

ACTS 20:17- 38 "COMMITMENT"

Paul, knowing he was scheduled to leave the next day - he decides to feed the believers the **whole enchilada** in a single sermon. 6 hours... 9 And in a window sat a certain young man named Eutychus, Eutychus had probably put in a full days work... the room was hazy with smoke, it was hot, oxygen deprived... **THE HYPNOTIC FLICKERING OF THE FLAMES DID THEIR WORK.** slowly Eutychus goes out like a light, then goes out the window like a rock!

HE DIES, PAUL EMBRACES HIM AND SEEING HIS LIFELESS BODY RECEIVE LIFE FROM JESUS THE GIVER OF LIFE.

Dearest Church don't ignore the lessons. Those who fall asleep spiritually set themselves up for a serious fall. **We must wake up! Hear the alarm sounding! If you are asleep in the light... wake up and live! May you fall on those who are asleep and call them back to life!**

Ephesians 5:14 Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light.

Remember when you are discouraged the Rodents of life cannot live in the altitude of your hope and worship. **PRAY**

Let's create some context and setting for today's passages, The Apostle Paul had embarked on his long-anticipated return to Jerusalem. Several decades had passed since his leaving, and he wanted to be home with the mother church for Pentecost. He was a passenger on a merchant ship slowly making its way down the Aegean toward the Mediterranean, stopping at various centers of trade. As the Lord would have it, the freighter stopped in Miletus, which was very close to Ephesus, a layover that lasted for several days. Though he had not planned on this delay, Paul made use of it and sent word requesting the Ephesian elders

to come meet him for a final chat. Paul knew he would never see them again. R Kent Hughes

Acts 20 verse 17 From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church. **18** And when they had come to him, he said to them: **It has been rightly said that one of the greatest abilities in the kingdom of God is availability.** The elders had jobs. **They had family obligations. They had responsibilities. But when Paul called, they came.**

The key to ministry is availability. No pay but the benefits are out of this world!

What follows is the only recorded speech Luke records from Paul.

Again verse 18 And when they had come to him, he said to them: “You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you,

PAUL HAD AN UNSHAKABLE COMMITMENT TO GOD AND HIS PEOPLE. Commitment means different things to different people. Consider the young man who waxed eloquent as he poured out his heart’s devotion in a letter of grief to the girl of his dreams, saying, “My dear, I would climb the highest mountain, swim the widest stream, cross the burning desert, die at the stake for you. **P.S. I will see you on Saturday if it doesn’t rain.”**

Commitment “The ability to carry out a good resolve long after the mood in which it was made has left” He finished well and heard the words he longed to hear... Well done thou good and FAITHFUL servant!


Verse 19 serving the Lord with all humility, with many tears and trials which happened to me by the plotting of the Jews;

Paul was always committed to sharing God’s Word **20** how I kept back

nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house, *implies that the Ephesian church, lacking any central building, was organized logically in house-churches. Probably, each elder had charge over a particular house-church.*

21 testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. Also Paul was committed to sacrifice everything to do the will of God... even to the point of losing his own life. 22 And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, Completely fearless, Continually cheerful, and Constantly in trouble. That was Paul! What would await him in Jerusalem? Probably trouble. "Chains and tribulation". Maybe given words of knowledge or just common sense.


23 except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me. 24 But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish *"my race"* with joy, Paul says *"my race"* - he had his race to run, we have our own - but God calls us to finish it with joy.

 **Matthew 10:28** And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the **soul**. But rather fear Him who is able to **destroy** both **soul** and body **in hell**. **Jesus taught, Paul caught.**

and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

Psalm 16:8 Paul could sing this Psalm from his heart: *I have set the Lord always before me; because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved.*


25 "And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, will see my face no more. (They never did see him again. He was to be beheaded by Nero)



This same commitment was beautifully evident in the life of James Calvert, a young pioneer missionary to the cannibals of the Fiji Islands. En route the ship captain, a humane man, tried to dissuade him, finally crying in desperation, "You will lose your life and the lives of those with you if you go among such savages." Calvert calmly replied, "We died before we came."

26 Therefore I testify to you this day that I *am* innocent of the blood of all *men*. 27 For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God. **It Takes The Whole Bible To Make A Whole Christian!**

In verse 26 Paul notes that he is **"innocent of the blood of all *men*."**
 Watchmen... our job to blow the trumpet...




Ezekiel 3 18 When I say to the wicked, 'You shall surely die,' and you give him no warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life, that same wicked *man* shall die in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at your hand. **19 Yet, if you warn the wicked,** and he does not turn from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered your soul.

Ezekiel 33 verse 1 Once again a message came to me from the Lord: **2** "Son of man, give your people this message: 'When I bring an army against a country, the people of that land choose one of their

own to be a watchman. **3** When the watchman sees the enemy coming, he sounds the alarm to warn the people. **4** Then if those who hear the alarm refuse to take action, it is their own fault if they die. **5** They heard the alarm but ignored it, so the responsibility is theirs. If they had listened to the warning, they could have saved their lives. **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.'

Watchmen... our job to blow the trumpet... Remember their response is not our responsibility... our responsibility is the "warn them".

We must say that those preachers who deliberately fail to **declare the whole counsel of God** *are guilty of the blood of all men.*

 The preacher who preaches what his audience wants to hear, and not **the whole counsel of God**, hurts both his audience and himself and will be judged by our King accordingly.

His commitment gave Paul a clear conscience! Verse 28 Therefore take heed to yourselves and to 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. Use this verse with your Jehovah's Witness friends who doubt the divinity of Jesus Christ. It is irrefutable that if God purchased the church with His own blood, then Jesus—the One who gave His blood—must be God.

FIRST... TAKE HEED TO YOURSELVES... Work on the log in your own eyes before you pull the splinter out of the flock's eyes. Take heed to yourself first. Make sure you're cultivating a personal devotional life—that you're a man or a woman of prayer. Make sure you're one who is engaged in consistent communion with the Lord personally. Take heed to yourself.

C.S. Lewis wrote, "The true Christian's nostril is to be continually attentive to the inner cesspool." We must never suppose that we have risen above some particular sin or have attained immunity to various temptations but must always be on our guard.

LUKE ADDS... AND TO THE FLOCK... God wants to work in you before He will work through you. A Shepherd's job is to take care of the sheep... again by feeding them, protecting them, bringing healing to them. Take care of the flock!

As Stott notes, "The first idea behind being a shepherd is **feeding** God's people. "They are to *be shepherds* of God's church, *poimaino* meaning in general to **tend** a flock and in particular *to lead a flock to pasture and so to feed it*. This is the first duty of shepherds." Courson adds, "The **only way the flock will grow, the only way the church will expand, is if we, as sheep, are being fed consistently and faithfully—for when sheep are fed properly, they will reproduce very naturally.**"

As we study through the New Testament we will see that "**elder**," "**pastor**," and "**BISHOP**" are all interchangeable terms describing the same position. The Greek word translated "elder" doesn't speak of chronological years, but of spiritual maturity. Thus, "elder" describes the man. The Greek word translated "bishop" means "overseer." Thus "bishop" describes the ministry. The Greek word translated "pastor" means "feeder" or "shepherd." Thus, "pastor" describes the method.

29 For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. **30** Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after

themselves.

PERVERSE (*Diastrepho*) **THINGS...** "to distort, twist" (*dia*, "through," and *strepho*), is translated "to pervert"

Bringing division and dissension... If I was the Pastor... If I was an Elder here.

All kinds of "perverse" things. End result is we don't see them in fellowship again.

THERE ARE TWO CLASSES OF ENEMIES: EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL.

Wolves from without Courson "After I leave," said Paul, "wolves will move in." You can always recognize wolves because, rather than feed the flock, they'll fleece the flock. A wolf in sheep's clothing looks like a sheep, smells like a sheep, and may even bleat like a sheep. The only difference between a sheep and a wolf in sheep's clothing is their diet. Wolves eat sheep. And you can always identify a wolf because inevitably there will be sheep carcasses in his wake.

There are no fewer than six false teachers from Ephesus:

- 1) Hymeneus 1 Tim 1:20
- 2) Alexander 1 Tim 1:20
- 3) Phygellus 2 Tim 1:15
- 4) Hermogenes 2 Tim 1:15
- 5) Philetus 2 Tim 2:17
- 6) Diotrephes 3 John 9

from within While David was in the palace conducting the affairs of state, his son, Absalom, sat outside the gate saying to passersby, "David doesn't have time for you, does he? If I were on the throne, it would be different. Your needs would be met. Your voice would be heard." Ultimately, Absalom launched a full-scale rebellion against his father and drove him from the palace (see 2 Samuel 14–15).

31 Therefore watch, *Paul knew that spiritual attack would rise up among the church itself; we should be aware that Satan likes to attack through infiltration - so pastors must watch. It isn't enough to feed; the shepherd must also protect the sheep. Watch applies both to savage wolves that come in from the outside and to those who rise up from among yourselves.*

and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears. 32 "So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, HOW PAUL LOVED THEM BUT KNEW THEY BELONGED TO JESUS NOT HIM... SO ALL HE COULD DO IS COMMEND THEM TO GOD AND HIS WORD (GRACE) which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

word of His grace... GRACE and PEACE to you You will never know the peace of Christ until you have come to know His grace...

Grace is love that is on the house... and it comes through Jesus...

God's Riches At Christ's Expense GRACE IS EVERYTHING FOR NOTHING TO THOSE WHO DON'T DESERVE ANYTHING... EVERYTHING TO YOU AND ME!!! AMAZING GRACE

peace... The absence of war! We are no longer at war with the God who made us. Rest in your soul. SHALOM... Perfect contentment! [Ephesians 2:14](#) For He Himself is our peace!

GRACE is who God is and peace is the result of knowing Him

GRACE AND PEACE!!! When grace explodes in your heart? Peace!

Nothing can separate you from His love Peace!
things work together for good... ALL things... Peace!
begin a good work in you will finish it... Peace!

All
He who

33 I have coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. **I'm not in this for the \$ or fame...** 34 Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me. 35 I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" **Now that pithy saying is Biblical and it is true.**

Notice that Paul's last recorded words to the Ephesian leaders were a quotation from the Lord Jesus: "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Beautiful! **The supreme beatitude** - a quote from Jesus found nowhere else in Scripture. The passage reads, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Notice, it doesn't just promise a blessing, **but more blessing.** This is why it's called the supreme beatitude! If you want to be **"more blessed"** be a giver!

36 And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. 37 Then they all wept freely, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him, 38 sorrowing most of all for the words which he spoke, that they would see his face no more. And they accompanied him to the ship.

Michael W. Smith – Friends Lyrics

Packing up the dreams God planted
 In the fertile soil of you
 Can't believe the hopes he's granted
 Means a chapter in your life is through

But we'll keep you close as always
It won't even seem you've gone
Cause our hearts in big and small ways
Will keep the love that keeps us strong

And friends are friends forever
If the Lord's the Lord of them
And a friend will not say "Never"
Cause the welcome will not end
Though it's hard to let you go
In the Father's hands we know
That a lifetime's not too long
To live as friends

With the faith and love God's given
Springing from the hope we know
We will pray the joy you'll live in
Is the strength that now you show
But we'll keep you close as always
It won't even seem you've gone
Cause our hearts in big and small ways
Will keep the love that keeps us strong

PRAYER: "O God, help us to each fully understand how to know and serve you, how to be faithful no matter what the cost, how to remain on our guard against the enemies of truth and of our souls. May our commitment not be one merely of words, but of heart resolve and unswerving love for you. When the mood has left may we still have resolve to follow you.