

ACTS: Church On Mission
Part 53- When Church Gets Dangerous
Acts 20:1-38

- VS. 1-6- “After the uproar ceased, Paul sent for the disciples, & after encouraging them, he said farewell & departed for Macedonia. When he had gone through those regions & had given them much encouragement, he came to Greece. There he spent three months, & when a plot was made against him by the Jews as he was about to set sail for Syria, he decided to return through Macedonia. Sopater the Berean, son of Pyrrhus, accompanied him; * of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus & Secundus; & Gaius of Derbe, & Timothy; & the Asians, Tychicus & Trophimus. These went on ahead & were waiting for us at Troas, but we sailed away from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread, & in five days we came to them at Troas, where we stayed for seven days”
- VS. 1-2- He encouraged them...gave them much encouragement...
- VS. 3-6- Luke is giving us names & places which helps to remind us, amongst so many powerful miracles, this really happened!
- **Unexpected Tragedy:**
- VS. 7-16- “On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul talked w/ them, intending to depart on the next day, & he prolonged his speech until midnight. There were many lamps in the upper room where we were gathered. And a young man named Eutychus, sitting at the window, sank into a deep sleep as Paul talked still longer. And being overcome by sleep, he fell down from the third story & was taken up dead. But Paul went down & bent over him, & taking him in his arms, said, "Do not be alarmed, for his life is in him." And when Paul had gone up & had broken bread & eaten, he conversed w/ them a long while, until daybreak, & so departed. And they took the youth away alive, & were not a little comforted. But going ahead to the ship, we set sail for Assos, intending to take Paul aboard there, for so he had arranged, intending himself to go by land. And when he met us at Assos, we took him on board & went to Mitylene. And sailing from there we came the following day opposite Chios; the next day we touched at Samos; & the day

after that we went to Miletus. For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he might not have to spend time in Asia, for he was hastening to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on the day of Pentecost.”

- **Dangers From Insiders:**
- VS. 17-38- “Now from Miletus he sent to Ephesus & called the elders of the church to come to him. 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, serving the Lord with all humility & w/ tears & w/ trials that happened to me through the plots of the Jews; how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, & teaching you in public & from house to house, testifying both to Jews & to Greeks of repentance toward God & of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. And now, behold, I am going to Jerusalem, constrained by the Spirit, not knowing what will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment & afflictions await me. But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course & the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God. And now, behold, I know that none of you among whom I have gone about proclaiming the kingdom will see my face again. Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all of you, for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God. Pay careful attention to yourselves & to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained w/ his own blood. I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; & from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish everyone w/ tears. And now I commend you to God & to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up & to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my necessities & to those who were w/ me. In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak &

remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" And when he had said these things, he knelt down & prayed w/ them all. And there was much weeping on the part of all; they embraced Paul & kissed him, 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."

- **Why Call For The Elders?**
- Called, qualified & recognized men who lead the local church
- **They Lead The Church:**
- VS. 28- "to care for the church of God"
- "Church"= ekklesian which means the gathered assembly
- 1 Timothy 3 & Titus 1 give us the bulk of the qualifications (gold)
- Words used interchangeably are:
- Elder- prebuterous- means an elder
- Overseer- episkopous (also translated Bishop) means "above vision"
- Pastor- Poimainein means to acts as a shepherd
- **They Love The Church:**
- 2 Corinthians 5:14- "Christ love compels me"
- Not just love though...it's also responsibility/authority
- VS.28- "in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers"
- James 3:1- "Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness."
- **They Feed The Church:**
- 1 Timothy 4:11-13- "Command & teach these things. Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching."
- 1 Corinthians 15:1- "Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand"
- **They Guard The Church Against Dangers W/in:**
- VS. 29-31- "I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; & from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore be alert, remembering that for 3 years I did not cease night or day to admonish everyone w/ tears."
- **Wolves:**

- **High-jackers:**
- VS. 30b- “& from your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them.”
- Titus 3:10- “As for a person who stirs up division, after warning him once & then twice, have nothing more to do w/ him,”
- They also like to draw people away after them...
- 2 Timothy 4:1-4- “I charge you in the presence of God & of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living & the dead, & by his appearing & his kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, & exhort, w/ complete patience & teaching. For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, & will turn away from listening to the truth & wander off into myths.”
- Titus 1:10-11- “For there are many who are insubordinate, empty talkers & deceivers, especially those of the circumcision party. They must be silenced, since they are upsetting whole families by teaching for shameful gain what they ought not to teach.”
- **Hired Hands:**
- John 10:12-13- “He who is a hired hand & not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming & leaves the sheep & flees, & the wolf snatches them & scatters them. He flees because he is a hired hand & cares nothing for the sheep.”
- **Heretics:**
- 1 Timothy 3 & Titus 1= able to refute heresy, able to rebuke those who contradict the Gospel (are they good for anything???)
- Titus 1:16- “They profess to know God, but they deny him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work.”
- **All Of Those From Demons & The Devil**
- Ephesians 6:10-12- “Finally, be strong in the Lord & in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh & blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.”
- 1 Peter 5:8- “Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour”
- **This Is A Full Time Job:**

- Hebrews 13:17- “Obey your leaders & submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy & not w/ groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.”
- **We Don’t Just Need Good Elders- We Need Jesus!**
- **Leader: The Chief Shepherd:**
- 1 Peter 5:4- “When the Chief Shepherd appears...”
- **Lover: The Bridegroom:**
- Ephesians 5:25- “Like Christ loves the church & gave himself...”
- **Guard: The Good Shepherd:**
- John 10:11- “I am the Good Shepherd...lays down his life...”
- **Feeder: The Bread Of Life**
- John 6:35- “Jesus...”I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, & whoever believes in me shall never thirst.”
- **Jesus Saw How Much It Would Cost Him:**
- VS. 22-23- “And now, behold, I am going to Jerusalem, constrained by the Spirit, not knowing what will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment & afflictions await me.”
- He is not sure what awaits Him, but Jesus was totally sure...
- John 18:4-5- “Then Jesus, knowing all that would happen to him, came forward & said to them, “Whom do you seek?” They answered him, “
- **Jesus Was Made Guilty For You:**
- VS. 26- Paul says, “I am innocent of the blood of all of you”
- John 18:6-9- “When Jesus said to them, “I am he,” they drew back & fell to the ground. So he asked them again, “Whom do you seek?” And they said, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus answered, “I told you that I am he. So, if you seek me, let these men go.” This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken: “Of those whom you gave me I have lost not one.”
- **Jesus Bought You:**
- VS. 28b- “...to care for the church of God, which he obtained w/ his own blood.” (ransomed, purchased)
- 1 Peter 1:18-19- “knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but w/ the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb w/out blemish or spot.”

- **Jesus Sanctifies You:**
- VS. 32- Sanctified- I'm not leaving you along because Jesus hasn't left you alone- given you His Word & His Spirit
- **Jesus Made The Ultimate Sacrifice For You:**
- VS. 24- Not my life that is valuable...Is Paul inventing this???
- John 10:11- "The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep."