

Pastor Lance Ainsworth

Acts 20:1-12

MESSAGE NOTES

Thursday, July 23

Sunday, July 26

Introduction:

Acts 20:17-38

notes

¹⁷From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders (presbyteros) of the church. ¹⁸And 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, ¹⁹serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials which came upon me through the plots of the Jews; ²⁰how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly and from house to house, ²¹solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. ²²And now, behold, bound by the Spirit, I am on my way to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there, ²³except that the Holy Spirit solemnly testifies to me in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions await me. ²⁴But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, so 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. ²⁵"And now, behold, I know that all of you, among whom I went about preaching the kingdom, will no longer see my face. ²⁶Therefore, I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. ²⁷For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God.

Apostle Paul's Resume:

- Dwelt among the people.
- Served with humility.
- Preaching (declaring) and Teaching.
- Able to reach all audiences with the gospel.
- Open to new opportunities to finish my race well.

Leadership by example is not a method; it's the method.

²⁸Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, (episkopos) to shepherd (poimen) the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. ²⁹I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock;

³⁰and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. ³¹Therefore be on alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears. ³²And 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.

³³I have coveted no one's silver or gold or clothes.

³⁴You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my own needs and to the men who were with me. ³⁵In 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.'" ³⁶When he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. ³⁷And they began to weep aloud and embraced Paul, and repeatedly kissed him, ³⁸grieving especially over the word which he had spoken, that they would not see his face again. And they were accompanying him to the ship.

Elders: presbyteros - presbyter, spiritually mature.

Overseers: episkopos - episcopal, bishop, sound doctrine, responsibility

Shepherd: poimen - pastor, care, guide, protect.

Godly Leaders:

Model the message. (v.18-27)

Guard themselves before they guard others. (v.28)

Shepherd what belongs to God. (v.28)

Finish well. (v.32-38)

Who is watching my life, and what example am I setting?

Paul's former resume:

Pharisee

Hebrew of Hebrews, self-righteous, and legalistic.

Oppressor of the church, blasphemer, and persecutor.

Chief of sinners.

notes

GROUP DISCUSSION

Book of Acts: From Belief to Boldness
GateWay Church of Visalia, Pastor Lance Ainsworth
Acts 20:17-38, July 23rd & 26th, 2026
Leadership by example.

Prayer Requests:

Group Discussion: How is your weekly Bible reading going? What helps or hinders you?

Read Aloud: Acts 20:17-38

1. What stands out to you most about Paul's farewell speech to the Ephesian elders? Why do you think Paul focused more on his example than on his accomplishments?
2. Paul reminds the elders that they had watched his life. Why is character more influential than competence? Which area of Paul's example challenges you the most?
3. Paul says he did not hesitate to declare "the whole purpose of God." Why is it tempting to avoid difficult biblical truths today? What does faithful leadership look like in your home, workplace, ministry, or friendships?
4. Paul says, "I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, so that I may finish my course..." (v. 24). What does finishing well mean to you? If someone observed your life for the next six months, what would they learn about following Jesus?