

Acts Chapter Twenty

Acts 20:1-5

And after the uproar had ceased, Paul sent for the disciples and when he had exhorted them and taken his leave of them, he departed to go to Macedonia. And when he had gone through those districts and had given them much exhortation, he came to Greece. And *there* he spent three months, and when a plot was formed against him by the Jews as he was about to set sail for Syria, he determined to return through Macedonia. And he was accompanied by Sopater of Berea, *the son* of Pyrrhus; and by Aristarchus and Secundus of the Thessalonians; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy; and Tychicus and Trophimus of Asia. But these had gone on ahead and were waiting for us at Troas.

- Virgil and Homer told their stories in the form of an epic journey. We see the same thing in Book of Acts.
- Paul revisits Athens and Rome—European churches from his third journey
- Rioting in Ephesus had convinced Paul to move on—he crosses Aegean Sea to Macedonia.
- Paul's extended time in this region may explain Rom 15:19 (Illyricum is due west of Thessalonica—famous Roman road—the Via Egnatia—went between these two cities. Illyricum is modern day Albania.
- People named are all believers who had come to Christ under ministry of Paul. They became missionaries as well....multiplied effect
- Us—indicates Luke is still with Paul at this point

Acts 20:6-12

And we sailed from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread, and came to them at Troas within five days; and there we stayed seven days.

And on the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul *began* talking to them, intending to depart the next day, and he prolonged his message until midnight. And there were many lamps in the upper room where we were gathered together. And there was a certain young man named Eutychus sitting on the window sill, sinking into a deep sleep; and as Paul kept on talking, he was overcome by sleep and fell down from the third floor, and was picked up dead. But Paul went down and fell upon him and after embracing him, he said, "Do not be troubled, for his life is in him." And when he had gone *back*, and had broken the bread and eaten, he talked with them a long while, until daybreak, and so departed. And they took away the boy alive, and were greatly comforted.

- Trip from Philippi to Troas can take place in about an hour today
- Came together on the first day of the week—NT pattern—I Cor 16:2
- Sabbath day celebrated by Jews—Jesus was still dead on that day
- Paul was going to leave the next day—so he taught till midnight...and then after accident—till dawn.
- Fell upon him—like Elijah—I Kings 17:21
- Do not be troubled—spoke/acted on faith
- Resurrection takes place

Acts 20:13-16

But we, going ahead to the ship, set sail for Assos, intending from there to take Paul on board; for thus he had arranged it, intending himself to go by land. And when he met us at Assos, we took him on board and came to Mitylene. And sailing from there, we arrived the following day opposite Chios; and the next day we crossed over to Samos; and the day following we came to Miletus. For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus in order that he might not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hurrying to be in Jerusalem, if possible, on the day of Pentecost.

- Paul's team travels by ship—Paul joins them on foot
- He stops at Miletus—a port for Ephesus—and because he is in a hurry—asks elders from Ephesus to meet him there. He is not in Miletus to preach—but to say farewell.
- They were in Philippi for Passover—wants to be in Jerusalem by Pentecost (roughly 2 weeks have passed since Passover at this point).

Acts 20:17-21

And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders of the church. And when they had come to him, he said to them,

“You yourselves know, from the first day that I set foot in Asia, how I was with you the whole time, serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials which came upon me through the plots of the Jews; how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly and from house to house, solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

- Elders walk 36 miles to meet with Paul
- Paul uses himself as an example of following Christ. He is assured in himself that he has modeled Christ well to this region.

- He emphasizes to them the significant spiritual investment he has made on their behalf. He kept nothing back that was profitable.
- Philippians 4:9
- Teaching...from house to house—since they lacked a central location—they were organized as house churches—probably an elder oversaw each location.
- Most of the time in Acts we observe Paul as apostle/evangelist/teacher-----here we view him as apostle/pastor/teacher
- This is the only Pauline speech delivered to Christians that Luke has recorded—parallels his epistles.

Acts 20:22-26

“And now, behold, bound in spirit, I am on my way to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit solemnly testifies to me in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions await me. “But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, in order that I may finish my course, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God. “And now, behold, I know that all of you, among whom I went about preaching the kingdom, will see my face no more. “Therefore I testify to you this day, that I am innocent of the blood of all men.

- Not knowing what will happen to me—uncertainty did not hinder his forward movement for the Kingdom (Ps 16:8)
- Apparently received numerous prophetic warnings
- Does not consider his life as dear to himself—He realizes his life is not his own—he has been bought with a price
- In Acts 16—forbidden to preach in Asia—now led by the Spirit where suffering awaits.
- He preached a gospel worth dying for.
- Does not anticipate seeing them again
- He has a clear conscience

Acts 20:27-28

“For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God. “Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

- In school of Tyrannus—teaching several hours per day—6 days a week=approximately 1500 hours of training.

- Whole purpose—a plan carried out step by step
- Be on guard for yourselves—take heed/pay attention to your own life—keep a high standard for the sake of holiness
- He is giving instruction to the leaders concerning their call to be overseers
- He gives the task to a group—rather than an individual
- Feed God's people—Lead God's people—Protect God's people

Acts 20:29-31

“I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. “Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears.

- After Paul leaves—warfare may move from blatant/external to deception/infiltration
- To draw away disciples after them—motivation: gain a following
- When warned of danger from among themselves—did they have the same response as disciples who said 'not me Lord'?
- He calls elders to be alert 2 times in this chapter
- Paul asks them to have the same concern for the flock that he did.

Acts 20:32-38

“And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build *you* up and to give *you* the inheritance among all those who are sanctified. “I have coveted no one’s silver or gold or clothes. “You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my *own* needs and to the men who were with me. “In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”

And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. And they *began* to weep aloud and embraced Paul, and repeatedly kissed him, grieving especially over the word which he had spoken, that they should see his face no more. And they were accompanying him to the ship.

- I commend you to God—only God can build the church up and give her an inheritance
- He assures them that he was in it for love and not financial gain

- Paul has modeled for them a way of self-less servanthood
- This was an act of warfare in a location dominated by the spiritual stronghold of mammon
- He does not anticipate a return to Ephesus—Rom 15:14-29
- Vs 35—never mentioned in any of the gospels—it is implied in Matt 10:8—consider: John 21:25
- In Ephesus—his lifestyle matched his message
- Consider how this church is viewed in Rev 2:4
- He knelt down and prayed—he lowered himself in their presence—in humility—to be led by the Holy Spirit

Acts Chapter Twenty—Workbook

Key Words:

Harmonize:

Read Romans 15

Dig:

- 1) What does Paul try to leave in every location where he ministers?
- 2) Many of Paul's journeys mention some orientation around the feast days. What part of his Jewish background does Paul still seem to participate in?
- 3) Read Romans 15:23-29. What else do you learn about this third missionary journey?
- 4) What is Paul's reaction to the plot of the Jews?
- 5) When he stops in Troas—two unusual things take place. What are they?
- 6) The distance between Ephesus and Miletus is around 50 miles. What request does Paul make of the Ephesian elders at this point?
- 7) What two actions are necessary as we respond to the gospel?
- 8) Why is Paul going toward Jerusalem?
- 9) How does Paul demonstrate reliance on the Holy Spirit?

10) What does Paul see as his life's work and calling?

11) What reason does Paul give for being a tentmaker as he ministered in Ephesus?

Discuss:

- 1) What are the benefits and drawbacks of functioning with ministry partners?
- 2) If a church is warned of spiritual conflict on the horizon (vs 29-30)—what is the best response to make? (read Rev 2:1-7 in light of this discussion)
- 3) How does church leadership guard the body, without controlling?
- 4) Ephesian elders are told to "be on guard for yourselves..." They were warned that trouble was coming from within. What effect will this kind of warning have on their love relationships?

Point of Prayer:

Pray for someone you believe is in spiritual danger.

Integrate:

What other scriptures come to mind as you read this chapter?

Application:

- 1) If you had one key truth to pass on to someone about Jesus—what would it be?
- 2) When do you find yourself most in need of encouragement?
- 3) Who is someone that is a great source of encouragement to you?
- 4) When was the last time you cried? What happened?
- 5) Who has served as a spiritual parent/mentor to you? How did this come about?
- 6) Who is the hardest person you have ever had to say goodbye to? Why?
- 7) Have you ever been warned of danger ahead of time? How did this effect your planning? Choices?
- 8) Whose spiritual walk have you cried over?