

ACTS 20:17-38 PAUL'S FAREWELL TO THE EPHESIAN ELDERS

Of all the speeches that Luke records in Acts, this is the only one delivered to Christians only. Paul's passion for a thorough ministry and his personal example of fidelity to God's truth underscores the message. Paul's main objective: to encourage similar fidelity in the Ephesian elders (and in us). Encouragement, warning, exhortation are paramount. Remember: Luke was an eyewitness to this event.

20:17-21 Paul's Personal Example of Fidelity in Ministry

v. 17 "...he called the ELDERS* of the church" (at Ephesus)

*ELDERS = πρεσβυτερος / presbuteros = one of _____ New Testament words for pastor-teachers. This word calls attention to their maturity in Christ.

- ELDERS in v. 28 are called _____ (επισκοπος / episkopos). This word calls attention to their _____; they watch closely the flock of God.
- v. 28 also speaks of their primary function: "to shepherd (KJV, "feed") the flock of God."

"Elder" Summary: Elders are relatively mature men who are appointed by the Holy Spirit as overseers of the local church primarily for the purpose of shepherding God's flock.

v. 18-21 Paul's Consistency: from day _____, YOU know my fidelity of service to Jesus Christ including:

- humility of mind
- many tears
- testings, trials due to Jewish _____
- (v. 19) withholding not one thing
- (v. 20) testifying the same message to both _____ and _____.
 - repentance → (eis) toward God
 - faith → (eis) toward Lord Jesus

Summary: Paul's emphasis in v. 18-21 is his consistent fidelity in ministry despite the circumstances (HE NEVER WILTED).

20:22-27 Paul's Present Plan and Attitudes

v. 22 Paul's Human Spirit Compulsion: "I go _____ in spirit to Jerusalem"

v. 23 Holy Spirit's Repeated Warnings

- Some previous (not recorded by Luke); others after in Chapter 21.

v. 24 Paul's Two Major Goals

- 1) "to finish the _____"
 - 2) "to _____ of the grace of God."
- } with no thought of self-preservation

See II Tim. 4:6-8 for Paul's conclusion in this regard.

(over)

v. 25-27 Paul's clean conscience based upon his thorough teaching

"I am _____... having declared unto you the entire _____ / _____
of God."

20:28-31 Paul's Exhortation for Fidelity in Ministry

v. 28 The Command: "Continually _____" (present active imperative)

- "for _____" (KJV "to yourselves")
- "for _____"

v. 29 Reason #1 for the Command (attack from without)

- "fierce _____ will come in to fleece the flock."

v. 30 Reason #2 for the Command (attack from within)

- "out from (ek) your ownelves...men speaking perverse things..."

For this danger realized: see I Tim 1:3, 18-20; II Tim. 2:16-18; Rev. 2:2 where men claim to be
"_____."

v. 31 The Command Reinforced (another imperative)

"Keep being _____, on watch..." (present active imperative)
"Remembering how I kept warning everyone..."

20:32-35 Paul's Closing Commendation

v. 32 Paul Commits Them (aorist middle indicative)

- "to God..." (Paul is saying, "My responsibility is over, it is now between you and God.")
- "and to the word of His Grace" (and its ability)
 - "to _____ you"
 - "to _____ you a spiritual, glorious inheritance"

v. 33-35 Paul Reminds Them of the Servant Mentality

v. 35 "Remember the words of the Lord Jesus...:" these are not found in the Gospels.

20:36-38 Paul and the Ephesian Elders Bid Farewell

WHAT AN EMOTIONAL GOOD-BYE! HE MOST LIKELY SAW THEM AGAIN BETWEEN HIS FIRST AND SECOND IMPRISONMENTS; I.E., SOMETIME BETWEEN 62-65 AD. IF SAYING "GOOD-BYE" WAS SO DYNAMIC, THINK OF THEIR SAYING "HELLO." WHAT A SCENARIO!