

July 24, 2022

“Proclaiming All That Is Profitable”

Acts 20:13-27

Prel Rmks

Paul’s Farewell to the Ephesian Elders – LOGW - Title

The Journey from Troas to Miletus:

(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. **(17) From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church.** – 5 days

INTRODUCTION

Paul’s farewell address to the Ephesian elders (v.25 – I know that you all ... will see my face no more):

He talks to them about 2 things:

The Time He Spent With Them (in Ephesus) 18-27

Their Future Without Him 28-38 (next week)

Today: How he describes those 3 years he spent with them:

His Manner Among Them

His Example Before Them

His Ministry to Them

I. His Manner Among Them 18-19

How he lived his life when he was there with them.

(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, - consistency

(19)

serving the Lord with all **humility**, with many **tears** and **trials** which happened to me by the plotting of the Jews;

humility

- **Colossians 3:12** Therefore, as *the* elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, **humility**, meekness, longsuffering;
- **Titus 3:2** to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, **showing all humility to all men**.
- **Philippians 2:3** *Let nothing be done* through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.

- **1 Peter 5:5** ... all of *you* be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "GOD RESISTS THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE."

tears

- **Psalms 126:5-6** Those who sow in tears Shall reap in joy. **(6)** He who continually goes forth weeping, Bearing seed for sowing, Shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, Bringing his sheaves *with him*.

trials

- **Acts 19:9** But when some were hardened and did not believe, but spoke evil of the Way before the multitude, he departed from them and withdrew the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus.
- **Acts 19:23** And about that time there arose a great commotion about the Way.

[His Manner Among Them – humility, tears, trials]

II. His Example Before Them 22-24a

In the midst of all the tears and trials, he had set an example for them – vv. 33-35 (next week).

But here, he sets an example before them. Even on this last day he would ever spend with them, they got to see how he was facing his own future:

(22)

And see, now I go **bound in the spirit** (sense of duty) 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.**

- Chapter 21 – A prophet named Agabus vv.10-11

(24a)

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,

none of these things move me

- **Colossians 1:24** I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church,

nor do I count my life dear to myself,

- **Revelation 12:11** And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.

- **Philippians 1:20-23** [Paul expressed his] hope [like this] that ... Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death. **(21)** For to me, to live *is* Christ, and to die *is* gain. **(22)** But if *I* live on in the flesh, this *will mean* fruit from *my* labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell. **(23)** For I am hard-pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, *which is* far better. **(24)** Nevertheless to remain in the flesh *is* more needful for you.

so that I may finish my race with joy,

Not worried about what would happen to him

Paul did finish his race with joy – “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.”

[Even on this last day he would ever be with them, he was living out an example before them of the attitude a faithful disciple of the LJC should have.]

Luke 9:23-26 Then He said to *them* all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. **(24)** For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. **(25)** For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost? **(26)** For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His *own* glory, and in His Father's, and of the holy angels.

[His Manner Among Them ~ His Example Before Them]

III. His Ministry To Them

He saw his ministry to them primarily as the ministry of the Word of God ~ the Gospel Ministry

[All the Apostles saw their ministry this way]

Acts 6:4 but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to **the ministry of the word.**" ... preaching ministry / teaching ministry = the preaching and teaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ

(18)

And when they had come to him, he said to them: "You know, from the first day that I came to Asia ...

(20)

how I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you,

kept back nothing

- didn't draw back; didn't withhold anything
- v. 27 – "I have not **shunned** to declare to you"

helpful = profitable to you, to your advantage, conducive to your spiritual good

and taught you publicly and from house to house,

(21) testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, - all people

[The remainder of the message]:

[If we are going to proclaim all that is profitable and not hold anything back in our ministry of the Word, what do we need to proclaim?] – 4 things ...

1) The Requirement of God

[Paul proclaimed the requirement of God.]

[We see that requirement in v. 20]

(20) repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

repentance toward God

- **repentance** = a change of mind and a change of heart and a change of will that leads to a changed life ... **an absolutely essential requirement for salvation**
- **Acts 17:30** ... God ... now commands all men everywhere to repent,

Repentance Toward God

- Good word ... = direction of a person's life
- "from" sin = toward God
 - "I'm not right with God."
 - There's sin in my life."
 - "I need to turn away from my sin and turn toward God!"
- Many people want salvation apart from repentance – they want salvation, but they want to keep going in the same direction!

- But, repentance is an absolutely essential requirement for salvation
- But here's the thing ... even though it is commanded and required by God, no man can repent on his own ...
- **Acts 11:18** – repentance is a gift that must be given by God – “granted” by God is the word used in that verse
- The good news is: God stands ready to give this gift of repentance to all who will come to Him through His Son Jesus Christ and ask for it ...
- [repentance is one of the requirements of God for salvation]

faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ

faith

- faith = to trust; not just believe something is true in your mind.
- Come to Christ and rest the weight of your eternal soul on Him and His saving life and death and resurrection
- **Matthew 11:28-30** Come to Me, all *you* who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. **(29)** Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. **(30)** For My yoke *is* easy and My burden *is* light."

toward our Lord Jesus Christ

- repentance and faith two sides of the same coin
- both are absolutely essential
- both are commanded by God
- both are required by God for salvation

[If we are going to proclaim all that is profitable to the spiritual well-being of those who hear us: We must proclaim:
The Requirement of God – repentance and faith]

2) The Grace of God 24b

[Paul describes his ministry]:

24b

... the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to **the gospel of the grace of God.**

- All throughout his letters in the NT, Paul speaks about the saving grace of God. – Apostle of Grace
 - **Ephesians 2:8-9** For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it* is the gift of God, **(9)** not of works, lest anyone should boast.
 - **Titus 3:5-6** not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, **(6)** whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior,
- Paul always presented the good news of salvation by grace in juxtaposition to a false teaching of salvation by works.
- For those of you here today who have never been saved, those of us who have been saved want you to know:
 - We are not here trying to prove we are good enough to deserve salvation
 - We are here for one reason only: to worship the One who has given us salvation by His grace,

because that's the only way we would have ever been saved!

- We are here as a response to the mercy and grace of God we have received.
- We know we don't deserve it!
- That's what grace is!
- {Name of the church}

[The Requirement of God]

[The Grace of God]

[Third, if we are going to proclaim all that is profitable, we must proclaim];

3) The Kingdom of God

Acts 20:25

"And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching **the kingdom of God**, will see my face no more.

- Another way to present the Gospel is to proclaim the Kingdom of God
- **Mark 1:14** Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,
- **Mark 1:15** and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel."
- **Acts 1:3** to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.
- **Acts 8:12** But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized.
- **Acts 19:8** And he went into the synagogue and spoke boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading concerning the things of the kingdom of God.

Kingdom = King = loyal subject = open enrollment = not visible to the world = hearts of men = in the true church = day is coming ...

[Finally, we must proclaim]:

4) The Whole Counsel of God 26-27

(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.

Another thing you have to do to proclaim all that is profitable and not hold anything back is to proclaim the whole counsel of God = all of His Word

2 Timothy 3:15-17 and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. **(16)** All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, **(17)** that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Conclusion / Applications

As he says his farewell to these elders, men he loved so much, men he had served beside and poured his life into for 3 years:

Paul goes back over his time with them:

His Manner Among Them
His Example Before Them
His Ministry to Them

He proclaimed everything that was profitable
to them ... spiritually

The Requirement of God
The Grace of God
The Kingdom of God
The Whole Counsel of God

Next week: Paul talked to them about their future without
him. vv. 28-38