

Jesus Christ's work through the Apostles to the Uttermost

Paul's third missionary Journey

"... and ye shall be witness unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judae'a, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Acts 1:8

Introduction: In Acts chapter 20 Paul gives us some of his "closing remarks." Paul purposely sets himself aside with the Lord. It seems that Paul can almost sense a change of direction on the horizon. He will move from place to place in this chapter preaching the Word of God and giving some sound words of truth to these newly formed local churches. The challenge is always to impart and prepare Christians for the future life of service to the Lord. What do they need to be mindful of? What can be expected along the way?

Outline:

I. The Family of God v1-6

II. The Faithful Preaching of God's Word v7-16

III. The Fervent Compelling of Paul v17-38

I. The Family of God v1-6

"I am so glad I'm a part of the family of God..."

Verse 1

You will notice we say "brother and sister" 'round here- It's because we're a family and these folks are so near; When one has a heartache we all share the tears, And rejoice in each victory In this family so dear.

Chorus

I'm so glad I'm a part of the family of God- I've been washed in the fountain, cleansed by His blood! Joint heirs with Jesus as we travel this sod, For I'm part of the family, the family of God.

Verse 2

From the door of an orphanage to the house of the King- No longer an outcast, a new song I sing; From rags unto riches, from the weak to the strong, I'm not worthy to be here, But, praise God, I belong!

Chorus

A. Paul calls for the disciples. v1

1. *"Paul called unto him the disciples,"*
2. Do you see the tenderness of this great leader?
3. *"But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another." I Thessalonians 4:9*
4. *"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." I John 4:7*
5. *"...and embraced them, and departed for to go into Macedonia."*
6. What powerful language that displays Paul's affection for the brethren.

B. Paul companions and family. v2-4

1. Paul's purpose seems to be strengthening the brethren.
2. **v2** *"And when he had gone over those parts, and had given much **exhortation**, he came to Greece,..."*
3. **Exhortation** – *logos*, literally "something said" and by implication in this passage *"much exhortation"*
4. Webster defines this English word as "incitement to that which is good or commendable."
5. **Paul purposes to go through Macedonia and Greece** – Corinth (Greece), Philippi, Berea, Thessalonica. (**v1,2**) *"And when he had gone over those parts,"*(v1); *"he purposed to return through Macedonia."*(v2)
6. **v3** Paul was going to sail to Syria (Antioch) but by God's divine providence he was directed back through Macedonia.
7. **v4** Notice the list of family: Sopater (Berea), Aristarchus and Secundus (Thessalonians), Gaius and Timotheus (Derbe), Tychicus and Trophimus (Asia)
8. "Paul now had around him a group of fine men from the various regions he had evangelized. The Macedonian churches represented by Sopater, Aristarchus and Secundus; the Galatian churches by Gaius and Timothy; the Asian churches by Tychicus and Trophimus, and, as we infer from 2 Corinthians, the Corinthian church by Titus and two other brethren (**2 Corinthians 8: 1-6; 16:24**)." - John Phillips
9. Many believe that these were carrying the offering for the church at Jerusalem to help in their poverty.
10. Some have calculated that Paul in his missionary journeys travelled **5,580 miles by land, 6,770 miles by sea, a total of 12,350 miles**. He evangelized an area of **1500 square miles in less than 16 years!** (Phillips, Chappell)

II. The Faithful Preaching of God's Word v7-16

A. People Came together v7-8

1. **When? v7** *"...the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread..."*
2. Referred to in **I Corinthians 16:2** and also **Revelation 1:10**, showing the day of assembling the *"Lord's day."* They partook the Lord's supper, they fellowshiped, and there was preaching of God's Word and pray.
3. "What terrible times we have in our churches trying to keep people faithful in attendance and loyal! How we reward and coax church members into doing things they don't want to do, but things they would do without coercion if they loved God!" – Paul Chappell
4. v7 *"...Paul preached to them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight."*
5. "Preaching is the highest calling of God. God only had one Son, and He was a preacher. When Jesus went into the synagogue at Nazareth, He opened the Scriptures to the book of Isaiah and read publicly, *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering the sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord."* – Tom Farrell (**Luke 4:18,19, referencing Isaiah 61:1,2a only**)
6. See **Matthew 4:17, 10:7, 10:27. Mark 1:38, 3:14, 16:15. Luke 4:43, 9:2, 9:60.**
7. We are told the reason for the **long preaching**, was because Paul had much to say, intending on departing the next day. (v7) *"...ready to depart on the morrow..."*
8. "All too often, in our fast-paced society, time is the deciding factor in our church services. It governs the pulpit with careless disregard for the moving of the Holy Spirit. Above all, the preacher must finish on time. The Holy Spirit may be moving, the message may be urgent, the closing moments, the invitation, the orderly close of the service may be imperative. No matter. Cut it all short. It's time to close. Is it any wonder a grieved Holy Spirit moves on to bless elsewhere?" – John Phillips
9. Paul amazingly continued his speech until midnight.
10. **v8** The Bible plainly tells us there were *"many lights in the upper chamber..."*
11. The twofold purpose is seen as they desired to freely see and receive what Paul was preaching and secondly to be above reproach. This was no criminal meeting taking place in the cover of dark.
12. As it should be also today our Lord and Saviour's people ought to be above reproach.
13. This ought to cause us to think about our actions while assembled together and also while apart.
14. **I Thessalonians 5:5** *"Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness."*

B. Paul Preached On v9

1. We are introduced to Eutychus, *"...a certain young man..."* Ironically his name means "fortunate."
2. **How fortunate you and I are to have the hand of God in our lives.**
3. **Notice also the fact that this young man was under the preaching of God's Word.**
4. How important is it to have young people under the preaching of God's Word?
5. My wife tells this story of her nephew Benjamin, who while doodling was completely listening to what was being preached.
6. **John 17: 16,17** *"They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."*
7. How is it we are to get instruction? correction? reproof? or doctrine? (II Timothy 3:16) From the Word of God.
8. **Psalm 119:9** *"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word."* (The application not just the knowledge of God's Word.)
9. In today's architecture 3 stories could be as high as 30 feet. Certainly, whatever the height, this was a considerable distance to fall.

C. Power of God v10

1. **God allows the miraculous to take place.**
2. v10 *"And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing him..."*
3. Paul's actions remind us much of the actions of Elijah and Elisha (**I Kings 17:21; II Kings 4:34**).
4. **We are reminded that God is immutable. His power is not abated.**
5. **Isaiah 50:2** *"Wherefore, when I came, was there no man? when I called, was there none to answer? **Is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem? or have I no power to deliver?** behold, at my rebuke I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a wilderness: their fish stinketh, because there is no water, and dieth for thirst."*
6. **Isaiah 59:1** *"Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear:"*
7. Paul gives some remark of comfort, *"Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him."*

D. Parting Words v10-12

1. They continued in fellowship and instruction.
2. v11 *"...and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed."*

3. homileō - Paul’s “talk” is where we get our word for homily which means a solemn discourse.
4. Homiletics – speaks to the discourse of a sermon.
5. From this we can gather that Paul again puts a premium on conveying to the people the truth of God’s Word.

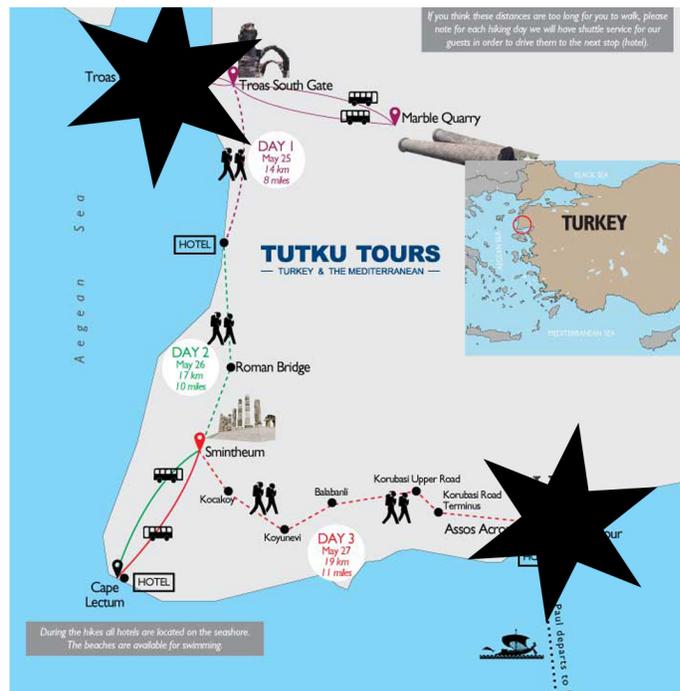
E. Paul’s Purposeful Separation 13-18

1. Notice the “we” in verse 13. Actually verse 5 we see that personal pronoun “us” indicates Luke travelling with Paul and his companions.
2. While Luke and the others traveled by ship, Paul went afoot. (Approx. 20 miles)

Day 1
8 miles

Day 2
10 miles

Day 3
11 miles



3. *“there intending to take in Paul: for so had he appointed, **minding himself to go afoot.**”*
4. This phrase “minding himself” expresses Paul’s purpose to be alone.
5. What took place on the road from point A to point B we are not specifically told.
6. We can understand there must be times of solitude with the Lord.
7. The work of the ministry is no substitute for time apart with God.
8. **Jesus separated to be alone and pray -Matthew 14:22,23** *“...he was there alone.”*
9. **Matthew 6:6 speaks to us about time alone in prayer** – *“But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.”* – This is in contrast to praying to be seen.
10. **Mark 1:35-39** – *“...All men seek for thee.”*
11. **Our Lord is with us, why do we need to be alone?**
12. v13-16 give us the many stops along the way.
13. Paul desired to be there for Pentecost (50th day, 49 days following Passover). **Acts 2** – the inception of the church at Jerusalem and the promise of our Lord Jesus Christ of the Holy Spirit.

III. The Fervent Compelling of Paul v17-38

A. Calling of the Elders v17

1. There are two meanings associated with the word elder. One is a person of age or a senior. The other usage as is used here denotes what we term pastor. Notice **verse 28** *“and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you **overseers**, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”* Same word translated ‘overseer’ is translated ‘bishop’ in **I Timothy 3:1,2**
2. “Those here called “elders” or “presbyters,” are in Act 20:28 called “bishops.” (See on Act 20:28). The identity of presbyters and bishops in the New Testament is beyond all reasonable dispute.”- Jamieson-Fausset-Brown

B. Compelling them to Consider v18-23

1. v18 *“...what manner I have been with you at all seasons,...”*
2. **What was Paul’s conduct? What was his conversation? What was his manner of life?**
3. **Are we displaying leadership in our conduct?**
4. Notice also the phrase *“...at all seasons...”* (We could say through the thick and the thin.)
5. v19 *“Serving the Lord”* – Notice how:

6. v19 **Humility of mind** – lowliness - *“For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.”* **Romans 12:3**
 - a. *“Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence am base among you, but being absent am bold toward you:”* **II Corinthians 10:1**
 - b. We should ask God to help us have humility of mind, to think ‘soberly’ of ourselves.

7. v19 **Many Tears**
 - a. **The outward expression of compassion and earnestness toward those whom he loved.**
 - b. *“For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you.”* **II Corinthians 2:4**
 - c. *“(For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:”* **Philippians 3:18**

8. v19 **Through Temptations**
 - a. Paul is speaking of his adversity, the constant attacks by the Jews.
 - b. Make note that in service to the Lord there will be ‘temptations.’
 - c. **I Peter 4:12,13** *Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.*

9. v20 **Through Sacrifice and Diligence**
 - a. *“I kept back nothing that was profitable to you,...”*
 - b. Paul did not speak to please men but God.
 - c. Paul weighed his words so that they were profitable.
 - d. Paul ‘shewed’ and ‘taught’ both in a public manner and in a private manner.
 - e. So, we should operate today in the same manner.

10. v21 **Through the simplicity of the Gospel**

- a. *“Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks...”* – the Gospel available to all.
- b. *“Paul saw a mission field in every man, woman, boy and girl he met regardless of color or creed, race, or religion. Every person for whom Christ had died, someone who needed a word from God.”* – John Phillips
- c. *“repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.”* - the Gospel reduced to its smallest form.

C. Compelling them to Continue v22-24

1. Explains his future route.
2. *“behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there:”* – Paul had a high sense of duty to go to Jerusalem.
3. He did not know exactly what would take place *“Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying bonds and afflictions abide me.”*
4. v24 *“But none of these things move me,...”*
5. What is the secret to Paul be unmoved by the *‘bonds and afflictions?’*
6. He was anchored to the Rock [Jesus Christ].
7. **Ephesians 6:10** *“Finally, my brethren, be strong **in the Lord**, and in the power of **his might.**”*
8. **I Corinthians 15:58** *“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain **in the Lord.**”*
9. Why did these not move him? *“...so that I might **finish my course with joy**, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify of the grace of God.”*
10. Paul could say at the end, *“I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a **crown of righteousness**, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.” (II Timothy 4:8)*
 - a. Crown of Righteousness - **II Timothy 4:8**
 - b. Crown of Life - **James 1:12, Revelation 2:10**
 - c. Crown of Glory – **I Peter 5:4**
 - d. Crown of Rejoicing – **I Thessalonians 2:19**
 - e. Incorruptible Crown – **I Corinthians 9:25**

D. Compelling them to Caution v25-31

1. Paul go on to say, you “...shall see my face no more.”
2. “He had discharged his duty in faithfully warning and teaching them; and now, if they were lost, the fault would be their own, not his.” – Albert Barnes
3. v26-27 Speaks to our personal accountability to the Lord.
4. Paul declared “**all** the counsel of God.”
5. v28 “Take heed therefore unto yourselves...” – Remember Paul is speaking with the Ephesian Elders and reminds them the importance of their personal fellowship with the Lord. Their first responsibility was their fellowship with the Lord.
6. “...and to the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers...”
7. Notice the calling of God upon the man of God, not the calling of man.
8. The responsibility was to ‘feed’ the church of God. – Some are fed with milk while others are fed with meat, but all are to be fed with the Word of God.
9. **I Corinthians 3:2** “**I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.**” (**Hebrews 5:12,13, I Peter 2:2**)
10. “...which he hath purchased with his own blood.” - Jesus Christ has purchased the Church with His own blood.
11. v29 The warning was for the “grievous wolves.” – These would naturally be crafty and cunning. They would attack and feed on the flock rather than feed the flock.
12. Then there is the mention of heretical teaching rising from within.
13. v30 When men deviate from the Word of God, they “...draw away disciples after...” themselves.
14. How do we guard against such things?
15. v30 “Therefore watch,...” – Remember the warning “...night and day with tears.”

E. Commending them to God v32-38

1. v32 “And now, brethren, **I commend you to God,...**”
2. There is no safer place to commit your trust than to God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.
3. “For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that **he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.**” **II Timothy 1:12**
4. Paul no doubt had an idea of the difficulties they would face, but also knew God was greater.

5. *"...the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."* The transforming power of Jesus Christ and the Gospel is ascribed both save, keep, build up, and consummate in final inheritance.
6. v33 Paul again begins showing his heart. *"I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel."* It was not about desiring what others had.
7. v34 He evidenced this by his practice of tent-making. Though he could have been chargeable to the local churches he chose oftentimes to labour with his own hands.
8. **I Thessalonians 2:9** *"For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, **because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.**"*
9. v35 Paul expresses by example I have shown you how to minister to other. *"I have shewed you all things..."*
10. "Paul's words contained both example and exhortation. God expects the rich to help the poor, the strong to help the weak, and the healthy to support the sick." – John Phillips
11. v36-38 What a fitting closing to the address. They prayed and embraced one another.
12. It brings sorrow to depart from those whom we love. But our great hope will be the rejoicing in Heaven one day with the whole host of God's people.