

Acts of the Holy Spirit
“*Expansion of Faith*” – Series

NOTE TAKERS...

- I’ve titled today’s message: “**Personal Direction For Ministry**”
 - (Acts 20:1-38) NLT

~INTRO~

OK...

- As we begin this morning...
 - Let’s remember we’re reading about...
 - How the early church... advanced the Gospel message.

SO FAR...

- We’ve seen the miracles of God...
 - **Result** in the *Expansion of Faith*... in several cities.

WE’VE WATCHED...

- The followers of Christ expand the reach of the Gospel...
 - By traveling out of Jerusalem... to the north & then west.

WE’VE FOLLOWED ALONG...

- Over the last two months...
 - Learning from the Apostle Paul about how to do ministry.

WE’VE BEEN TAUGHT...

- *How Ministry Happens*
- *Effective Ministry*
- *Up’s & Downs of Ministry*
- *Basic Ministry Truths*
- *The Work of The Spirit in Ministry*
- *The Mission and The Mess of Ministry*
- *Pushback in Ministry*

NOW... TODAY... AS WE DIVE INTO (Acts 20)...

- We cover the last segment of Paul’s... 3rd Missionary journey...
 - Before he heads to Jerusalem.

AND... HE LEAVES SOME... FINAL INSTRUCTIONS...

- To the Elder’s leading the Church in Ephesus.

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FOLLOW ALONG (vv.1-6) NLT

HERE’S A FEW THINGS TO OBSERVE...

IDEA #1 – DON’T GIVE UP: (vv.1-17)

THE FIRST 17-VERSES OF THIS CHAPTER...

- Describe the big picture of Paul’s travel.

LUKE...

- Was painting a picture in the minds-eye...
 - On how people carried the Gospel Message forward...
 - When circumstances changed.
- **They didn’t give up... they pressed on!**

(v.3) LUKE DESCRIBES...

- The continued struggles Paul faced... from enemies of the cross...
 - And how to pivot without giving up.

***CHRISTIAN BE AWARE...**

- The enemies of the cross could be from our own family.
 - (Mark 10:28-30) NLT

OK... LUKE RECORDS THE MINISTRY ALONG THE WAY...

- Paul’s travel companions (v.4)
- Teaching until mid-night (v.7)
- A young man falls out the window & died (v.9)
- Brought back to life & Paul continued talking (vv.10-12)

AFTER THIS...

- Luke gets to the main topic in this chapter.
 - It’s the final meeting with the Church Elders of Ephesus (v.17).

IDEA #2 – PAUL’S MESSAGE: (vv.18-35)

PAUL LEADS THE DISCUSSION...

- By highlighting how he modeled *perseverance*... (v.27) NKJV
 - Against the obstacles in ministry.

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AND... HE GIVES THE KEY POINTS TO CHURCH LEADERS...

- Starting at (v.28) NLT “*guard yourselves and God’s people*”
- (vv.29-30) NKJV
 - Two areas of attack – from without & within.

APPLICATIONS TO CONSIDER...

FIVE HINDERANCES TO THE CHRISTIAN LIFE:

- 1) **Carelessness** (v.31) *watch out* = be alert to what’s going on in the Church.
(Failure to give sufficient attention TO avoiding harm OR errors)
- 2) **Shallowness** is the enemy of never growing (v.32) (2 Peter 1:5) NLT
- 3) **Covetousness** – an unending desire to find fulfillment, meaning, & purpose in things, instead of God (v.33) (Prov. 27:20) NLT
- 4) **Laziness** (v.34) don’t be a slacker... do your part! (2 Thess. 3:6) NLT

(Prov. 26:13-16) NLT describes the lazy person with these traits...

- a) Makes excuses instead of helping (v.13)
- b) Lacks faith by being double minded (v.14)
- c) Wastes resources with a self-consuming life (v.15)
- d) Lacks common sense by rejecting wisdom (v.16)

IN THE END...

- *A lazy person* is one who is reluctant to try!

PAUL MODELED THE EXACT OPPOSITE...

- As he followed the Lord by faith...
 - To advance the Gospel.

- 5) **Selfishness** – Concentrating on one's own advantage, pleasure, or well-being...
 - Without regard for others (v.35) NKJV

PAUL MENTIONS THIS PERSON...

- Who has fallen into error (1 Tim 6:9-10) NKJV.

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“The love of money”

- Addresses Christian’s who have become **un-generous**
 - As they GIVE inadequate amounts.

THIS IS CALLED...

- “*Stinting*”
 - “*The Love of Money*” (Greek = Fil – Are – Goo – Ree – Ah).

AND... THE RESULTS FOR THE INDIVIDUAL... (in this life)...

- Are described (1 Tim 6:9-10) ...
 - *Trapped by harmful desires*
 - *Plunged into ruin & destruction*
 - *Straying from the faith*
 - *Pierced themselves with many sorrows*

CHURCH...

- As we get personal insight in the book of (Acts)...
 - We’re to recognize & learn to avoid the things...
 - That can shipwreck our faith.

THESE ARE JUST FIVE EXAMPLES...

IDEA #3 – PAUL SAYS GOOD-BYE: (vv.36-38)

AFTER THIS EXTENSIVE TRIP...

- Paul now sets his sights on Jerusalem...
 - And the next phase of ministry...
 - Which we will pick up next week in (Acts 21).

~ IN CLOSING ~

(Ps. 86:5) NLT

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO PUT FAITH IN JESUS TODAY...

- And have your sins forgiven...
 - Would you raise your hand so I can pray for you.