

Acts 20:13-38 Paul's Farewell Speech

Have you ever thought about your memorial service?

A) What would you want it to be like? What songs would you want sung?

B) Who would you want to share and what do you hope they would have to say about you?

C) Ever thought about any of that?

I have been a Pastor now for over 38 yrs

A) I have done a lot of funerals and memorial services

B) Many of them when it has come time for people to come up and share -

1) I have listened to some of the stories - What an Amazing person

C) I wish I would have known them better

D) Been to others though where the you could tell the people who were asked to speak -

1) were trying really hard to find something nice to say

E) Been to some, where what was shared was really lame - Really sad -

So it is Good question to consider

A) Would the people sharing at your service have a lot to say?

B) Worth while things to say? - Because of the impact you made

C) Or would they be searching for things to say?

Today in our study we are going to see Paul meeting with the Leaders of the church in Ephesus

A) Mini leaders conference

B) Seen in our study in the book of Acts that when Paul arrives in Ephesus he spends 3 years there

C) Gospel spread from Ephesus all over Asia minor

D) We pick up our story - Paul is traveling from Troas where we saw him last week

1) and he is wanting to get to Jerusalem to celebrate the feast of Pentecost

On the way he is going to stop at this island called Miletus - call for the Elders

A) Farewell message - Share his heart

B) As we consider what Paul said to these Leaders in Ephesus -

1) It gives us some insight into what Paul might have wanted to be shared about him at his Memorial service -

¹³ Then we went ahead to the ship and sailed to Assos, there intending to take Paul on board; for so he had given orders, intending himself to go on foot.

¹⁴ And when he met us at Assos, we took him on board and came to Mitylene. ¹⁵ We sailed from there, and the next *day* came opposite Chios. The following *day* we arrived at Samos and stayed at Trogyllium. The next *day* we came to Miletus. ¹⁶ For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he would not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hurrying to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on the Day of Pentecost.

Why did Paul sail past Ephesus rather than stopping there?

A) My guess is he knew if he stopped he would never make it to Jerusalem on time for the feast

B) His love for the people in Ephesus and their love for him - there would be way too many people to visit

C) Better to not stop at all

So this is what he does -he stops at the island of Miletus

A) And he is going to ask for the Elders in the church of Ephesus to meet him there

B) He has some things he wants to share with them - some things that are heavy on his heart

C) He knows this might be the last time he is going to see them -

1) He arranges for a mini leaders conference on the Island

Note 4 things that Describe what Paul was all about

A)BTW: this is the only extended speech in all of Acts made to Christians—

B)All the other ones are sermons to unbelievers—

C)So this speech gives you crucial insight into how Luke, the author of Acts,

1)thinks believers should think about their lives).

#1 Paul made much of Jesus and not much of himself V.17-19

17 From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church. 18 And when they had come to him, he said to them: “You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you, 19 serving the Lord with all humility, with many tears and trials which happened to me by the plotting of the Jews;

Notice that Paul says he served among them in humility, tears and trials

A)That’s not typically how great leaders describe themselves, is it?

B)Leaders talk about their victories. Their accomplishments. Their strengths.

C)It is interesting that the word, “humility” in vs. 19 is often translated weakness,

1)and it was almost always considered an insult. It meant low, defeated, weak...

But the word is used 200 times in the Bible, and it’s almost always presented as a virtue.

A)Why does Paul take a word normally intended as an insult and turn it into a virtue?

B)Because Christian ministry, at its core, is not about extraordinary men and women of great power;

1)it’s about a great Savior who can save and then use the weakest, most broken, and most guilty of sinners.

C)See Paul doesn’t want to leave them with HIS example to admire but an all-

1)sufficient Savior to trust in,

D)Quite frankly the weaknesses, trials and tears are how God demonstrates the sufficiency of our Savior.

“A humble and weak person will show a crucified savior better to a listener than a polished, pulled together expert. Because that’s how it happened for us: we weren’t saved by pulling ourselves together, but by admitting we were sinners and calling on the one who was pulled apart for us.” Tim Keller

Why I remind you all the time- NO ONE HERE HAS ARRIVED

A)Including myself - ALL BROKEN PEOPLE WHO ARE IN THE PROCESS of being transformed by our loving redeemer

B) When you’ve been broken, and weakened, and experienced tears and trials

1)you can better testify to the strength of our Savior.

C)When we are weak - HE IS STRONG

D)Unbelievers pay the most attention to us in our times of struggle - not times of Victory.

E)So the first thing the people of Ephesus might have said about Paul is

1)he was a man who made much of Jesus. - Great trait

#2 Paul was faithful to what Jesus called him to do! V.20-27

20 how I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house, 21 testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. 22 And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, 23 except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me. 24 But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

25 “And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, will see my face no more. 26 Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. 27 For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.

Paul saw himself primarily as the bearer of a message.

A) As a messenger was not responsible for whether people liked it, only that they heard it.

B) What Paul meant by **I am innocent of the blood of all men.**)

C) Twice Paul alludes to this idea: **I did what Jesus called me to do**

1) I delivered the message God had me give you; I told you everything.”

20 how I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house 27 For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.

V 27 BTW - Is one of the verses in the Bible that we in CC look to for our model of teaching chapter by chapter verse by verse

A) **TEACHING** through the whole Bible - Give the whole counsel of God

B) It would be so much easier for me as a pastor to spend the year -

1) teaching topically through my favorite passages - topics

C) But we believe the whole Bible is inspired by God and profitable for study

“Teaching the whole Bible makes for Whole Christians who can be used to reach the whole world.”

A) Listen Culture can change - but God’s word doesn’t change

B) Not bending the Word to try and make it fit with the mindset of our culture.

1) We want to bend our hearts to fit in with the heart and will of God revealed in the Word!

C) So I am committed to teaching every Word - digging in - going deep into the word

I was talking to someone the other day - they were telling me about someone they knew he recently left the church.

A) The reason they gave was that I spent too much time teaching through one book of the Bible

B) Guilty!!!! - There is just so much here. - So hard to breeze over it

Saw in our study before Christmas Paul spend 5 hrs a day 6 days a week teaching in Ephesus - for 2 yrs

A) That is over 3,000 teaching hours

B) See This was serious business for Paul- He wanted to be faithful to the calling the Lord gave him -

1) **Give the whole counsel of God**

C) Listen all the Lord is looking for from each of us is to be faithful to our assignment - he has given us

1 Cor 4:2, “Moreover, what is required of stewards is that they be found faithful.”

D) God doesn’t give the same assignment to everybody - But he has given you an assignment.

1) He just want you to be faithful to your assignment.

I don’t know what my assignment is? - What has God put into your hands.

A) God’s Assignment to Adam and Eve - Love Him - Love each other - **and tend to what I have put into your hands.**

B) So what has God put into your hands? -

1) What resources, what relationships, what responsibilities - what opportunities

C) Resources: Your Income - assets - Possessions - Home, Car /- How am I going to use them?

D) What relationships and Responsibilities { that is what he has put into your hands

I have relationships- My Wife and Family

A) What % of my resources / my time / my gifts are going to go toward taking care of my family - bless my family

B) Budget resources and Time Date nights with my wife - that is a relationship I want to steward

1) Fridays.....

C) Help my kids with things - invest in my grand kids

D) Saturdays - Boys Day / Sunday moms day

Then I have my relationship to this family - my local church -

A) A responsibility from God to invest in the Kingdom

B) Best way to do that is through the local church - so I am going to Tithe 10% of my income

C) I am going to look to use my gifts and resources my time and energy to bless others

D) See it is all about who and what the Lord has placed into your hands ?

Here is the thing church:

A) We are all going to answer to the Lord concerning what he has made us a steward of.

B) What.....put in your hands?

C) Are you being faithful to what he has made you a steward of -

1) so that when you get to heaven you can hear - Well done good....servant

D) My dad was a great example of this - he was a behind the scenes kind of guy -

Never preached a sermon - or gave a Bible study from a platform like this.

A) But he used his influence to love people well - loved my mom well - family well - friends well -

B) So many people here - loved my dad

C) He never made more than \$60,000 in a year -

1) but he was one of the most Generous human beings that I have ever known. -

He Faithfully tithed his whole life more than 10%

A) He was Never in debt - BC - never used his money for frivolous things -

B) He was always incredibly giving and was still able to leave my mom in a good financial place when he died

C) He was an avid golfer - his one thing he did -

1) His Mission field always sharing Jesus with guys on the course - tracks and Cassette tapes of Bible studies -

Lived 3,000 miles from most of family but played a big part in all of them coming to Christ

A) Write and call - send studies

B) One of my cousins he had an impact on listens to our church services back in ND ever week -

1) Hey Walter

C) My dad never had a title - never wanted one - but when he went into heaven -

1) I have no doubt he heard from Jesus - well done Tony - good and faithful servant - enter into your rest

What is your assignment? What has God put into your hands?

A) What resources, talents and gifts? What relationships?

B) Steward those things - invest in those things

C) If Has God called you to be a part of this church family - Tithe -

D) Invest your time and gifts to bless this family - and in doing so you will be investing in God's Kingdom.

E) So the church in Ephesus would have said that Paul -

1) Made much of Jesus - and he was faithful to his calling - Good steward

Now Before we move on to point #3

A) I want us to quickly note 3 things that our text tells us about Paul

B) that helped him be faithful to his calling

C) These three things are connected - they feed off one another

A) 1st Paul was led by the Spirit - 22 And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, 23 except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me.

B) Paul lived his life as a man who desired to be led by the Holy Spirit -

1) even when that meant he was going to face difficulties

C)The Lord made it clear - rough times awaited Paul in Jerusalem and he didn't run from them

1)but he ran toward them

D)How could Paul live that way? He Believed that God was in control of his life

2nd Paul didn't count his life dear to himself

24 But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, -

A)My problem so often is I count my life too dear to myself -Isn't that a hard thing not to do

B)I can be very hyper focused on my needs - my desires - my goals

C)Paul lived with a completely different mindset - Was Paul super human –

1)Just wasn't affected by persecution – threats – trials?

D)Lord knows he went through more than his share

1)2 Corinthians 11:22-28 he spells it out for us what his life had looked like.

He was beaten with whips he received 39 stripes from the Jews

A)Three times beaten rods, once stoned; Three times ship wrecked

B)He spent a Day and night in deep; experiencing times of being hungry; naked; been without; several times jailed.

C)Listen to how Paul describes the struggles he went through: ²⁶I have traveled on many long journeys. I have faced danger from rivers and from robbers. I have faced danger from my own people, the Jews, as well as from the Gentiles. I have faced danger in the cities, in the deserts, and on the seas. And I have faced danger from men who claim to be believers but are not. ²⁷I have worked hard and long, enduring many sleepless nights. I have been hungry and thirsty and have often gone without food. I have shivered in the cold, without enough clothing to keep me warm.

²⁸ Then, besides all this, I have the daily burden of my concern for all the churches. 2 Corinthians 11:26-28 NLT

But here we read but None of these things move me – nor do I count my life dear to myself.

A)Was Paul just a super stud Christian – was He not human. No?

B)In fact Paul also wrote this to the Corinthians :

8 We don't want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, of our affliction that took place in Asia. We were completely overwhelmed—beyond our strength—so that we even despaired of life itself. 2 Corinthians 1:8 CSB

C)There were things that Paul went through that were so hard

1)That there were times that he just wanted to die. - Take me home Lord

So When Paul says - that none of these things move me. -

A)I think what he means is they didn't permanently move him

B)His struggles didn't define him - they didn't make him quit

C)Because he knew that God was in control - The HS was leading and he knew that God was on the throne

D)He didn't count his life dear to himself -

1)in other words Paul was saying I wasn't living for my glory - But God's glory!

My point is there are going to be things that move you and me –there are things that moved Paul.

A)But he didn't let those things permanently disable him -

B)He rose up and moved forward in confidence! How?

C)He knew that the HS was leading - He knew that His life belonged to God

3rd He was always looking to the end of the race - He kept his eye on the prize

24 But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

A lot of people start well in the Christian life, but they don't persevere on to the finish.

A) You have heard of one-hit wonders. Carly Rae Jepsen - Or Milli Vanilli

B) How we start isn't as important as how we finish.

C) Finish well - Heaven is waiting - Eternity is longer

1) Eternity with Jesus will make this life look like a short walk in the park

¹⁶ Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward *man* is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory, ¹⁸ while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen *are* temporary, but the things which are not seen *are* eternal. 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 NKJV

D) Paul lived his life with eternity in View - he was running his race to win

1) Running to receive that prize from Jesus - well done

E) Listen Church - don't just run to run - don't just be happy that you are in the race - you are running

1) RUN TO WIN - IN IT TO WIN IT!!!!

So the Church in Ephesus might have said this about Paul at his memorial

- He made much of Jesus -
- He was faithful to his calling

#3 Paul cared deeply for the church. V.28-31

28 Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

Now Paul says something here we all need to remember about the church -

A) This pertains to all of us individually and us corporately

B) Believers in Jesus Christ make up the church - He purchased us with his blood!

C) You are valuable to God - Blood bought with the Blood of his precious son - Let that sink in

D) Gospel: God wanted you to be a part of his family so bad -

1) He gave the only thing that could REDEEM US - His Son - Blood BOUGHT

Paul says, If Jesus poured out his blood for the church, I'm going to pour my life INTO IT!!

A) Now I know that your role is not the same as the apostle Paul

B) or even mine or those who are on staff here regarding the church

C) But the church should be precious to all of us - It is precious to God.

D) Sometimes I meet people who say - I am a Christian -

1) I love Jesus but I just don't like the church

Well friends the Bible says that the Church is the Bride of Christ

A) So that would be like saying to me - Rob I really like you - but I can't stand being around Denise - MY WIFE

B) Guess what we are not going to be on great terms

C) Listen: I know my wife is not perfect - but she is an amazing human being

1) and lover of Jesus and his church

D) Definitely my better half - I definitely got the better end of the deal when we got married

So I know she isn't perfect but I love her with all my heart -

A) And if we are going to be friends - you will need to love her too.

B) Jesus knows his bride isn't perfect -

1) he knows that we are broken people in the process of being transformed

C) But Jesus loves HIS BRIDE - If you love Jesus you need to love his bride too.

So because Paul cared so much for the Bride of Christ - the church - he said to the Leaders V.28 -

A) Take heed to yourself and to all the flock.
Notice order

B) First, take heed to yourself! = “Keep watch over yourselves.”

C) The importance in this for those who want to be used by the Lord is not to have a priority on self / but THE preparation of self.

D) If I am going to be one who is effectively, consistently ministering to others
1) I need to be cultivating *my own walk with Lord*

E) Heart and life prepared for the calling { Take heed to myself

If I am going to be one whom the Lord uses to Bless others –

A) I must first be one - Who is being blessed by Jesus!

A man went on business trip to France while there picks up a present for his wife.

Trinket box glow in the dark (Doesn't work)
directions are in French

B) His wife had a friend over who happens to speak French

1) She reads words on the back - this needs to sit in the sun for it to glow.

C) If we are going to be those who will effectively shine as lights in this dark world we need to sit in the Son Light / Presence of the SON!

D) Your own Devotional life – Prayer life.

1) Amazing Jesus wants you to spend time with him!

E) You want to do well in your assignment? Take heed to yourself - you heart your walk with Jesus

1) And let what you do for Jesus flow out of what Jesus is doing in you.

Then Paul says something to these men that was probably so hard for him to say and even harder for them to hear.

29 For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves

Not everyone cares about the church - some merely want to use the church for their own benefit.

A) Paul says - there are even some of you here who are going to end up being shown to be wolves

B) Wolves eat sheep - Shepherds care for sheep -
1) wolves are all about seeking to see what they can get from the sheep

C) Paul cared so much for the church and he knew this tendency in the heart of man that he says in V.31 Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.

D) Here is my point: Because Paul cared so much for the church he wasn't afraid to say the hard things.

1) He did it with tears running down his face

So at Paul's memorial service - the sharing would center around -

- How Paul made much of Jesus and not of himself
- How Paul was faithful to his calling
- How Paul loved the church of God

#4 Paul gave more than he took V.32-35

32 “So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. 33 I have coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. 34 Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me. V. 35

I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’ ”

Paul thought that a successful, blessed life, is one in which you gave more than you took. Why?

A) The model of Jesus

B) Jesus whole life was defined by giving not receiving -

1) I didn't come to be served but to serve and to give my life as a ransom for many

C) On the night before he died, Jesus had washed the disciples feet. If I knew I was about to die, for you,

1) the night before I would have been like, "Look, this is my time."

D) Paul gave more than he received because he believed in this premise from Jesus- 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' "

You want to live a blessed life? Apply that principle to every aspect of your life -

A) Marriage / parenting/ friendships - church

B) If you want to flourish and fill your assignment - Give more than you receive.

1) let your life be marked by giving to others - not taking

Here is what that means - You stop taking accounts -

A) Well last time I did this for you - so now it is your turn to do for me.

B) Stop it!!!!!! - I am going to be a giver - not a taker - You will be blessed BIG TIME

C) Close with this story - Ever heard of William Tyndale?

The first English Bible - Tyndale Bible

In the 1500's an Englishman named William Tyndale wanted to translate the Bible from the original Greek and Hebrew into English.

A) At that time there was not an English Bible - only in Latin

B) But most Englishmen couldn't read Latin and therefore did not know the Bible.

1) Tyndale wanted to change that.

C) The problem was Bible translation was illegal; you could be killed for it.

D) But God intervened through a godly businessman named Humphrey Monmouth.

Monmouth protected Tyndale, he provided for him,

A) and he even used his merchant ships to smuggle the first English New Testaments throughout England.

B) So this is what is interesting - Very few people have ever heard of Humphrey Monmouth

1) but his partnership with Tyndale changed the world.

C) He didn't care who got the credit - he just wanted to use his resources to help get the job done.

1) Do what you can - for God's glory

Verse 36-38 Paul moves on

36 And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. 37 Then they all wept freely, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him, 38 sorrowing most of all for the words which he spoke, that they would see his face no more. And they accompanied him to the ship.

4 things it would be awesome if people said this about us.

- 1. We made much of Jesus**
- 2. We were faithful to what Jesus called us to do**
- 3. We loved and respected Jesus' Bride - The Church**
- 4. We gave more than we took**