

The Acts of the Apostles, Part 45: Kingdom Focus

Key Scripture: Acts 20:17-35

Now from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called the elders of the church to come to him. 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; 20 how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you in public and from house to house, 21 testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. 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. 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, 27 for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God. 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. 29 I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; 30 and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. 31 Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears. 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. 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.'"

❖ Context/ Background

➤ Goal Oriented

- Paul desires to be in Jerusalem by Pentecost.

❖ Trouble in the Text

➤ Paul prepares the Elders

- They need to be prepared to follow Christ and lead others without his presence.

❖ Acts 20:28-31

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❖ Acts 20:24

- 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.

❖ Trouble in the World

- Knowledge and Wisdom

- We **all know** that we will one day die, yet, most **act** as if we will live forever.

- Legacy

- Perhaps we need to live like we won't be around forever?
 - And prepare a legacy that will outlive us.

❖ Grace in the Text

- “Finish My Course”

- “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. 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, 27 for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God.” (Acts 20:24-27)

➤ Passing the Torch

- Paul is clear that his responsibility is over.
- Paul is clear that the responsibility to lead is theirs.
 - He reminds them
 - He encourages them
 - He prays with them

❖ Philippians 2:3

- “Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.”

❖ Grace in the World

- Today we have the privilege of the Holy Spirit’s influence and presence!
- Also, today, we have the privilege of having the Word of God speak to us!
- 1 Corinthians 11:1, “And you should imitate me, just as I imitate Christ.”
NLT
 - Proverbs 27:1, “Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring.”

❖ Application/ Take-away

- There are *very practical* ways to become Kingdom Focused as a church.
- First, humble yourself and become a disciple.
 - Recognize that you, just like everyone else, need to be fed regularly.
 - Second, take courage and be a discipler.
 - Recognize that you are expected to feed others, just as you have been fed yourself.

- Third, be bold and be an evangelist!
 - Share the Gospel message!
- Last, keep the cycle going!
 - This is a never ending work until the Lord takes you home.