



Until We Meet Again

Acts 20:17-38

- A. Paul's Mission - Looking Back (20:17-21)
 - 1. Serving through oppression
 - 2. Declaring the whole counsel of God
 - 3. Teaching wherever and whenever
 - 4. Testifying to all people
- B. Paul's Next Steps (20:22-23)
- C. Paul's Perspective/Prophecy (20:24-27)
- D. Paul's Challenge for the Elders (20:28-31)
 - 1. Pay careful attention to yourself/your flock (Be Devoted - *prosechō*)
 - 2. Be vigilant about false teachers - from the outside and inside (Guard the Gate)
- E. Paul's Conclusion (20:32-35)
 - 1. Entrusted the Elders to God's grace
 - 2. Reminded the Elders of His example
 - 3. Exhorted the Elders to support the weak
- F. Paul's Prayer and Departure (20:36-37)

Discussion Questions

- 1. Read Acts 20:17-21. In verse 19 Paul describes his emotions and trials in ministry. How did he respond to adversity and what can we learn from Paul's 4 responses? Discuss.
- 2. Read Acts 20:28-31. What steps should we take in the church today to prevent false teachers and false doctrines?
- 3. Read Ephesians 6:10-18. What tools are at our disposal that help us be devoted and vigilant followers of Jesus? Discuss. [Life Connections Study Bible]
- 4. Read Acts 20:32-35. What do Paul's two exhortations to the Ephesians elders tell us about the priorities spiritual leaders must have? Discuss.
- 5. Pray for God to use the church (and its leaders) to fulfill His mission by living out grace and truth in our interactions with those around us just like Jesus did.

Acts 20:17-38: Now from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called the elders of the church to come to him. ¹⁸ And when they came to him, he said to them:

"You yourselves know how I lived among you the whole time from the first day that I set foot in Asia, ¹⁹ serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials that happened to me through the plots of the Jews; ²⁰ how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you in public and from house to house, ²¹ testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. ²² And now, behold, I am going to Jerusalem, constrained by the Spirit, not knowing what will happen to me there, ²³ except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me. ²⁴ But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God. ²⁵ And now, behold, I know that none of you among whom I have gone about proclaiming the kingdom will see my face again. ²⁶ Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all, ²⁷ for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God.

²⁸ Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.

²⁹ I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; ³⁰ and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. ³¹ Therefore be alert (stay awake), remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears. ³² And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified. ³³ I coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. ³⁴ You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my necessities and to those who were with me. ³⁵ In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

³⁶ And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. ³⁷ And there was much weeping on the part of all; they embraced Paul and kissed him, ³⁸ being sorrowful most of all because of the word he had spoken, that they would not see his face again. And they accompanied him to the ship.



L.I.F.E. Group Leader's Guide

Main Idea: Our story matters. Paul shows us how to use our story to encourage, challenge, and exhort the next generation of believers who will carry on the mission of the church.

Study Question #1: Read Acts 20:17-21. In verse 19 Paul describes his emotions and trials in ministry. How did he respond to adversity and what can we learn from Paul's 4 responses? Discuss.

4 Responses: Serving through oppression, Declaring the whole counsel of God, Teaching wherever and Whenever, and Testifying to all people

Study Question #2: Read Acts 20:28-31. What steps should we take in the church today to prevent false teachers and false doctrines?

False teaching can appear in many different forms; but we can divide them into two main sections. Sometimes it takes the form of a blatant denial of the Truth and of the cardinal principles and tenets of the Christian faith... But false teaching does not always take that form. There is another form... Here it is not so much a denial of the faith, not so much a contradiction of the cardinal elements, as a teaching which suggests that something else is required in addition to what we have already believed. - Martin Lloyd-Jones

Study Question #3: Read Ephesians 6:10-18. What tools are at our disposal that help us be devoted and vigilant followers of Jesus? Discuss. [Life Connections Study Bible]

Out of all the armor God gives us to fight Satan, only one piece is used for killing – the sword. It is called the sword of the Spirit (Eph. 6:17). So when Paul says, “Kill sin by the Spirit” (Rom. 8:13), I take that to mean, Depend on the Spirit, especially His sword. What is the sword of the Spirit? It's the Word of God (Eph. 6:17). Here's where faith comes in... The Word of God cuts through the fog of Satan's lies and shows me where true and lasting happiness is to be found. And so the Word helps me stop trusting in the potential of sin to make me happy, and instead entices me to trust in God's promise of joy (Psm. 16:11). - John Piper

Study Question #4: Read Acts 20:32-35. What does Paul's two exhortations to the Ephesians elders tell us about the priorities spiritual leaders must have? Discuss.

Good effective spiritual leaders infuse others with an animating, quickening and exalting spirit of enthusiasm for the person of Christ, growth in Christ and the mission of the church. - Oswald Sanders

Pray Together: Pray for God to use the church (and its leaders) to fulfill His mission by living out grace and truth in our interactions with those around us just like Jesus did.

DISCOVERY BIBLE STUDY QUESTIONS (CRU)

- 1) What does this passage tell you about God and His Character?
- 2) What does this passage tell you about People?
- 3) What does this passage tell you about His relationship with people?
- 4) How might the Holy Spirit be prompting you to live differently?

