of doctrine and zeal: he communicates with profusion, and yet with discretion, without jealousy and without fear, what God had put in his heart, and what charity inspires. A good shepherd, says St. Bernard, should always have abundance of bread in his srip, and his dog under command. His dog is his zeal, which he must lead, order, and moderate; his srip full of bread is his mind full of useful knowledge; and he should ever be in readiness to give nourishment to his flock." He who will quarrel with this sentiment, because of the uncouthness of the simile, needs pity, and deserves censure.

**Barnes: I kept back nothing**, etc. No doctrine, no admonition, no labour. Whatever he judged would promote their salvation, he had faithfully and fearlessly delivered. A minister of the gospel must be the judge of what will be profitable to the people of his charge. His aim should be to promote their real welfare—to preach that which will be *profitable*. His object will not be to please their fancy, to gratify their taste, to flatter their pride, or to promote his own popularity. "All Scripture is *profitable*," 2 Timothy 3:16; and it will be his aim to declare that only which will tend to promote their real welfare. Even if it be unpalatable; if it be the language of reproof and admonition; if it be doctrine to which the heart is by nature opposed; if it run counter to the native prejudices and passions of men; yet, by the grace of God, it should be, and will be delivered. No doctrine that will be profitable should be kept back; no plan, no labour, that may promote the welfare of the flock, should be withheld.

**Chuck Smith:** Paul gave himself for the people because he was serving the Lord. You see, as a minister of Jesus Christ, He requires that I be the servant of the body. Jesus said that if any of you would be chief, then let him become the servant of all. He's talking about the ministry, talking to His disciples. So my serving the Lord involves my serving you. And Paul talks about his service to the men and the people there in Ephesus.

Now notice Paul said, "I was showing you and teaching you." Sometimes the best lessons are object lessons. If our lives don't show it, the teaching becomes meaningless. As a minister, I have to not just proclaim, I must live by it. Showing you, demonstrating by my life, the lifestyle that I lived among you, as well as teaching you. And so that faithful minister.

### **Acts 20:21**

**Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.**

**BBC:** Many philosophers customarily appealed to their hearers in endearing terms, such as Paul uses here, and reminded them that any reproofs were given as signs of true friendship, as opposed to the flattery of false friends. That this language was common means only that it was culturally relevant to the hearers' needs, not that it was merely an empty rhetorical form; Paul and most others who used such language also meant it sincerely.

**[repentance toward God]** Greek: *metanoeo* (GSN-3340), to change one's mind for the better. Not merely to forsake sin, but to change one's attitude toward it and his love for it. Hence, it is demanded by God as a condition of forgiveness and grace (Luke 13:3,5; Luke 15:7; Luke 24:47; Acts 2:38; Acts 3:19; Acts 17:30; Matthew 4:17). See Seven Original Words for "Repent".

**Repent]** Repentance is one of the main themes of the Bible, being found 110 times from Genesis 6:6 to Rev. 16:11.

#### **Seven Original Words for "Repent" (Dake)**

1. Hebrew: *nacham* (HSN-5162), to sigh, breathe strongly, to be sorry (Genesis 6:6; Exodus 13:17; Job 42:6; Jonah 3:10)
2. Hebrew: *shuwb* (HSN-7725), to turn back (1 Kings 8:47; Ezekiel 14:6)
3. Hebrew: *nocham* (HSN-5164), regret (Hosea 13:14)
4. Hebrew: *nichuwm* (HSN-5150), compassion (Hosea 11:8)
5. Greek: *metanoeo* (GSN-3340), to change the mind for the better morally, to change the attitude toward sin (note, Luke 13:3)
6. Greek: *metamellomai* (GSN-3338), to regret consequences of sin, not the cause (Matthew 27:3; 2 Cor. 7:8)
7. Greek: *metanoia* (GSN-3341), a real change of mind and attitude toward sin and its cause, not merely the consequences of it (Matthew 3:8,11; Matthew 9:13; Luke 24:47)

**Examples of Repentance (Dake):**

1. Joseph's brethren (Genesis 50:17)
2. Israel (Numbers 21:7-9; Judges 2:4; Ezra 9:4-14; Neh. 1:6-7)
3. David (2 Samuel 24:10-17; Psalm 51)
4. Ahab (1 Kings 21:25-29)
5. Josiah (2 Kings 22:11-20)
6. Manasseh (2 Chron. 33:1-13)
7. Ninevites (Jonah 3; Luke 11:32)
8. Jews (Matthew 3:6; Luke 3:7-15)
9. Prodigal son (Luke 15:17-21)
10. The publican (Luke 18:9-14)
11. Peter (Matthew 26:75; Luke 22:62)
12. Corinthians (2 Cor. 7:9-11)

**[faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ]** John 3:16; Romans 3:24; Romans 10:9-10; Ephes. 2:8.

**Clarke: Repentance toward God, etc.**—As all had sinned against God, so all should humble themselves before him against whom they have sinned; but humiliation is no atonement for sin; therefore repentance is insufficient, unless faith in our Lord Jesus Christ accompany it. Repentance disposes and prepares the soul for pardoning mercy; but can never be considered as making compensation for past acts of transgression. This repentance and faith were necessary to the salvation both of Jews and Gentiles; for all had sinned, and come short of God's glory. The Jews must repent, who had sinned so much, and so long, against light and knowledge. The Gentiles must repent, whose scandalous lives were a reproach to man. Faith in Jesus Christ was also indispensably necessary; for a Jew might repent, be sorry for his sin, and suppose that, by a proper discharge of his religious duty, and bringing proper sacrifices, he could conciliate the favor of God: No, this will not do; nothing but faith in Jesus Christ, as the end of the law, and the great and only vicarious sacrifice, will do; hence he testified to them the necessity of faith in this Messiah. The Gentiles might repent of their profligate lives, turn to the true God, and renounce all idolatry: this is well, but it is not sufficient: they also have sinned, and their present amendment and faith can make no atonement for what is past; therefore, they also must believe on the Lord Jesus, who died for their sins, and rose again for their justification.

**JNTC:** The Gospel is the same for Jews as for non-Jews: repentance and trust in God through Yeshua the Messiah. The Two-Covenant theory (see Yn 14:6N) is wrong.

**Acts 20:22**

**And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there:**

**[go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem]** Paul's own spirit... Firmly resolved in my spirit in spite of the repeated warnings of the Holy Spirit (Acts 20:22-23).

**Clarke: I go bound in the spirit** Either meaning the strong influence of the Divine Spirit upon his mind, or the strong propensity in his own will, wish, and desire, to visit Jerusalem; and in this sense, to bind, is sometimes used. But it appears more consistent with the mind of the apostle, and with that influence under which we find that he constantly acted, to refer it to the influence of the Holy Ghost; being under the power of that Spirit; as if he had said: "I have now no choice—God has not left me either to the advices of friends, or to my own prudence: the Spirit of God obliges me to go to Jerusalem, and yet does not intimate to me what peculiar trials shall befall me there: I have only the general intimation that, in every city where I proclaim the Gospel, bonds and afflictions await me." This sense of the word Kypke has largely defended in his note here.

**Barnes: Bound in the spirit.** Strongly urged or constrained by the influences of the Holy Spirit on my mind. Not by any desire to see the place where my fathers worshipped, and not urged merely by reason, but by the convictions and mighty promptings of the Holy Spirit to do my duty in this case. The expression "bound in the spirit"- is one of great strength and emphasis. The word *to bind*, is usually applied to confinement by cords, fetters, or bands, Matthew 13:30, 14:3, 21:2; and then denotes any strong obligation, Romans 7:2, or anything that strongly urges or impels, Matthew 21:2. When we are strongly urged by the convictions of duty, by the influences of the Holy Spirit, we should not shrink from danger or from death. Duty is to be done at all hazards. It is ours to follow the directions of God; *results* we may safely and confidently leave with him.

True intellectual heroes in Greco-Roman tradition were those who believed their teaching so much that they were willing to die for it; philosophers who died for their beliefs were considered noble and brave. Paul stands in the Old Testament prophetic tradition of speaking God's message no matter what the cost, but he also presents his message in a manner that resonates with the best in his hearers' culture.

**McGee:** Here is a point over which many great teachers of the Bible differ. Some of my good friends in the ministry and many good, authoritative Bible teachers believe that Paul made a mistake in going to Jerusalem. They think that he should not have gone. However, this testimony which Paul gives is very clear. I believe that he was entirely in the will of God in going to Jerusalem. He is saying in effect, "I am going to Jerusalem. I am bound in the spirit because everywhere I have gone, the Spirit of God has shown me that bonds and affliction await me in Jerusalem." Now that is different from Acts 16 when he was forbidden by the Spirit of God to preach in Asia. In fact God simply put up roadblocks which directed him to Europe. There is no roadblock here. Rather the Spirit of God is revealing to Paul what he will be walking into when he reaches Jerusalem. Paul makes it clear that he realizes he will suffer if he goes to Jerusalem. He says, "I don't count my life dear. I'm willing to lay down my life for Jesus." He wanted to bring the gift to the poor saints in Jerusalem in his own hands. In his swan song Paul wrote, "I have finished my course." I think Paul touched all the bases. Jerusalem was one of those bases.

## **Acts 20:23**

**Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me.**

**[bonds and afflictions abide me]** This proves the Holy Spirit can see ahead and know what will befall one, further proving His personality.

**Barnes: The Holy Ghost witnesseth.** Either by direct revelation to him, or by the predictions of inspired men whom Paul might meet. An instance of the latter mode occurs in Acts 21:11. It is probable that the meaning here is, that the Holy Ghost had deeply impressed the mind of Paul by his direct influences, and by his experience in every city, that bonds and trials were to be his portion. Such had been his experience in every city where he had preached the gospel by the direction of the Holy Ghost, that he regarded it as his certain portion that he was thus to be afflicted.

**Barnes: In every city.** In almost every city where Paul had been, he had been subjected to these trials. He had been persecuted, stoned, and scourged. So uniform was this, so constant had been his experience in this way, that he regarded it as his certain portion to be thus afflicted; and he approached Jerusalem, and every other city, with a confident expectation that such trials awaited him there.

**BBC:** “The Holy Spirit’s testimony” surely means prophecies (Acts 21:4); early Judaism viewed the Spirit especially as the agent that had inspired the prophets.

The Holy Spirit showed Paul that he would be imprisoned and experience suffering. Even knowing this, Paul did not shrink from fulfilling his mission. His strong character was a good example to the Ephesian elders, some of whom would also suffer for Christ.

**ESV: Constrained** (Gk. *deō*, “to bind, tie, constrain”) indicates that the Holy Spirit was giving Paul an exceptionally strong sense of compulsion that he had to go quickly and directly to Jerusalem, even though he knew that imprisonment and afflictions awaited him there. Paul must have reflected on the similarities between his present journey to Jerusalem and Jesus’ final journey to Jerusalem where he was to die (Matt. 16:21; 20:18; Mark 10:32–33; Luke 9:51, 53; 18:31–33), and wondered if he also would end his life there (see Acts 20:24). the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city. Such testimony probably came to Paul through both Christian prophets (cf. 21:11) and direct revelation from the Holy Spirit.

## **Acts 20:24**

**But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.**

[course] Some ten or more years were to pass before the end of his course (2 Tim. 4:7).

**None of these things move me;** I consider them as nothing; I value them not a straw; they weigh not with me.

**Neither count I my life dear**—I am not my own; my life and being are the Lord's; he requires me to employ them in his service; I act under his direction, and am not anxious about the issue.

**Clarke: Finish my course with joy,** My ministerial function. We have already met with this word in application to the same subject, Acts 13:25. And the apostle here adds, by way of explanation, even that ministry which I have received of the Lord. The words, with joy, are omitted by ABD, some others; the Syriac, Erpen, Coptic, Sahidic, Ethiopic, Vulgate, and some of the fathers. If we consider them as genuine they may imply thus much: that the apostle wished to fulfill his ministry in such a way as might meet with the Divine approbation; for nothing could give him joy that did not please and glorify God.

**Clarke: To testify,** Earnestly, solemnly, and strenuously to assert, vindicate, and prove the Gospel of the grace of God, not only to be in itself what it professes to be, but to be also the power of God for salvation to every one that believes.

“Finish the course” (e.g., NASB) or “finish the race” (NIV) are athletic images; philosophers often used such images to describe their own mission (cf. TEV).

**LAN:** We often feel that life is a failure unless we're getting a lot out of it: recognition, fun, money, success. But Paul considered life worth *nothing* unless he used it for God's work. What he put *into* life was far more important than what he got out. Which is more important to you—what you get out of life, or what you put into it?

Single-mindedness is a quality needed by anyone who wishes to do God's work. Paul was a single-minded person, and the most important goal of his life was to tell others about Christ (Phil. 3:7-13). It is no wonder that Paul was the greatest missionary who ever lived. God is looking for more men and women who focus on that one great task God has given them to do.

**Chuck Smith:** "My chief desire is to finish my course with joy. It doesn't bother me that I have to be imprisoned. It doesn't move me that I'm going to be bound. My chief desire is to just to finish my course." So Paul's great drive to finish that course that God had set before him. He finally wrote to Timothy and he said, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished the course." That was his last epistle just before being beheaded by Nero. "I fought a good fight, I finished the course. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of

righteousness, which the Lord, our righteousness judge, shall give. Not only to me, but to all those who do love His appearing" (II Timothy 4:7-8).

### **Acts 20:25**

**And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more.**

**[kingdom of God - Dake]** It is headed by Jesus Christ for the purpose of re-establishing the kingdom of God over this rebellious part of God's realm. Only found in Matthew because it is the gospel of Jehovah's King. It is a dispensational term and refers to Messiah's kingdom on earth. Offered by both John and Jesus (Matthew 3:2; Matthew 4:17; Matthew 10:7). Because it was rejected, it was postponed until Christ comes to set up the kingdom (Matthew 11:12,20-24; Matthew 27:22-25; Luke 19:11-27; Acts 1:6-7; Acts 3:19-26). It is now the realm of profession (Matthew 13:11-17,30,38-43,47-50). The parables of the kingdom apply to this age. At the end Christ will come and set up a literal earthly kingdom forever (Matthew 25:31-46; Rev. 11:15; Rev. 19:11-20:10; Zech. 14; Isaiah 9:6-7; Daniel 2:44-45; Daniel 7:13-27; Luke 1:32-33). During the first 1,000 years of His eternal reign He will put down all rebellion and rid the earth of all rebels. Then God will become "all in all" as before rebellion (Rev. 20:1-10; Rev. 21:1-22:5; 1 Cor. 15:24-28; Ephes. 1:10). Anything said of the kingdom of heaven can also be said of the kingdom of God, because the former is only the earthly dispensational aspect of the latter. There are many things said of the kingdom of God, however, which cannot be said of the kingdom of heaven.

**Clarke: Ye all—shall see my face no more—**This probably refers simply to the persons who were now present; concerning whom he might have had a Divine intimation, that they should not be found in life when he should come that way again. Or it may refer only to Ephesus and Miletus. From the dangers to which he was exposed, it was, humanly speaking, unlikely that he should ever return; and this may be all that is implied: but that he did revisit those parts, though probably not Miletus or Ephesus, appears likely from Philippians 1:25-27; 2:24; Philemon 22; Hebrews 13:19-23. But in all these places he speaks with a measure of uncertainty: he had not an absolute evidence that he should not return; but, in his own mind, it was a matter of uncertainty. The Holy Spirit did not think proper to give him a direct revelation on this point.

**BKC:**When these verses are read together, it becomes clear that the preaching of the kingdom and the gospel of God's grace are related. God's work of grace enables believing Gentiles to have both the privilege of salvation and of entering the Lord's millennial reign.

Because of the warning to Paul (v. 23) he concluded that the Ephesian elders would not see him again. The NIV translation, none of you, is a bit strong. The Greek refers to

---

v. verse  
NIV New International Version

“all” of them (as a group) not seeing Paul again (lit., “all of you [as a group] will never see me again”). He did not say no *one* of them would see him again (cf. the pl. verb in v. 38). His ambition was to finish the race, which later he said he did (2 Tim. 4:7).<sup>15</sup>

### **Acts 20:26**

**Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I *am* pure from the blood of all *men*.**

**[that I am pure from the blood of all men]** If any Jew or Gentile perishes who has heard me, his blood will be upon him. I have fully shown both the way.

**Clarke: I am pure from the blood of all**—If any man, Jew or Gentile, perish in his sins, his blood shall be upon him; he, alone, shall be accessory to his own perdition. I am blameless, because I have fully shown to both the way to escape from every evil.

**Barnes: I take you to record.** Greek, I call you to witness; I appeal to you to testify. If any of you are lost, if you prove unfaithful to God, I appeal to yourselves that the fault is not mine. It is well when a minister can make this appeal, and call his hearers to bear testimony to his own faithfulness. Ministers who preach the gospel with fidelity, may thus appeal to their hearers; and in the day of judgment may call on them to witness that the fault of the ruin of the soul is not to be charged to them.

**Barnes: The blood of all men.** The word *blood* is used often in the sense of *death*, of blood shed; and hence of the guilt or crime of putting one to death, or condemnation for it, Matthew 23:35, 27:25, Acts 5:28, 18:6. It here means, that if they should die the second death, if they should be lost for ever, *he* would not be to blame. He had discharged his duty, in faithfully warning and teaching them; and now, if they were lost, the fault would be their own, not his.

### **Acts 20:27**

**For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.**

“whole counsel of God.”

**[counsel of God]** The revealed will of God up to now.

**Clarke: I have not shunned to declare,** I have not suppressed or concealed any thing, through fear or favor, that might be beneficial to your souls. This is properly the meaning of the original word.

---

lit. literal, literally  
cf. *confer*, compare  
pl. plural

<sup>15</sup>Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-c1985). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (2:413). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

**Clarke: All the counsel of God**—All that God has determined and revealed concerning the salvation of man—the whole doctrine of Christ crucified, with repentance towards God, and faith in Jesus as the Messiah and great atoning Priest. In Isaiah 9:6, Jesus Christ is called the wonderful counsellor, which the Septuagint translate · The messenger of the great counsel. To this the apostle may have referred, as we well know that this version was constantly under his eye. Declaring therefore to them the whole counsel of God, the whole of that counsel or design of God, was, in effect, declaring the whole that concerned the Lord Jesus, who was the messenger of this counsel.

**McGee:** Paul knew that he would not see these folk again in this life. Paul also knew that he had honestly given to them the entire counsel of God.

As I write this, I am a retired preacher. I have made many blunders and have failed in many ways. But as I look back on my ministry, I can say truthfully that when I stood in the pulpit, I declared the Word of God as I saw it. I have the deep satisfaction of knowing that if I went back to any pulpit which I have held, I haven't a thing to add to what I have already said. I don't mean I couldn't say it in a better way, but the important thing is that I declared the whole counsel of God. I have always believed that the important issue is to get out the entire Word of God.

**BKC:** In conformity with Ezekiel 33:1-6, Paul declared himself to be innocent of the blood of all men in Ephesus (cf. comments on Acts 18:6). He preached to “all men” (cf. “all the Jews and Greeks . . . in the province of Asia,” 19:10). And the content of His preaching was all of God's will (boulēn, “purpose, plan”; cf. 2:23; 4:28; 13:36; Eph. 1:11; Heb. 6:17). Interestingly Paul used several words in referring to his role in communicating the gospel: (a) “preach” (Acts 20:20) and proclaim (v. 27), both from anangellō (“proclaim, announce”); (b) “taught” (from didaskō, “teach,” v. 20); (c) “declared” (v. 21) and “testifying” (v. 24), both from *diamartyromai* (“solemnly bear witness to”); (d) declare (*martyromai*, “testify,” v. 26).

**JNTC: I am innocent of the blood of all.** To the unbelieving Jews of Corinth Sha'ul had said, “Your blood be on your own heads; for my part, I am clean” (18:6&N). At the outset the Corinthians had refused to hear him; these Ephesian elders, attentive till now, still risk falling away and having **blood** guilt on their heads. The serious problems that will arise in Ephesus after he leaves (vv. 28–31) he has tried to avert by proclaiming **the whole plan of God**; their responsibility is to remain in “the care of the Lord and the message of his love and kindness” (v. 32).

---

cf. *confer*, compare  
v. verse

## Acts 20:28

**Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.**

**[flock]** Greek: *poimnion* (GSN-4168), little flock. Here; Acts 20:29; Luke 12:32; 1 Peter 5:2-3.

**[over]** Out of 2,782 times the Greek: *en* (GSN-1722), in, is used, this is the only place it is translated "over." It is in the little flock that the Holy Spirit has made people overseers. No man is a lord over God's heritage, but all are ensamples to the flock (1 Peter 5:2-4).

**[Holy Ghost]** Another reference to the Holy Spirit as a person. He is the executive of the Godhead over all the church.

**[overseers]** Greek: *episkopos* (GSN-1985). Translated "overseer" here, but "bishop" in Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:7; 1 Peter 2:25. A bishop was a preaching elder. Bishops and presbyters were the same.

**[feed]** Greek: *poimaino* (GSN-4165), shepherd. Translated "feed" (Luke 17:7; John 21:16; Acts 20:28; 1 Cor. 9:7; 1 Peter 5:2; Jude 1:12; Rev. 7:17) and "rule" (Matthew 2:6; Rev. 2:27; Rev. 12:5; Rev. 19:15).

**[church of God]** *ekklesia* (GSN-1577), called out. Used 115 times and is always translated church except in Acts the Hebrew: *qahal* (HSN-6950), to call. *Qahal* is used 123 times of Israel called out from the nations (Genesis 12:3); of a council called from each tribe (Genesis 49:6); of local assemblies of Israel called out to worship (Deut. 18:16; Deut. 31:30; Joshua 8:35; Judges 21:8); and of any congregation of worshipers (Psalm 22:22-25).

**[which he hath purchased]** This is another proof that Jesus Christ is a member of the Divine Trinity (John 1:1-2,14; Micah 5:2; Isaiah 7:14; Isaiah 9:6-7; Hebrews 1:8; 1 Tim. 3:15; 1 John 5:7).

**[own blood]** Matthew 26:28; Romans 3:24; Ephes. 1:7; Col. 1:20; 1 Peter 1:18-23; Rev. 1:5; Hebrews 9:12-28; Hebrews 10:19; Hebrews 13:20.

**Clarke: Made you overseers,** Appointed you bishops; for so we translate the original word in most places where it occurs: but overseers, or inspectors, is much more proper, over, and, I look. The persons who examine into the spiritual state of the flock of God, and take care to lead them in and out, and to find them pasture, are termed *episcopoi*, or superintendents. The office of a bishop is from God; a true pastor only can fulfill this office: it is an office of most awful responsibility; few there are who can fill it; and, of those who occupy this high and awful place, perhaps we may say there are fewer still who discharge the duties of it. There are, however, through the good providence of God,

Christian bishops, who, while they are honored by the calling, do credit to the sacred function. And the annals of our Church can boast of at least as many of this class of men, who have served their God and their generation, as of any other order, in the proportion which this order bears to others in the Church of Christ. That bishop and presbyter, or elder, were at this time of the same order, and that the word was indifferently used of both,

**BBC:** “Overseer” was usually a Greek term for a ruling officer, although the Dead Sea Scrolls include a Hebrew equivalent. Even though the image of shepherd as a leader is not exclusively Jewish, it is especially Old Testament language for the leaders of God’s people. God would call shepherds to account for how they watched over his flock; see comment on John 10:1-18. “Take heed” was standard language for moral exhortations.

**BKC:** In verses 28-35 Paul turned to the future responsibilities of the elders in Ephesus. First, they were to guard (*prosechete*, “attend to” in the sense of taking care of) themselves and all the flock. Significantly before they could provide for the flock they had to care for their own spiritual well-being.

Here the elders are described as overseers (*episkopous*, from the verb *episkopeō*, “to look for, to care for”). The term “elders” has primarily Jewish antecedents and stresses the dignity of the office, whereas “overseers” is mainly Greek in its derivation and emphasizes the responsibility of the office, namely, “to look after” others.

The value of the flock, over which the elders were to be shepherds (*poimainein*, pres. tense infinitive; cf. 1 Peter 5:2), is underscored by Paul’s calling it the church of God (i.e., the church that is owned by God) and by his referring to its purchase (cf. Ps. 74:2) by His own blood. Nowhere does the Bible speak of the blood of God the Father. The Greek here can read “by the blood of His own,” that is, His own Son. The Greek word for bought means “acquired, obtained.”

**ESV: Pay careful attention to yourselves.** Spiritual leaders need first of all to guard their own spiritual and moral purity. the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. The last part of this phrase refers to the blood of Christ poured out in his atoning death on the cross (cf. Rom. 3:25; 5:9; Eph. 1:7; etc.). The reference to God in the first part of this phrase (“the church of God”) most likely is a reference to Christ as the head of the church and as “God the Son,” the second person of the Trinity. Alternatively, if God the Father is in view in the phrase “the church of God,” then “his own blood” is a reference to the blood of God’s “own,” that is, of “God’s own Son” (which would be a legitimate alternative reading of the Greek). (See also esv footnote indicating that some Greek manuscripts read “the church of the Lord” rather than “the church of God.”)

**Chuck Smith:** And this is the charge and the responsibility that God has placed upon the ministers: to feed the flock of God. But it is so difficult to find pastors today who will really feed the flock of God. We get letters by the hundreds. The other night when I was in Indianapolis, scores of people afterwards said to me, "Would you please start a work

---

pres. present  
cf. *confer*, compare  
i.e. *id est*, that is

here in Indianapolis? We've been praying for five years that God would establish a Calvary Chapel here in Indianapolis. We want a place where we can just go and be fed the Word of God." People are hungry to be fed the Word of God. And so Paul said to these overseers of the church of Ephesus, "Feed the flock of God." Peter in writing his epistle said, "Feed the flock of God which is among you." Jesus said to Peter, "Feed My sheep." I don't know why pastors don't realize that this is the most important function of a pastor is to feed the flock of God. We have those who are seeking to entertain the flock of God. And then God help us, unfortunately we have those who are seeking to fleece the flock of God. But how few are really feeding the flock of God.

### **Acts 20:29**

**For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.**

Grievous wolves; perverse men. Two classes of enemies: external and internal.

[**For I know this ...**] The 10th New Testament prophecy in Acts (Acts 20:29-30, fulfilled). The next prophecy will be in Acts 21:11.

[**grievous**] Greek: *barus* (GSN-926), oppressive. Here; Acts 25:7; Matthew 23:4,23; 2 Cor. 10:10; 1 John 5:3.

[**not sparing the flock**] Not protecting, caring or providing for, or feeding the flock (Romans 8:32; Romans 11:21; 1 Cor. 7:28; 2 Cor. 1:23; 2 Cor. 12:6; 2 Cor. 13:2; 2 Peter 2:4).

**After my departing**—Referring, most likely, to his death; for few of these evils took place during his life.

**Grievous wolves**—Persons professing to be teachers; Judaizing Christians, who, instead of feeding the flock, would feed themselves, even to the oppression and ruin of the Church.

### **Acts 20:30**

**Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.**

No fewer than six false teachers from Ephesus: Hymeneus (1 Tim 1:20); Alexander (1 Tim 1:20); Phygellus (2 Tim 1:15); Hermogenes (2 Tim 1:15); Philetus (2 Tim 2:17); and Diotrephes (3 John 9).

(Doctrine of the Nicolaitans? Rev 2:6; where's their lightstand? Rev 2:1-7.)

Epistle to the Colossians, written at the same time as the one to its neighbor, Ephesus, evidence the propagation of Gnostic errors in Proconsular Asia.

**[to draw away disciples after them]** To make schisms or splits in the church in order to get a following to support them. How soon this was fulfilled is clear in Rev. 2:2,6,15-16,20.

**Clarke: Also of your own selves, etc.**—From out of your own assembly shall men arise, speaking perverse things, teaching for truth what is erroneous in itself, and perverse of the genuine doctrine of Christ crucified.

**Clarke: To draw away disciples**—To make schisms or rents in the Church, in order to get a party to themselves. See, here, the cause of divisions in the Church:

1. The superintendents lose the life of God, neglect the souls of the people, become greedy of gain, and, by secular extortions, oppress the people.
2. The members of the Church, thus neglected, oppressed, and irritated, get their minds alienated from their rapacious pastors.
3. Men of sinister views take advantage of this state of distraction, foment discord, preach up the necessity of division, and thus the people become separated from the great body, and associate with those who profess to care for their souls, and who disclaim all secular views.

In this state of distraction, it is a high proof of God's love to his heritage, if one be found who, possessing the true apostolic doctrine and spirit, rises up to call men back to the primitive truth, and restore the primitive discipline. How soon the grievous wolves and perverse teachers arose in the Churches of Asia Minor, the first chapters of the Apocalypse inform us. The Nicolaitans had nearly ruined the Church of Ephesus, Revelation 1:2, 6. The same sect, with other false teachers, infested the Church of Pergamos, and preached there the doctrine of Balaam, Revelation 2:14, 15. A false prophetess seduced the Church of Thyatira, Revelation 2:20. All these Churches were in Asia Minor, and probably bishops or ministers from each were present at this convocation.

**Barnes: Speaking perverse things.** Crooked, perverted, distracting doctrines, Acts 13:10. They would proclaim doctrines tending to distract and divide the church. The most dangerous enemies which the church has had, have been nurtured in its own bosom, and have consisted of those who have perverted the true doctrines of the gospel. Among the Ephesians, as among the Corinthians, 1 Corinthians 1:11-13, there might be parties formed; there might be men influenced by ambition, like Diotrephes, 3 John 1:9, or like Phygellus or Hermogenes, 2 Timothy 1:15, or like Hymeneus and Alexander, 1 Timothy 1:20. Men under the influence of ambition, or from the love of power or popularity, form parties in the church, produce divisions and distractions, and greatly retard its internal prosperity, and mar its peace. The church of Christ would have little to fear from external enemies if it nurtured no foes in its own bosom; and all the power of persecutors is not so much to be dreaded as the counsels and plans, the parties, strifes, heart-burnings, and contentions which are produced by those who have power, among the professed friends of Christ.

**ESV:** Paul showed remarkable insight into the future situation of the Ephesian church (probably through a revelation from the Holy Spirit). The letters of Paul to Timothy, who served Ephesus a decade or so later, attest to the presence of false teachers who were ravaging the church for their own gain and who had indeed come from within the church, in fact, from among the elders themselves (from among your own selves). (See 1 Tim. 1:19–20; 4:1–3; 2 Tim. 1:15; 2:17–18; 3:1–9.)

### **Acts 20:31**

**Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.**

**[warn]** Greek: *noutheteo* (GSN-3560). Used only by Paul and is translated "admonish" (Romans 15:14; Col. 3:16; 1 Thes. 5:12; 2 Thes. 3:15) and "warn" (Acts 20:31; 1 Cor. 4:14; Col. 1:28; 1 Thes. 5:14).

**[with tears]** A warm, tender-hearted preacher filled with compassion and the love of God.

**Clarke: Therefore watch, and remember**—The only way to abide in the truth is to watch against evil, and for good; and to keep in mind the heavenly doctrines originally received. Unwatchfulness and forgetfulness are two grand inlets to apostasy.

**Clarke: By the space of three years.** The Greek word here does not necessarily mean three whole years: it may be months more or less. In Acts 19:8, 10, we have an account of his spending two years and three months among them; probably this is all that is intended. One MS., perceiving that the time of three years was not completed, inserts the space of two years.

**BBC:** Exhortation often appealed to people to remember. "Night and day" was a standard way of saying "all the time"; parts of a night and of a day could be reckoned as the whole. Good public speakers were supposed to feel their speeches enough to express proper emotion and to move the crowds emotionally.

Paul's relationship with these believers is a beautiful example of Christian fellowship. He had cared for them and loved them, even cried over their needs. They responded with love and care for him and sorrow over his leaving. They had prayed together and comforted one another. Like Paul, you can build strong relationships with other Christians by sharing, caring, sorrowing, rejoicing, and praying with them. You will gather others around you only by giving yourself away to them.

## **Acts 20:32**

**And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.**

Not just initial stages of salvation, but the subsequent stages of “upbuilding,” even to consummation of final inheritance, is here ascribed to the ability of God to bestow it as in Rom 16:25; Eph 3:20; Jude 24. (Same ascribed to Christ, 2 Tim 1:12.)

Four Ways:

- 1) Admonish with tears, speaking the truth in love..
- 2) Use the Word
- 3) Be selfless in your ministry
- 4) It is better to give than to receive

(Vs. “The giver is foolish, but the receiver is fortunate.” Athenaeus, 8:5.)

**[build]** Greek: *oikodomeo* (GSN-3618), to edify, build up in the faith, or build any kind of structure (Acts 20:32; 1 Cor. 3:1-14; Ephes. 2:20; Col. 2:7; Jude 1:20). This suggests a ruin of man; a wreck of his body, soul, and spirit, which must be repaired and made new again as the habitation of God by the Spirit.

1. The foundation: Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 1:11-15; Ephes. 2:19-22)
2. The model or plan: the image of Christ (2 Cor. 3:18; Col. 3:10)
3. The materials: man's creative make-up now marred by sin (Romans 3:23; Romans 5:12-21; 1 Thes. 5:23; Psalm 51:5; Ephes. 2:1-9)
4. The tools: the Word of God (Romans 1:16; John 15:3; John 17:17; Ephes. 5:26; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:23; Hebrews 4:12), the blood of Christ (Matthew 26:28; Ephes. 1:7; Col. 1:20; Rev. 1:5; Hebrews 9-10), the grace of God (Acts 20:32; John 1:17; Ephes. 2:8-9), and the gifts of the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:4-11)
5. The workers: God (John 3:16; Phil. 2:13), Christ (Matthew 1:21; Galatians 3:13-14; Hebrews 4:14-16; John 16:23-26), the Holy Spirit (John 16:7-15; Romans 8:1-13,26; 1 Cor. 6:11; Titus 3:5), angels (Hebrews 1:14), and man (John 3:16; 2 Tim. 2:4; Rev. 22:17; 1 Cor. 6; Phil. 2:12; 2 Peter 1:4-10; 1 John 1:7; Jude 1:20-24; Ephes. 4:11)
6. The goal: new creatures ( 2 Cor. 5:17) and the restored image of Christ (2 Cor. 3:18; Ephes. 2:19-22; Ephes. 4:13; Ephes. 5:27; Col. 3:10)
7. The result: a finished building, restored and united to God eternally (Ephes. 2:19-22; Ephes. 4:13; Ephes. 5:27; John 14:1-3; 1 Thes. 4:13-17; Rev. 21-22)

**[inheritance]** Greek: *kleronomia* (GSN-2817), a possession (Acts 20:32; Ephes. 1:14,18; Ephes. 5:5; Hebrews 9:15; 1 Peter 1:4).

**[sanctified]** *hagiasmos* (GSN-38), consecration; a separation unto God FROM a profane, secular, and carnal use TO a sacred, religious, and spiritual use.

The words "sanctify" and "sanctified" are used 132 times; "sanctification" 5 times (New Testament only); and "sanctifieth" 4 times (New Testament only)—141 times total in Scripture: 110 times in the Old Testament and only 31 times in the New Testament A study of the various passages shows that to sanctify means to set apart from other uses to

God's particular use, not to cleanse from sin or rid of carnal nature (sometimes called "the old man" or Adamic nature). Even Christ, the Sinless One, was sanctified (John 10:36; John 17:19). Where humans are concerned one begins to be sanctified when he begins to consecrate his life to God, and the process is continued as he continues in his dedication (1 Cor. 1:30; 1 Cor. 6:11; 2 Thes. 2:13; 1 John 1:7-9; 1 John 3:8-10; 1 John 5:1-4,18).

**Clarke: Which is able to build you up**—The foundation is Jesus Christ; God is the great master-builder; the doctrine of his grace, or mercy, points out the order and manner, as well as the extent, etc., of this building. Let us observe the order of these things:—

1. The soul of man, which was formerly the habitation of God, is now in a state of ruin.
2. The ruins of this soul must be repaired, that it may again become a habitation of God through the Spirit.
3. Jesus Christ is the only foundation on which this house can be rebuilt.
4. The doctrine of God's grace is the model, or plan, according to which the building can be raised.
5. When re-edified, each is to be a lively temple of the Lord, made inwardly pure and outwardly righteous, and thus prepared for a state of bliss.
6. Being made children of God, by faith in Christ Jesus, and sanctified by his Spirit, they have a right to the heavenly inheritance; for only the children of the family can possess the celestial estate.

Thus we find they must be saved by grace, and be made thereby children of God; be sanctified by his Spirit; and, then, being prepared for, they are removed, in due time, into the heavenly inheritance.

"An inheritance among all those who are sanctified" (NASB) (i.e., "set apart" or "separated" for God) refers to the Jewish hope that they as God's people would inherit the world to come, just as Israel had "inherited" the Promised Land.

### **Acts 20:33**

**I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel.**

**[coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel]** A characteristic of a true minister. Wolves are known by their greed, selfish interests, and other fruits (Matthew 7:15; cp. 1 Samuel 12:3-5).

**Clarke: I have coveted no man's silver, etc.**—And from this circumstance they would be able to discover the grievous wolves, and the perverters; for these had nothing but their own interests in view; whereas the genuine disciples of Christ neither coveted nor had worldly possessions. St. Paul's account of his own disinterestedness is very similar to that given by Samuel of his, 1 Samuel 12:3-5.

**Barnes: I have coveted.** I have not desired. I have not made it an object of my living among you to obtain your property. Thus 2 Corinthians 12:14 he says, "I seek not yours,

but you." Paul had power to demand support in the ministry as the reward of his labour, 1 Corinthians 9:13,14. Yet he did not choose to exercise it, lest it should bring the charge of avarice against the ministry, 1 Corinthians 9:12,15. Paul also had power in another respect. He had a vast influence over the people. The early Christians were disposed to commit their property to the disposal of the apostles. See Acts 4:34,35,37. The heathen had been accustomed to devote their property to the support of religion. Of this propensity, if the object of Paul had been to make money, he might have availed himself, and have become enriched. Deceivers often thus impose on people for the purpose of amassing wealth; and one of the incidental but striking proofs of the Christian religion is here furnished, in the appeal which the apostle Paul made to his hearers, that this had not been his motive for action. If it had been, how easy would it have been for them to have contradicted him! and who, in such circumstances, would have dared to make such an appeal? The circumstances of the case, therefore, prove that the object of the apostle was not to amass wealth. And this fact is an important proof of the truth of the religion which he defended. What should have induced him to labour and toil in this manner, but a conviction of the truth of Christianity? And if he really believed it was true, it is, in his circumstances, a strong proof that this religion is from heaven. See this proof stated in Faber's "Difficulties of Infidelity," and in Lord Lyttleton's "Letter on the Conversion of St. Paul."

**LAN:** Paul was satisfied with whatever he had, wherever he was, as long as he could do God's work. Examine your attitudes toward wealth and comfort. If you focus more on what you don't have than on what you do have, it's time to reexamine your priorities and put God's work back in first place.

### **Acts 20:34**

**Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me.**

Paul notes that he earned his own living.

**[my necessities, and to them that were with me]** I have supplied myself and others with me with the necessities of life.

**Clarke: These hands have ministered, etc.**—It was neither "sin nor discredit" for the apostle to work to maintain himself, when the circumstances of the Church were such that it could not support him. Still many eminent ministers of God are obliged to support themselves and their families, at least in part, in the same way, while indefatigably testifying the Gospel of the grace of God. Whatever it may be to the people, it is no cause of reproach to the minister, to be obliged thus to employ himself.

**Barnes: Yea, ye yourselves know.** By your own acquaintance with my manner of life. In Corinth he had lived and laboured with Apollos, Acts 18:3; and he refers elsewhere to the fact that he had supported himself, in part at least, by his own labour, 1 Corinthians 4:12 1 Thessalonians 2:9, 2 Thessalonians 3:8. We may hence learn that it is no discredit

to a minister to labour. Whatever it may be to a people who put him under a necessity to toil for his support, yet the example of Paul shows that a man should rejoice in the privilege of preaching the gospel, even if it is done while he is obliged to resort to labour for his daily bread. It is well when a minister of the gospel can make an appeal to his people like this of Paul, and say, "I have coveted no man's gold, or silver, or apparel." Every minister should so live that he can make this appeal to their own consciences of the sincerity and disinterestedness of his labours from the pulpit; or when called to separate from them as Paul did; or when on a dying bed. Every minister of the gospel, when he comes to lie down to die, will desire to be able to make this appeal, and to leave a solemn testimony there, that it was not for gold, or ease, or fame, that he toiled in the ministerial office. How much more influence can such a man have, than he who has been worldly-minded; who has sought to become rich; and the only memorials of whose life is, that he has sought "the fleece, not the flock," and that he has gained the *property*, not the *souls* of men. And every Christian, when he dies, should and will desire to leave a testimony *as* pure, that he has been disinterested, self-denying, and laborious in the cause of Jesus the Lord.

Paul was a tentmaker, and he supported himself with this trade. Paul worked not in order to become rich, but to be free from being dependent on anyone. He supported himself and others who traveled with him (he also mentions this in some of his letters; see Phil. 4:11-13; 1 Thes. 2:9).

### **Acts 20:35**

**I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.**

These words of Jesus are not recorded in the Gospels. Obviously, not all of Jesus' words were written down (John 21:25); this saying may have been passed on orally through the apostles.

**[shewed you all things]** I have set an example before you to follow in all things, especially in unselfishness.

**[said, It is more blessed to give than to receive]** The giver is more happy than the receiver. Where or when Christ said this is not known.

**I have showed you all things**—The preposition is to be understood and the clause should be read thus—I have showed you **IN** all things, etc.

**Clarke: It is more blessed to give than to receive**—That is, the giver is more happy than the receiver. Where, or on what occasion, our Lord spake these words we know not, as they do not exist in any of the four evangelists. But that our Lord did speak them, St. Paul's evidence is quite sufficient to prove. The sentiment is worthy of Christ. A truly generous mind, in affluence, rejoices in opportunities to do good, and feels happy in

having such opportunities. A man of an independent spirit, when reduced to poverty, finds it a severe trial to be obliged to live on the bounty of another, and feels pain in receiving what the other feels a happiness in communicating. Let, therefore, the man who is able to give feel himself the obliged person, and think how much pain the feeling heart of his supplicant must endure, in being obliged to forego his native independence, in soliciting and receiving the bounty of another. I am not speaking of common beggars; these have got their minds already depraved, and their native independence reduced, by sin and idleness, to servility.

**Barnes: The words of the Lord Jesus.** These words are nowhere recorded by the evangelists. But they did not pretend to record *all* his sayings and instructions. Comp. John 21:25. There is the highest reason to suppose that many of his sayings which are not recorded would be treasured up by those who heard them; would be transmitted to others; and would be regarded as a precious part of his instructions. Paul evidently addresses them as if they had heard this before, and were acquainted with it. Perhaps he had himself reminded them of it. This is one of the Redeemer's most precious sayings; and it seems even to have a peculiar value, from the fact that it is *not* recorded in the regular and professed histories of his life. It comes to us *recovered*, as it were, from the great mass of his unrecorded sayings; *rescued* from that oblivion to which it was hastening if left to mere tradition, and placed in permanent form in the sacred writings by the act of an apostle, who had never seen the Saviour before his crucifixion. It is a precious relic- a memento of the Saviour-and the effect of it is to make us regret that more of his words were not recovered from an uncertain tradition, and placed in a permanent form by an inspired penman. God, however, who knows what is requisite to guide us, has directed the words which are needful for the welfare of the church, and has preserved by inspiration the doctrines which are adapted to convert and bless man.

**JNTC: The words of the Lord Yeshua himself, “There is more happiness in giving than in receiving.”** These words of Yeshua’s appear nowhere else in the New Testament—that is, they are not found in the Gospels. There are many apocryphal New Testament books which contain numerous purported other sayings of Yeshua. See Lk 2:52N.

### **Acts 20:36**

**And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all.**

**Clarke: He kneeled down and prayed**—Kneeling is the proper posture of a supplicant, it argues at once both humility and submission; and he who prays to God should endeavor to feel the utmost measures of both.

### **Acts 20:37**

**And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him,**

**[And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him]** This demonstrates a normal relationship and mutual love between pastor and people.

**Fell on Paul's neck**—Leaned their heads against his shoulders, and kissed his neck. This was not an unusual custom in the east.

**Wept sore.** Wept much. Greek, "There was a great weeping of all."

### **Acts 20:38**

**Sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more. And they accompanied him unto the ship.**

Did see his face once more: 1 Timothy hints that he did end up going back once more.

They did try to respond to Paul's admonition as they did cast out the liars (Rev 2:2,4,6).

(John spent his final years a Bishop of Ephesus.)

**[that they should see his face no more]** There is no record of Paul ever seeing these converts again.

**Barnes: Sorrowing most of all,** etc. This was a most tender and affectionate parting scene. It can be more easily imagined than described. We may learn from it,

- (1.) that the parting of ministers and people is a most solemn event, and should be one of much tenderness and affection.
- (2.) The effect of true religion is to make the heart more tender; to make friendship more affectionate and sacred; and to unite more closely the bonds of love.
- (3.) Ministers of the gospel should be prepared to leave their people with the same consciousness of fidelity, and the same kindness and love, which Paul evinced. They should live such lives as to be able to look back upon their whole ministry as pure and disinterested; and as having been employed in guarding the flock, and in making known to them the whole counsel of God. So parting, they may part in peace. And so living, and acting, they will be prepared to give up their account with joy, and not with grief. May God grant to every minister the spirit which Paul evinced at Ephesus, and enable each one, when called to leave his people by death or otherwise, to do it with the same consciousness of fidelity which Paul evinced, when he left his people to see their face no more!

**Spurgeon:** If the sorrow is so great to part for a while from those whom we love, how much sharper will the pangs be of those who will forever be parted from their godly friends at the last day! How terrible will it be to be separated eternally! God grant it may not be our lot, for Jesus' sake.



