

## **Denied Privilege**

Acts 20:32–35

### **Context**

Paul is 30 miles from Ephesus.

These are his final words to pastors he disciplined for three years.

He knows he will not see them again.

This is leadership language spoken to influencers.

### **Big Idea**

Healthy leaders deny personal privilege so the gospel can advance and the weak can be strengthened.

#### **1. Commended to God and His Grace (v.32)**

“I commend you to God and to the word of His grace...”

Commend = entrust for provision and care.

Paul releases them to:

- God
- The Word
- The Gospel

Not their experience.

Not their independence.

Not their strategy.

Truth: The grace that saved you is the grace that sustains you.

If you move from grace to performance:

- Joy disappears
- Fear increases
- Pride or insecurity follows

Your inheritance is not success — it is Christ.

1 Peter 1:3–5 — an imperishable inheritance.

#### **2. Denied Financial Privilege (v.33–34)**

“I coveted no one’s silver or gold...”

Paul had influence.

He could have monetized the movement.

Instead, he worked to support himself and others.

Not because pastors shouldn’t be paid,

but because the gospel must never be hindered.

Principle: Lay down rights when love requires it.

### **3. Structure Your Life to Lift the Weak (v.35)**

“Work hard... help the weak... It is more blessed to give than to receive.”

Paul modeled generosity.

Strength is given to serve weakness.

Open hands move the mission forward.

Application: Your job is not secular if it fuels kingdom generosity.

Work becomes worship when its fruit strengthens the church.

If your income funds:

- Missions
- Church planting
- Counseling
- Food for the needy
- Discipleship

Then your work is kingdom strategy.

Colossians 3:23–24 — You are serving the Lord Christ.

### **The Gospel Motive**

Jesus was rich and became poor.

He was strong and became weak.

He gave His life so you could have one.

We give because He gave first.

If previous believers protected comfort, the gospel would not have reached you.

### **Final Challenge**

Structure your life so:

- Grace remains your foundation
- Privilege is surrendered
- The weak are strengthened
- The gospel advances

One day someone may say,

“The gospel reached me because they didn’t live for themselves.”