

**SUBJECT : PAUL SAYS GOOD-BYE**

**BIBLE BASIS:**

**Lesson Scripture:**

**Acts 20:17-28, 36-38**

**BIBLE TRUTH:**

**Committed to a cause.**

**MEMORY VERSE: READ ACTS 20:23**  
That you will understand the importance of being  
faithful to a commitment.

2Tim 2:1-2

# Introduction

- Paul was gripped with passion to visit Jerusalem. Passion for the lost is the element that is missing in most of our churches today. Jesus instructed the disciples to pray for passionate labors. Matt. 9:36-38.
- Where is our passion for the lost? Must the lost come to us or must the church go to them? Matt. 28:18-20.
- How do we measure a successful church? a. By church membership and programs that minister to their needs or b. How the church impacts the community in which it is located? Act. 19:1-12, 18-21
- Why did Paul wish to be alone and go by land instead of sea? Vs. 13 Paul needed to be alone to decide weather or not he should go to Jerusalem in spite of the fact that the Holy Spirit warned him that trouble and persecution awaited him there. Act 20:22-24.
- Paul sensed he needed to share the matter with his Lord. Prov. 3:5-6
- Paul wanted to minister in Jerusalem to his own people and be present when the financial help was delivered to the poor saints in Jerusalem. Rom 15:25-26 In Romans 10:1-4 Paul reveals his passion for his lost brethren, the Jews.
- The grace of God that was on Jerusalem which provided for the needs of the saints in the beginning had shifted to the church in Antioch. Act 2:44-47, Act 11:20-24

# Paul An Example Of The Believer

- Acts 20:18-19 And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, [19] Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews:
- Paul had called for the elders of Ephesus to bid them farewell. Paul had a testimony of a constant, unwavering service. Paul was totally devoted from “the [very] first day” and through “all seasons” that is, through all kinds of situations and circumstances. He served through tears and sorrows, trials, and disappointments.
- Paul was “serving the Lord” not self and not others. The word serving is taken from the word bond-slave. Paul constantly called himself the slave of Jesus Christ. Romans 1:1
- Paul’s service was characterized with humility. Phil. 2:3-11
- His worst experience was being attacked by the unsaved religious Jews. The point is this: despite the terrible trials, he kept on serving faithfully. 2Corn. 11:23-30,
- If you are going through something right now be encouraged and give thanks and be not weary of well doing for it you faint not, you shall receive a reward. 1Cor. 15:58, Gal 6:10, 2 Tim. 4:2.

# Paul Was Not Ashamed Of The Gospel

- [20] And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house, [21] Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.
- Paul taught the whole gospel, plainly and simply. He kept nothing back. Rom. 1:16-17
- Note the words “showed” and “taught.” Paul taught so plainly and simply it was like showing the truth, painting it before the very eyes of the people. He did not use flowery speech and big words. He spoke simply on the level of the people. 1Cor. 2:1, 4
- Paul taught publicly and privately. He used every opportunity he could to teach, even going from house to house.
- Paul taught powerfully. This is seen in the word “testifying.” He spoke with authority, as one who had the right of God Himself to testify. He taught both Jew and Greek. He showed no favoritism or partiality. He was a Jew, but he did not favor the Jews. He was called by God to be the apostle to the Gentiles, and he was severely persecuted by the Jews. He preached to all men. He reached out to all. Acts 10:34-35, Romans 10:12
- He taught repentance toward God and faith toward Jesus Christ

# Repentance Toward God

- Change is not change until you change. The change that repentance brings is turning away from: lying, laziness, undependable, unfaithful, stealing, cheating, immorality, cursing, drunkenness, and the other so-called glaring *sins of the flesh*. But the change is also turning away from *the silent sins of the spirit* such as self-centeredness, selfishness, envy, bitterness, pride, covetousness, anger, evil thoughts, hopelessness, jealousy, lust.
- Repentance involves two turns. There is a negative turn away from sin and a positive turn toward God. It is a turning to God away from sin, whether sins of thought or action.
- When a person truly repents, the Holy Spirit is activated comes alongside to help the believer keep his commitment. 1Corn 12:3, John 14:15-18, Rom 3:25,

# Faith In Jesus Christ

- Saving faith is commitment—the commitment of a man’s total being and life to Jesus Christ. It is a man’s commitment of all he *is and has* to Jesus Christ. He gives Jesus everything; therefore, it involves giving ones life. Gal. 2:20.
- A man must trust Jesus to take care of his past (sins), his present (welfare), and his future (destiny). He entrusts his whole life, being and possessions into Jesus’ hands. He lays himself upon Jesus’ keeping, confiding in Him about his daily necessities and acknowledging Him in all the ways of life. He follows Jesus in every area and in every detail of life, seeking His instructions and leaving his welfare up to Him. It is simply the commitment of a man’s whole being, all he is and has, to Jesus our King. Luke 9:23, John 14:15
- **You Must Love God More Than You Love Yourself**

# Paul Is Willing To Die For The Cause

- [22] And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there:[23] Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me.
- Paul has an unquenchable thirst to reach the lost. The words “bound in the spirit” mean Paul’s own spirit, not the Holy Spirit. Paul was driven to do all he could to reach his own people, the Jews (Romans 9:1-3; Romans 10:1).
- Paul said the Holy Spirit bore witness to him that bonds and afflictions would come upon him in every city. Therefore, he knew that persecution awaited him in Jerusalem. Act 21:4, Act 21:10-14,
- In spite of all the warning from the Lord, Paul still had an overwhelming passion to reach his fellow brethren. Act 22:18
- If Paul was not in God’s direct will, he was in God’s permissive will, and God overruled this burden of his and took him to Rome as a prisoner. Act 23:11
- Paul persevered and continued on with the Lord despite an unending series of persecution, and despite knowing that such afflictions awaited him no matter where he went. John 15:20, Phil.1:29, 2Tim. 3:12, 1Peter 4:12-13

# The Gospel Grace

- [24] But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.
- Paul did not count his life “dear” unto himself, that is precious and valuable. His life was not for him to use and to do as he pleased, not for earthly comfort or pleasure. His life was not for himself; it was for Christ.
- The Lord possessed his life, for he had given it to the Lord, and the Lord was using it to the maximum.
- Paul had given his life to the Lord for two reasons. Paul wished to finish the course of his life with joy, faithfully and diligently running the Christian race to the end (1 Cor. 9:24-27; Phil. 3:13-14).
- Paul did complete his course, proclaiming its fulfillment to Timothy (2 Tim. 4:6-8).
- Paul wished to finish the ministry which the Lord Jesus had given to him Acts 9:15; Note what his ministry was—to proclaim the gospel of the grace of God Titus 2:11-15
- Paul really stressed the grace of God in Ephesians: Eph.1:2, 6-7, Eph. 2:5, 7-8; Eph. 3:2, 7-8; Eph. 4:7, 29; Eph. 6:24.
- **Grace say, John 3:16, John 5:24, Rom. 8:1-2,**



# What's So Amazing About Grace

- Grace is probably the most misunderstood word in the early church in Paul's day and in the church today. The Bible means something far more than most men mean by grace. To men the word "grace" is something we say before we eat. Grace is a period of time give a person to pay a debt. Grace is a gift, a favor that someone might extend to a friend. The favor is freely done, expecting nothing in return.
- However, when the early Christians looked at what God had done for men, they had to add a deeper and much richer meaning to the word *grace*. For God had saved sinners, those who had acted against Him. Therefore, grace became the favor of God showered upon men—men who did not deserve His favor. Grace became the kindness and love that God freely gives to men who are..without strength, ungodly men, full strength industrial sinners...enemies of Christ" Rom. 5:6-10
- No other word so expresses the unlimited depth and richness of the heart and mind of God. There is the distinctive difference between God's grace and man's grace. Whereas man sometimes does favors for his friends and thereby can be said to be gracious, God has done a thing unheard of among men: He has given His very own Son to die for His enemies
- God's grace is not earned. It is completely undeserved and unmerited. To receive grace requires an empty hand.

# Paul Farewell

- [25] And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more.
- Paul was saying farewell to the elders from Ephesus. Paul was probably thinking...of possible persecution and martyrdom.
- He knew that in either case he would not be able to visit the Ephesian church again. The scene was touching, tender, and solemn. Note: he had preached the Kingdom of God to these men.
- There is the spiritual kingdom that is at hand; it is present right now Matthew 4:17; Matthew 12:28.
- The present kingdom refers to God's rule and reign and authority in the lives of believers. Eph. 1:18-23, Phil. 2:5-11, Col. 1:13.
- The present kingdom is offered to the world and to men in the person of Jesus Christ. The present kingdom must be received as a little child. Mark 10:14-15.
- Entering or Seeing the present kingdom can only be experienced by the new birth. John 3:3, Matthew 21:31, Mark 10:15.
- The present kingdom is a spiritual kingdom. Rom. 14:17.
- The present kingdom is to be the first and only thing sought by believers for we are Ambassadors for the King. Matt 6:33.

# No Respect Of Person

- [26] Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. [27] For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.
- Paul made an astounding claim, a claim which he meant to be a challenge to the ministers who stood before him and thereby to all ministers of all ages.
- He was free from the blood of all men. If any man was unsaved, it was the man's fault. Ezekiel 33:6.
- The reason he was free was that he had proclaimed all the counsel of God. He had proclaimed the truth, warning every man. This is what Jesus demanded in the great commission to teach them to observe all things and low I am with you, even until the ends of the earth. Matt. 28:18-20, Col. 1:28-29
- The testimony of Paul should be the claim of every preacher and teacher of the Gospel. When your conscience is clear of offense between both God and man, you have no enemies to repay or friends to reward, you are armed and dangerous and all the authority of heaven and earth is within your reach. Matt. 16:18

# Paul's Last Instructions To Church Leaders

- [28] Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.
- These words are the last words of Paul to church leaders. It is a critical message, a message that needs to be studied time and again by every church leader.
- The first duty is to guard yourselves and the church. This is a strong charge. The minister must look after his own life, his character and conduct, before he can look after the flock of God. He must “take heed,” that is, concentrate upon, focus upon. There are specific areas he must guard.
- He must guard against false teaching. **Luke 12:1.**
- He must guard against an unforgiving spirit. **Luke 17:3-4.**
- He must guard against self-indulgence, drunkenness, and possessions. **Lu. 21:34**
- He must guard against the fables, myths, speculations, and false doctrines. **1 Tim. 1:4**
- He must watch and give himself to reading, exhortation and doctrine. **1 Tim. 4:13**
- He must especially give himself to *the doctrine*, the teaching of Scripture. **1 Tim. 4:16**
- The minister must look after “all the flock.”
- There are three reasons stressed in Scripture. Sheep can wander about and get lost. Luke 15:4 for five ways that a sheep loses its way. **Isaiah 53:6. Proverbs 21:16. Matthew 24:12. Hebrews 10:38. 2 Peter 2:15.**
- Sheep can be seized by the beasts (false teachers) of the world and within the church. Acts 20:29-30; John 10:1. John 10:7-8, **Isaiah 56:9-11, Jeremiah 23:1-2; Jeremiah 25:34-38, Jeremiah 50:6, Ezekiel 34:2-6, Ezekiel 34:7-31,**
- Sheep without a shepherd are in a pathetic condition. Mark 6:34 **Matthew 9:36. 1 Peter 2:25**

# Paul's Last Instruction To Church Leaders

The second duty is to feed the church of God. The word “feed” is shepherd, to act as a shepherd. Church leaders are to shepherd the church of God. There are four reasons why the church leader is to feed the church of God.

- The church must be fed because God has purchased the church and paid the supreme price for it with His own blood. Note three all-important points.
- Jesus is unequivocally said to be *God*. He is the One who shed His blood to purchase the church. He is very God, very Man. John 1:1-5, Col. 2:9; Phil. 2:5-11; Col. 1:15-19
- Jesus “purchased” the church. Therefore, it is His; He owns it and He has all say-so concerning everything about the church. As Purchaser, His Word about the care of His church is to be carried out explicitly, just as He dictates. There is to be no deviation whatsoever. Leaders are but overseers appointed by Him to shepherd His church as He says.
- The church must be fed because it is the duty of church leaders to feed it. Titus 1:5-9, **1 Peter 5:1-4.**
- The church must be fed because false teachers will come in among believers and seduce them.
- Paul sets a dynamic example for all leaders of the church. He was a mere man as every leader is, yet he was able to please God immensely, able to feed the church exactly as God wished. He demonstrated perfectly that the man chosen by God to be an overseer can shepherd the church as it should be done. Acts 14:14-18
- He “warned” admonished. The word means both to give advice and to warn. He warned everyone, not neglecting any or favoring any. He gave attention to all, saw to it that they were fully fed and shepherded.

# Grown Men Cry

- Acts 20:36-38 And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all. [37] And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him, [38] Sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more. And they accompanied him unto the ship.
- The conclusion of Paul's exhortation to the Ephesian elders is a touching scene, the kind of affection being expressed that every minister and teacher of the gospel would covet.
- Paul was so gripped with emotion that he fell to his knees and began to pray for these dear men of God. (The scene was most unusual, for it was the custom of Jews to stand when praying in public.)
- Are we really looking for more members to join our churches or are we looking for friends? When I am hurt or lonely, brokenhearted, feeling abandoned, grieved by the lost of a loved one, a member can't do much for you; but a friend loveth at all times. And there is a friend that sticketh closer than your own brother. Prov. 18:24, John 15:13