

# Acts 20 – 27 September 2020

## “Cultivating Christian Leaders”

### Introduction

- \*We've been learning much from Paul's missionary trips around the world
- \*This is the return leg of the 3<sup>rd</sup> & final trip
- \*Knowing he may never get to do this again; he's dedicated to only those things that matter the most
- \*Paul's concerned about what we leave behind when we're gone. Are you?

Simple people – live to gain for themselves

Regular people – live to gain & give things of earthly value

Godly people – live to cultivate God's life in other people

Acts 20 presents Paul's life's goal of growing others  
In that regard, this is a lot like parenting!

**Today, 4 keys to cultivating new Christian leaders**

# 1<sup>st</sup> Key to Cultivating Christian Leaders is to spend long hours ministering to people (Chap 20:1-16)

Read Vs 1-6 – *Traveling to Greece & back*

1. So Paul left Ephesus (chap 19) & came into Greece to give them “much exhortation”.
2. He spent 3 months there, then comes back into Asia Minor w/ lots of friends.
  - a. Even knowing the Jews were after him, he spent 3 months there w/ those he already knew
  - b. Paul not just interested in making converts, but also in growing disciples. (Takes time)
3. Paul wasn’t going to places...he was going to people.
  - a. Paul knew Israel, as Hosea said, were “destroyed for a lack of knowledge”, & he didn’t want that to happen to these new friends
  - b. There’s no substitute for spending time teaching and guiding people.

## Vs 7-12 – *Preaching in Troas & Eutychus falls*

### Read Vs 7

1. 1<sup>st</sup> day of week was their 1 day/week off work.
2. “Preached” = better reasoned with them
  - a. He’s always taking ‘em deeper in the Word
  - b. Taught til midnight...& that’s not the end!

### Read Vs 8-12

1. Now this is Dr. Luke reporting in vs 9 that “he was taken up dead”, so that’s what happened
  - a. I believe God did a miracle thru Paul
  - b. How does Eutychus’ story relate to what’s happening here?
2. Notice they go back to the teaching of the Word after the incident with Eutychus.
  - a. Paul teaches until the break of day.
  - b. You’ve heard it said, “The mind can absorb no more than the seat can endure.” – Morton Blackwell

- c. I say to you, “The seat can only endure to the extent that the subject is valued & pure”
- d. The Word of God was so valuable to them, nothing was going to stop them.

Read Vs 13-16 – *From Troas to Miletus*

- 1. Paul has a schedule he's on...he wants to get to Jerusalem by Pentecost.
  - a. But every time he has a chance to be with people, he takes it.
  - b. Paul's friends got the ship at Troas, but Paul walked from Troas to Assos, for people.
- 2. Do we involve people every chance we get, or do we avoid people?
- 3. Christians need to breed a culture that gets involved with each other.
  - a. Ask the hard questions of each other.
  - b. Talk about God's Word w/ each other.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Key to Cultivating Christian Leaders is to be an example of living on purpose for God (Chap 20:17-24)

Read Vs 17-19

1. The leaders of this major church in Ephesus come down to the coastal town of Miletus for this great farewell to Paul.
2. Paul says, you know I worked hard to serve the Lord thru much opposition.
  - a. It cost Paul pain to serve the Lord

Read Vs 20-21

1. Notice how Paul conveyed his service to them.
  - a. He “showed them” – thru his life & work
  - b. He “taught them” – thru his words
2. What did he convey to them?
  - a. Repent – change your life to be like God
  - b. Faith – Believe all that Jesus said
  - c. Paul kept back nothing – Gave them ALL
  - d. He was intentional about giving to them

Read Vs 22-24

1. All else fell to a lower priority behind one thing: To finish his life testifying of Jesus' work
2. Even not knowing if it will be hard or easy didn't matter.
3. Nothing moved him or could change his mind
  - a. That's an example of knowing the mission God has given you and never quitting.
  - b. BECAUSE JESUS IS WORTH IT TO HIM

**3<sup>rd</sup> Key to Cultivating Christian Leaders is to teach them to duplicate all of God's Word in others (Chap 20:25-31)**

Read Vs 25-27

1. Vs 25 – My time with you is complete
2. Vs 26 – I've completed my job therefore, I'm guilty free. How can he know that?
3. Vs 27 – B/c he's given them ALL the Bible!

- a. Vs 20 – Paul “kept back nothing”.
- b. This was Jesus’ commission to us (Read Matt 28:20)
- c. Rom 15:19 – Paul said, “I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ”.
- d. This is even what Jesus did in His ministry on earth (Read John 15:15)

4. B/c Paul’s never to see them again, he reminds them his goal was to give them the whole Bible

Read Vs 28-31

- 1. Paul’s saying the most important thing is to continue passing down God’s Word
- 2. This will protect the flock or the people
- 3. There are people outside & inside the church that will oppose the teaching of all of God’s Word
- 4. The only protection against falling for counterfeit teachings (lies), is to know that truth.
- 5. This is the ultimate tradition that needs passed down from person to person.

## **4<sup>th</sup> Key to Cultivating Christian Leaders is to release them to God (Chap 20:32-38)**

Read Vs 32-35

1. Vs 32 – Paul now presents them to God & His ability to directly give them what they need.
2. Paul trusts that God has what they need and that they're mature enough to receive it!
3. Notice vs 33-35 – Paul was never in it to gain money or fame from them.
  - a. This releasing them back to God proves it!
  - b. And it's a challenge to them to walk with God and be themselves givers to others.

Read Vs 36-38

1. How do you gain friends like this?
  - a. Give things of value from yourself to others
  - b. Paul gave them God's valuable truth
  - c. Paul gave them love and attention
2. Paul has created independent Christians
  - a. Babies need parents help, adults don't.

## Conclusion

Paul's goal has never been to cultivate people that are dependance on Him.

Paul's been cultivating people who trust God and His Word.

How can we do that?

1. **Spend long hours ministering to people**
  - a. Paul wasn't one visit & done, he stayed and answered the hard questions.
2. **Be an example of living of purpose for God**
  - a. Both teach and show the full way to others
3. **Teach them to duplicate all of God's Word in others**
  - a. Follow Jesus example: Jesus gave us all the Father gave Him, we should give others all that Jesus gave us, and so on....
4. **Release them to God**
  - a. Be sure others understand, you don't need me...you need Jesus Christ!