

Series: The Acts of the Apostles: The End VIII

Text: Acts 20:17-38

HI: Leadership that's Christ-like is cross-like.

Title: *Last Words*

Hook: Famous last words

Date: 6.23.24

Purpose: To charge God's people to engage God's mission with fearlessness and selflessness.

FCF: Like the Ephesian elders, we are tempted with selfishness and cowardice, but God's grace builds us and keeps us for the sake of his name.

COR: Parting ways with those we love is a tearful enterprise. The gospel speaks to this, rooting us in the grace of God with a hope of future inheritance.

Witness of Christ [WC*]: The fearless selflessness of Christ on the cross not only gives us an example to follow but purchases our salvation. He fills us with his Spirit and calls his people to testify to the grace they have received.

Apologetic: A church family saved by grace is filled with grace-filled people. As God's people live in the truth, and declare the truth in word and deed, not shrinking from our responsibility as salt and light in a decaying and dark world, the Lord advances his kingdom.

Text Tone: Admonition

Preaching Voice: Prophetic

Form: Inductive

Call to Worship: Philippians 4:4

Benediction: Colossians 2:6-7

Outline:

I. Jesus builds his church when his word is proclaimed. (17-27)

A. Paul was fearless in the word.

B. Paul was selfless in the work.

II. God guards his people through the leaders he assigns. (28-38)

Christ-like leaders...

A. Stay focused on mission. (28)

B. Stay alert to wolves. (29-31)

C. Stay rooted in grace. (32)

D. Stay tuned to Christ. (33-35)

Main Idea:

Subject: How does Paul's example guide the mission of the Ephesian elders?

Complement: They must be fearless in the word and selfless in the work to care for Christ's flock.

Exegetical Idea: The Ephesian elders must take their cue from Paul to care for Christ's flock by being fearless in the word and selfless in the work.

Theological Idea: God leads his people through those who, like Christ, are fearless and selfless.

Homiletical Idea: Leadership that's Christ-like is cross-like.

Introduction:

[FIND PICS]

Karl Marx

Bob Marley

Winston Churchill

Frank Sinatra

READ Acts 20:17-38

¹⁷ 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. ²⁹I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; ³⁰and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. ³¹Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every 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 coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. ³⁴You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my necessities and to those who were with me. ³⁵In 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.' "

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

³⁷And there was much weeping on the part of all; they embraced Paul and kissed him, ³⁸being 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.

I. Jesus builds his church when his word is proclaimed. (17-27)

A. Paul was fearless in the word.

“Shrink” – to draw back, unwilling and uncertain to avoid responsibility

B. Paul was selfless in the work.

Cross-like = fearless + selfless

RE-READ Acts 20:28-35

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II. God guards his people through the leaders he assigns. (28-38)

"Elders" (v. 17), "pastor" (v. 28: "care"), "overseers" (v. 28).

Peter says this: So I exhort **the elders** among you...**shepherd** the flock of God that is among you, exercising **oversight**... 1 Peter 5:1, 2

Christ-like leaders...

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World: Control = Blessing

Jesus: Trust in God = Blessing

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