

Pay Careful Attention

Acts 20:28

INTRO – PAUL’S FINAL WORDS

- Paul meets the Ephesian pastors on the beach.
- They are weeping, embracing, knowing this is the last time they’ll see him.
- These are not casual words—these are **final, weighty instructions**.
- When you know it’s your last moment, you say what matters most.

Acts 20:28

“Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock... to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.”

BIG IDEA

The church is not casual—because it was purchased at the highest possible cost: **the blood of Jesus**.

1. PAY CAREFUL ATTENTION TO YOURSELF

- Paul’s first command: examine your own heart.
- Spiritual drift doesn’t happen suddenly—it happens through distraction.

The Danger of Distraction

- We pay attention to temporary things while neglecting eternal things.

- We slowly drift onto roads we never intended to take.

Jesus: Narrow road leads to life. Wide road leads to destruction.

How to Pay Careful Attention

- Examine yourself through God's Word.
- Slow down enough to let God search your heart.

Psalm 139:23–24

“Search me, O God, and know my heart...”

Questions to Ask:

- Am I tender toward God or numb?
- Am I quick to repent or quick to defend?
- Am I pursuing Jesus or managing appearances?

Truth: You can't shepherd others if you neglect your own soul.

2. PAY CAREFUL ATTENTION TO THE FLOCK

- Paul tells leaders to care for others—not control, condemn, or command—but care.

Why This Matters

- Jesus calls His people His flock.
- Jesus laid down His life for His sheep.

John 13:35

“They will know you are my disciples by your love for one another.”

Care Requires:

- Knowing one another deeply
- Living in real community
- Being honest about struggles

The Church Is Not an Event — It's a People

You don't attend church.
You are the church.

3. THE CHURCH WAS BOUGHT WITH BLOOD

"...the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood."

This Changes Everything

- The church belongs to God—not us.
- We don't own it. We steward it.
- We don't shape it around preferences—we submit to God's purposes.

The Cross Was Payment

- Jesus didn't invest in us—He substituted Himself for us.
- He took our sin, our judgment, our debt.

Your value is defined by the price Jesus paid for you.

THE DANGER OF CASUAL CHRISTIANITY

We treat church casually when:

- It's convenient
- It fits our schedule

- It becomes optional

But what cost Jesus His life cannot be treated casually.

You don't get to spectate—you are called to participate.

THE GOSPEL RESPONSE

If you don't follow Jesus:

- Jesus didn't die for religion—He died for you.
- You can follow Him today.

If you do follow Jesus:

Ask yourself:

- Am I paying careful attention to my soul?
- Am I caring for others?
- Am I treating the church as costly—or casual?

FINAL TRUTH

If the church cost Jesus His blood,
then following Him will cost us our lives.

But what we receive in return is infinitely greater.