

Further up, Further in

Resources for Continued Study



LOOKOUT
MOUNTAIN
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

"THE UNMISTAKABLE MARKS OF CHRISTIAN LIVING"

For individual study or discussion

The 20th chapter of Acts contains a wonderful reminder that God's overruling of our plans can so often result in great good. Paul had planned to sail directly from Greece to Syria, but because the Jews were plotting against him, he "decided to go back through Macedonia." Because of this travel detour he was able to meet with the elders of the Ephesian church one final time, and thus we have the one address that Paul made to an entirely Christian audience recorded for us in the book of Acts.

We'll be spending more time considering his address next week. This week we're considering just the beginning, in which Paul briefly reviews the time he spent with the Ephesians, highlighting the way he lived and served as a follower of Christ.

- 1) Paul's persistence in loving, encouraging, and teaching the saints is an incredible example to us.
 - In 1 Corinthians (written, most likely, before this final meeting with the Ephesian elders), Paul exhorts the Corinthians to "be imitators of me." (1 Cor. 4:16, ESV) Is that something only Paul can say? Or is that something helpful for other leaders to think and say?
 - What marked Paul's leadership? Can you point to things that he wisely avoided both as a leader and as a Christian?
- 2) Paul reminded the Ephesian elders that he had never hesitated to preach whatever would be helpful. (Acts 20:20) In fact, he added a little later in his address that he did not shrink from proclaiming to them "the whole counsel of God." (Acts 20:25)
 - How do we determine what is *necessary* biblical truth to teach or share with others and what is also *helpful*?
 - Paul persisted in teaching the whole counsel of God despite the plots of the Jews. What would you say we need to persist in teaching and sharing today, regardless of any opposition we may face? (If time, read 1 Corinthians 15.)
- 3) Paul had the same Gospel message for everyone: They "must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus." (v. 21) There have been many different Gospel presentations put together by different organizations over the years. Perhaps you are familiar with Campus Crusade's "Four Spiritual Laws" or Evangelism Explosion's two basic questions and answers.
 - What should be included in a clear presentation of the Gospel?
 - Should we present the Gospel differently depending on whom we are talking with? Here are a couple of resources that may prove useful as you consider this question.
 - ◇ An [interview](#) with Tim Keller on how to bring the Gospel to post-Christian America
 - ◇ A great [article](#) by RUF pastor Chris Colquitt on discipling "Gen Z"

DATE: October 11, 2020

SPEAKER: Joe, Frank

SERIES: Acts

PASSAGE: Acts 20:13-21

Family Dinner Table

Most of us like consistency. (What does consistency mean? It's sticking with one way of thinking or acting, not just a couple of times, but over and over again.) You'd probably agree that it's nice when whatever we're expecting to be the same does, in fact, stay the same. We want the power hitters to continue power hitting, and the on fire quarterbacks to keep throwing touchdowns. We like our dinner to be warm every night, our drinks to be cold, and our favorite cake or pie to be served every Thanksgiving.

So we like consistency, but generally we find *being consistent* to be hard. In Paul, we have an example of someone who lived consistently as a Christian: he was not one way when he was in front of a crowd and another way when he was with just a few people at home. He didn't tell some people about Jesus and hide the fact that he was a Christian from others.

How should Christians go about becoming more and more consistent in the way they live as Christians? What will help us honor and serve Jesus wherever we go and whatever we do?

And finally, can you identify what keeps you from being consistent?

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Bible in the Schools

PRAY FOR WORLD MISSIONS
Peter and Joanna Vaughn serving with Amani Ya Juu