

ACTS 20:22-27

Acts 20:18-35 is a sermon for us.

It is the only sermon in Acts addressed directly to elders.

Spend these devotion times in our meetings reminding ourselves of what we are called to do as elders.

Look at verses 22-27.

A. The Context

1. Paul is addressing the elders of the church in Ephesus.

The speech has the feel of passing the baton of responsibility of caring for the church to these elders.

2. How Paul lived.

“When they arrived, he said to them: “You know how I lived the whole time I was with you, from the first day I came into the province of Asia. I served the Lord with great humility and with tears, although I was severely tested by the plots of the Jews.” (Acts 20:18-19)

He was with them.

He was humble towards them.

He loved them.

He faced opposition for them.

3. What Paul preached

“You know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you publicly and from house to house. I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus.” (Acts 20:18-21)

He preached for their good not his popularity.

He preached publically and privately.

He preached to all not just some.

He preached the gospel.

B. Called to wear a cross not a crown

“And now, compelled by the Spirit, I am going to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there. I only know that in every city the Holy Spirit warns me that prison and hardships are facing me. However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me— the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace.”

1. Paul was heading to Jerusalem.

Under no illusions as to what lay ahead.

Following the way of his master.

APP: 2 Timothy 3:12 – everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

APP: Being an elder is hard – not a glamorous position.

2. Paul was willing to suffer for Christ.

He had counted the cost of following Christ.

The task Christ had given him of preaching the gospel was more important than his personal comforts.

APP: The flock needs us to protect them from hits by taking the hits ourselves.

APP: Band of brothers – take the hits together.

C. Called to be faithful not successful

“However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me— the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace. Now I know that none of you among whom I have gone about preaching the kingdom will ever see me again. Therefore, I declare to you today that I am innocent of the blood of all men. For I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God.”

1. Paul has been a faithful watchman.

Language of the faithful watchman in Ezekiel.

Paul had not been perfect but has been faithful.

He has done everything necessary for that church.

A faithful watchman faithfully teaches God's Word. If they don't, blood is on their hands.

Paul has taught God's Word in the past. He knows he must go forward.

APP: Encouragement as I preach through Lamentations.

APP: God's business is changing people. Our business is faithfully teaching His Word and modelling it in our lives.

2. Paul hands over the responsibility to the elders.

Paul is not going to be around.

They have been taught the whole counsel of God.

They need to pass it on – verse 28.

APP: Key part of being elders is training up the next generation of elders to hand the baton on to.

APP: Looking for men who are faithful.