

ACTS 39 – **What Leading Looks Like - Acts 20:13-38**

Well - **last message** - after **teaching** all night  
& bringing a young **Metaphor** named **Eutychus** back to life  
after **falling asleep** in church (see last wk's msg) . . .

The **Apostle Paul** was leaving **Troas** for Jerusalem  
& **Vs's 13-15** of **Acts 20** get that **Voyage** started for us

**& Acts 20:16 says (esv)**

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

It's **NOT** that Paul **didn't WANT** to spend more time **Ephesus**

It's just that he **KNEW** if he went **back** there  
he'd **never** make it to **Jerusalem** in time for **Pentecost**

At **this point** - it had been at least **25 YEARS** since  
the **Day of Pentecost** in **Acts Ch 2** & the **BIRTH** of the **NT** church

& **Paul** was anxious to **get back to** Jerusalem for **THIS Pentecost**  
to **share** what God had **done** on this **3rd Missionary** Journey  
& to **bring** all the **MONEY** he'd **collected** from Gentile Churches

& so - Paul's **headed back** to Jerusalem - but **the ship** has to pull  
into **port** at **Miletus** - which was only **30 MI** from Ephesus

Paul **still felt** he couldn't **go BACK** into Ephesus

& so **instead** - he's going to **call the ELDERS** of the church  
to come **meet him** in Miletus, in order to **say goodbye**

& in this Emotional goodbye - we find possibly;  
the greatest LEADERSHIP TESTIMONY - &  
the greatest LEADERSHIP CHARGE - in the Bible

## Let's Pray

---

---

This is a LARGE text - & Chocked Full of great truths  
John MacArthur Preached SEVEN Msgs on just THIS text

But we're going to break it down into just TWO major sections

- 1) Paul's LEADERSHIP TESTIMONY
- 2) Paul's LEADERSHIP CHARGE to those who CARE for the Church

& I promise you - God will MEET YOU here - if you'll LET HIM

We'll start in Acts 20:17 (esv)

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

So the boat had stopped at Miletus - Just 30 mi's from Ephesus  
& Paul calls for the Elders to walk the 30 mi's to meet with him

& it's important to see - there was a GROUP of elders  
who were already in place & leading the church at Ephesus

These ELDERS (called OVERSEERS in V.28) are the group  
who SHARE the Leading & the Responsibility of the Church  
Just like today, in this church

& when the ELDERS arrived - Paul began, NOT with instruction,  
but with the TESTIMONY OF his Own LIFE Among them

The **FIRST thing** Paul holds up to them is his own **CHARACTER**,  
His **INTEGRITY**, & his **COMMITMENT** to the Lord

**Acts 20:18-19 (esv)**

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

**FIRST** of all - you **KNOW** how I lived - as an **EXAMPLE** to you  
from the **FIRST DAY** I was with you

**You KNOW how I SERVED the LORD**

With all **Humility** - - With **Tears** - - With **Trials**

***Hey, Dave, Can I be a leader in the church?  
I think I'd like some of that “position & influence”***

**NO**, you **can't** be a leader . . . because you **DON'T get it**

When a **person serves**  
with **NO regard** for themselves - **THAT'S** Humility

When a **person serves**  
Shedding **TEARS** for those **they're serving**

When a **person serves IN** the **MIDST**  
of the **Trials & Difficulties** that **COME** in the Ministry

Now, **you're looking** at Someone God has **CALLED** to **LEAD**  
In **HUMILITY** - With **TEARS** - In **TRIALS**

**THAT** is the Example **Paul sets**  
for all those **CALLED to SERVE** the Flock of God

& it's not only his **SERVANT'S** heart - but there's **something else** . . .  
**NOT ONLY** did Paul serve - In **HUMILITY** - **TEARS** - & **TRIALS**

**But Acts 20:20 says (esv)**

*20 how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you in public and from house to house,*

Well - this **may explain why** Paul was Serving in **TEARS** & in **TRIALS**

**The NLT says**

*20 I never shrank back from telling you what you needed to hear, either publicly or in your homes.*

**Guys - after a WHILE - the Elders of the church KNOW 2 things:**

- 1) They know what you **WANT** to hear
- 2) They know what you **NEED** to hear

& **Paul says** - I **never Shrank** back  
from **telling** you what you **NEED** to hear

---

& now - Pls **LISTEN** Carefully - **THIS** is what they **NEEDED** to Hear  
THIS is what Paul - ***NEVER shrank back from telling them . . .***

**Acts 20:21 (esv)**

*21 testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.*

**the Greek** word for **TESTIFYING** here  
can be **translated** TO **DECLARE** - or TO **WARN**

**This is an INTENSE appeal to TWO things;**

- 1) **REPENTANCE** *from* Sin & *to* God
- 2) **FAITH** in our Lord Jesus Christ

& these are the **SAME two things**  
that we make an **Intense Appeal** to - **TODAY**

**REPENTANCE** means to **Turn FROM** your sin  
& **Turn TOWARD** God - it's an **ACTION** word (*something you DO*)  
It involves **THROWING OFF** your sin - & **EMBRACING GOD**

& **then** - **putting your FAITH** in Jesus Christ **MEANS** . . .  
**TRUSTING** Him **ALONE** - for ALL things in this Life & for Eternity  
**AND** - **FOLLOWING** Him **ALONE** as **LORD**

---

These are the **HALLMARKS** of the **Message** of God  
& How **OFTEN** have **we said** to you in **THIS** church

**You NEED to Hear Two things**

- 1) **REPENT** of your sin - **turn** from it & turn to God
- 2) **PUT** your Full & Complete **FAITH** in Jesus Christ -  
**Trusting Him Alone, & Following Him Alone**

We got No **FANCY entertainment** for you  
We got No **EAR TICKLING self-improvement** ideas

**There are TWO things that you NEED to HEAR;**

- 1) **REPENT** of your Sin
- 2) Put your **FULL FAITH** in Jesus Christ **ALONE**

& guys - I **KNOW** that more people would **stay** at this church  
if **we would** just **GIVE** them what **THEY WANT**  
**instead** of what they **NEED**

But when I read this passage - & apply it to what we do here in Nuevo

I am So AT PEACE with God - & I am so GRATEFUL that He has given us the CALL & the ABILITY to DO JUST THIS in our town

---

---

Now Paul's gonna Make a Commitment - to FINISH his race well  
*no giving in, no giving up, no turning back*

Paul Died With Christ a long time BEFORE this day  
His life is NOT his OWN - & so he has NO CONCERN for it

### Acts 20:22-24 (esv)

*22 And now, behold, I am going to Jerusalem, constrained by the Spirit, not knowing what will happen to me there,*

*23 except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me.*

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

THAT is what it looks like - to be a SHEPHERD, a LEADER,  
an OVERSEER of the Flock of God

### Look at how the NLT translates Vs 24

*24 But my life is worth nothing to me unless I use it for finishing the work assigned me by the Lord Jesus . . .*

Paul is CONSTRAINED by the Spirit - to get to Jerusalem  
Even Tho the Spirit has Revealed JAIL & Suffering AWAIT Him

NKJV says - *But none of these things move me*

**Why?** - Because my life is **WORTHLESS** - **unless** I use it to **FINISH** the **Work Assigned** me by the Lord **Jesus**

Paul's **Circumstances** **ARE NOT** Driving Him, **Anywhere**, or **Anyway**  
The **CALL** of the **LORD** is the **ONLY THING** Driving Him

& so he will **ALWAYS Serve God** - **IN Season & OUT of Season**  
In **Abounding & Abasing** - **Having Plenty** or **Suffering NEED**

**if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received  
from the Lord Jesus**

**THAT** is what it Takes to **LEAD & CARE** for God's **FLOCK**

---

& so, **because** of what the **Holy Spirit** has **shown him**  
**Paul knows** he will **never see** these men again

But **watch** very closely - **WHY** Paul has **PEACE** about **leaving** them

**Acts 20:25-27 (esv)**

***25 And now, behold, I know that none of you among whom I have gone about proclaiming the kingdom will see my face again.***

***26 Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all of you,***

***27 for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God.***

In **Eze Ch 33** - God tells Ezekiel to put a **WATCHMAN** on the **WALL**  
& for him to **sound the WARNING** of Impending **Danger**

& **IF** he **sounds** the Warning **Well** - then **the blood** of those **lost**  
would **not be held** against him

**But Eze 33:6 says (NLT)**

***6 But if the watchman sees the enemy coming and doesn't sound the alarm to warn the people, he is responsible for their captivity. They will die in their sins, but I will hold the watchman responsible for their deaths.***

Paul knew he was the **WATCHMAN** - & **HE** was **Responsible**

& in an **infinitely minuscule** way by comparison to Paul  
I **KNOW** that I am the **WATCHMAN** - & I am **Responsible**

& Paul **KNEW** - that if he failed to Declare the **WHOLE COUNSEL**  
of God - that God would Hold **HIM** responsible

& I **KNOW** - that if I **FAIL** to Declare the **WHOLE COUNSEL** of God  
God will hold **ME RESPONSIBLE**

God will **NOT** hold me responsible  
if you **LEAVE** here - & Choose to Die in your Sins

But He **WILL** hold me responsible - if I **DON'T WARN** You  
& so **PLEASE** - - - Be **WARNED**

**REPENT** - & **Put your FAITH** in the Lord Jesus Christ, Alone

---

---

---

& **now** - we turn to the **2nd half** of the message

Here - **Paul changes** - From His Own **TESTIMONY**  
to his **CHARGE** to the **OVERSEERS** of the church

**Acts 20:28 (esv)** → →

**Acts 20:28 (esv)**

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

**FIRST thing Paul says - *Pay careful attention to YOURSELF***

Pay careful attention to your **OWN spiritual Walk**

Where are **YOU** with God - are **YOU** walking with Him every day  
is He **LORD** over **EVERY area** of **YOUR** Life

**First & Foremost** - Pay **careful attention** to your **OWN life**

**THEN** (v.28) - Paul says - ***Pay careful attention to THE FLOCK, in which the Holy Spirit has made you OVERSEERS***

This word **OVERSEER** here describes the **ROLE of the Elders**  
it can also be translated - **GUARDIAN**

& **If** the Holy Spirit has made you a **SHEPHERD** - a **GUARDIAN**  
**then** by all means - Pay **careful ATTENTION** to that

**Because** you have been called - ***to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood (the blood of Christ)***

---

**Let me ask** you a question?

**How WELL** do you think the **Secret Service** watches over  
the **Children** of the **President** of the **United States**

**How serious** a **job** do you **think** that is?

If the **Secret Service** perceives a **THREAT** around the children  
of the **President** - **How** do you think they **handle** that threat ?

& How much **BIGGER**, & how much **MORE IMPORTANT**  
is **GOD** - than the **President** of the U.S.?

& **WHO** has been **CHARGED** w/ watching over the **Children of GOD**?  
The **ELDERS** of the Church !!

& how **SERIOUS** do you think the **ELDERS** of the church  
should take their job as **OVERSEERS** & **GUARDIANS** ?

---

---

**They should** take their Jobs **VERY Serious** - - - **WHY?**

**Why** are the **Elders** called to **GIVE THEIR LIVES**  
to **Watch over** & **Protect** God's Children ?

**Because Paul says in Acts 20:29 (esv)**

***29 I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in  
among you, not sparing the flock;***

The **First reason** we are called to this **Sacrificial Level of Care**  
is because **FIERCE WOLVES** will come in - not sparing the Flock

This is **Danger** coming in from **the Outside**  
& I promise you - from watching this happen for well over 20 years

These **FIERCE WOLVES** Never Come in wearing a **T-Shirt** & saying  
***"I'm a Wolf looking to destroy God's children"***

Instead - what does their **T-Shirt** say ?  
***"I'm just a good ol' Christian, I have ALL good intentions"***

& then they just "**saddle-up**" to the weakest sheep  
& for **as long** as we **let 'em** - they bring **destruction** into the church

---

---

& how we wish it were **ONLY** the Wolves coming in from outside that we were charged with protecting God's Flock from

**Acts 20:30 (esv)**

***30 and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them.***

Now - for every Wolf I've seen come in from the outside I've seen TWO rise up from the INSIDE

& in my experience - The Devil uses Those that RISE UP from the Inside - to do MORE long term Damage to the Flock

These are people who (almost always) just begin to think more highly of themselves than they ought

THEY know how things really SHOULD be Done  
THEY know what the people really SHOULD be Hearing  
THEY know the focus really SHOULD be on THEM

& so they begin to speak their twisted thoughts  
& they get people to sit at their feet & look up to them

& they have only ONE desire - it's right here at the end of v.30  
***"to draw away the disciples after them."***

ALL they want is for God's Children to follow THEM  
They just want to be looked up to, admired, respected

But to do it - they have to twist things  
in order to get people to Look at THEM - & Follow THEM

& THESE people do the vast Majority of all damage in the church  
& The Devil is Eternally Grateful to them - for their assistance

---

---

& Guys - WE are Commissioned BY GOD  
to PROTECT HIS CHILDREN - From THAT

Which means we MUST DEAL WITH the Wolves that come in  
AND those that rise up from the INSIDE

& here's how you know the Devil's doing his damage  
It's one word - GOSSIP

Oh, did you hear what those BAD leaders did to *poor old so-&-so*

You know, he seems to be a pretty decent guy  
& HE SAID the leaders DID THIS to him  
& HE SAID the Leaders SAID THAT to him

& certainly he wouldn't Make THAT Up  
Maybe we should Go LISTEN to him some MORE

Please - DON'T Get taken out by that

THANK Mike Taylor
-------------------

---

---

Let me give you a QUOTE by Dr Harry Ironside from his msg  
on THIS text from Moody Church, Chicago in the 1930's

## H.A. IRONSIDE

*It has been one of Satan's favorite methods of disrupting the peace of the saints of God, to raise up in their midst men, perhaps truly converted to God, but men who in large measure were self-seeking; and these men endeavored to force upon the saints of God certain teachings in order to make division in God's house, and then gather a group around themselves with the object of attaining personal recognition and support.*

Guys - We, as a church, have survived  
a CONSTANT BARRAGE of these TYPE of Attacks

Just last Sunday - in the midst of a Memorial Service for Mark Langevin - who was outspokenly AGAINST this sort of thing

In the midst of us celebrating Mark's life we had to call the police to help stop this Exact Type of Damage being done right here

This is SERIOUS Business - & The POINT is this . . .

WE, as OVERSEERS of this Flock - are CHARGED BY GOD to DO SOMETHING about people like this in the church

IF we ALLOW them to continue to do their damage - then WE will have to Answer to GOD

& so we are COMMITTED to watching over God's children With all HUMILITY, with TEARS, & with TRIALS

---

& so - We say - with the Apostle PAUL

Acts 20:31 (esv)

***31 Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish everyone with tears.***

I know - some of you get tired of me WARNING & WARNING you - about the dangers that exist INSIDE the Church

But the RISKS are HIGH - & the Consequences are ETERNAL & I am BOUND by God - to ADMONISH You & WARN You

---

But I don't COMMEND you to MYSELF - or for My Benefit

Because this is about GOD, & about His Word - which are  
the only things that can TRULY SAVE you & build you up

**Acts 20:32 (esv)**

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

Man - TAKE HOLD of GOD  
TAKE HOLD of the Word of His GRACE  
TAKE HOLD of HIM Alone !!

Be BUILT UP in Your Relationship with the Lord  
Make Sure you HEAR direct from His Word  
Make Sure you APPLY IT to your Life

& THEN - you will SEE THRU all these schemes & devices

Be Grounded in your OWN relationship with God  
& in His Word alone

& DO NOT BE MOVED by these  
constant attempts of the enemy to throw you off track

***WILL YOU DO IT ??***

---

---

---

& now - it seems Paul is about to finish - when he remembers  
one other critical aspect of Ministry - - - MONEY !!

**Acts 20:33-35 (esv) → →**

**Acts 20:33-35 (esv)**

**33 I coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel.**

**34 You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my necessities and to those who were with me.**

**35 In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' "**

It's **generally agreed** - the **reason** Paul lived (*at times*)  
by **working** to **support** himself **WHILE** starting **new churches**

is to **combat** the **tendency** of the day for the **Religious Leaders**  
to **actually** be **more interested** in the people's **money**  
**than** in their **spiritual condition**

**Can you IMAGINE that** - **Religious Leaders** more interested  
in people's **money** - than in the **people** themselves ??  
(*we've never heard of such a thing, have we*)

Actually - this has been a **HUGE problem** since the **1st Century**  
& it is still a **HUGE problem** today

& it is **NOT just** an **American Culture** problem  
it is a **SIN NATURE** problem

& every **Elder/Leader** who begins to be **supported** by the church  
must be **constantly monitoring** this **PIT-FALL** in the ministry

Keep your <b><u>HANDS OFF</u></b> God's <b><u>MONEY</u></b> , God's <b><u>WOMEN</u></b> , & God's <b><u>GLORY</u></b>
--

Now - **of all** the **Spiritual Battles** we've had **here** in Nuevo  
the **Struggle** of "***Excess Money***" has **never been** one of them

& so in **some ways** - we can **thank God** for that

But the **POINT is** - Paul showed us by **example** - how to live  
as **Jesus** lived & taught - '***It's more blessed to give than receive***'

& we will always have **SAFE GUARDS** here - to make sure  
we are allowing **GOD** to control His money - & **NOT** us

---

---

& so **now** - with the **TESTIMONY** & the **CHARGE** both delivered  
**Paul** - Finally - says his **goodbye's**

### **Acts 20:36-38 (esv)**

***36 And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all.***

***37 And there was much weeping on the part of all; they embraced Paul and kissed him,***

***38 being sorrowful most of all because of the word he had spoken, that they would not see his face again. And they accompanied him to the ship.***

What an **incredible Picture** for a Church **Leader**

**So often**, when a **Pastor leaves** a church  
it's the **result of conflict**, or **dissention**

**Sadly** - Sooo **many pastors** - after **pouring their lives** out  
**End up sneaking** out of town **in the night** . . .  
& **very often** . . . **NEVER returning** to the ministry

But **not so** with **Paul** & the **Ephesian Church**

He had LIVED among them - STRAIGHT & NARROW  
He had GIVEN them God's Word - STRAIGHT & NARROW

& POURING his life into them - resulted in the  
Greatest Ministry Relationship any of us could ever hope for

---

THAT - is what LEADING Looks Like !!

If you are a Christian LEADER - THIS is what it really LOOKS LIKE  
If you lead your Family, your Kids  
your Sunday school class  
your Discipleship Group  
or your Ministry . . . THIS is what it looks like

Lead Well - Set the Example - PROTECT the Sheep  
Be a WATCHMAN on the Wall

& Remember - What God has made you Responsible For  
He will HOLD you Responsible For

---

If THAT - Or anything Else I've said - Brings up the NEED  
for you to REPENT & Put your FAITH in Jesus Christ

Then I'd like to give you the chance to DO THAT

The Prayer Counselors are going to come down front here  
& we're going to Pray

& I'd ask you to come talk to them - & DON'T shoot the Breeze  
REPENT of your Sin - & Put your FULL FAITH in Jesus Christ

Lets Pray