

**Ministry of The Holy Spirit**  
**Paul's 3<sup>rd</sup> Missionary Journey Resumes: Many Words and Final Words**  
**Acts 20:6-24**

Last time...closing remarks in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Epistle to the Corinthians, including a promise, a warning, and an exhortation...and a very timely application for all of us today

This time...Paul resumes his 3<sup>rd</sup> Missionary Journey

First, a chronological recap of this 3<sup>rd</sup> Missionary Journey

[ Map 3<sup>rd</sup> Missionary Journey ]

Acts 18:23 – 19:20

Strengthening the churches on his return to Ephesus  
Stayed for 2 years, during which time he wrote

**Galatians and 1 Corinthians**

Acts 19:21-41

Timothy/Erastus sent ahead to Macedonia, Achaia  
confusion and persecution in Ephesus over Diana

Acts 20:1-3a

Paul to Macedonia and Achaia/Corinth for 3 mos,

catching up with Timothy and Erastus

While in Corinth, wrote Epistle to the **Romans**

Acts 20:3b-6a

Paul departed Corinth, headed to Jerusalem with

companions, including reps from the

churches giving the love offering

He intended to go by sea but liars-in-wait “forced”

the land route thru Macedonia to Philippi

In Philippi, Paul is inspired to write **1 Timothy** and

**2 Corinthians**

Now, the Journey resumes in Acts 20, as does the flow of the Ministry of the Holy Spirit

v6-7 Paul and Luke sail from Philippi to Troas after Passover/Unleavened Bread

- spring...March/April
- early Church still celebrated the Jewish feasts of the Lord

After the coast-hugging 5-day boat ride, they catch up with the brethren (v4) and minister in Troas for a week, concluding on Sunday, the day of the week the followers of Jesus Christ gathered to continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers (Acts 2:42)

Paul preaches the Word of God that Sunday

His focus is on Jerusalem; he intends to continue his journey the next morning,  
Monday morning

He probably started to preach sometime on Sunday morning and preached until...  
midnight i.e. 12 – 18 hours

Studying this passage this week to rightly divide it, I was given a revelation:  
My messages are WAY TOO SHORT!!  
So I'm gonna have to fix that!

v8-9 The followers of Jesus Christ had gathered in a house in an "upper room" on the 3<sup>rd</sup> story  
Springtime, warm weather in the day and cool breezes at night  
As day turned to night, they lit some torches...generating light and heat  
and heat rises

As Paul preached on (and on and on...)

v27 it seems

Eph 3:3-4 How that by revelation He made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)

Eph 3:19 And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

a young man named Eutychus sat in a window for some fresh, cool air

And, sitting in the open window, Eutychus

- fell asleep, overcome with sleep...goes off to the "land of Nod" (Gen 4:16)
- fell out of the window to the ground below
- died

v10-12 Time for a break!

Out the window goes Eutychus and out goes Paul

- down the 2 flights of stairs to the ground floor
  - embraced Eutychus
    - Elijah-like with the dead son of the widow of Zarephath
- 1 Kings 17:19-24 And he said unto her, Give me thy son. And he took him out of her bosom, and carried him up into a loft, where he abode, and laid him upon his own bed. And he cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, hast thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son? And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again. And the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived. And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and delivered him unto his mother: and Elijah said, See, thy son liveth. And the woman

said to Elijah, Now by this I know that thou *art* a man of God, *and* that the word of the LORD in thy mouth *is* truth.

- Elisha-like with the dead son of the Shunemite woman

2 Kings 4:32-37      And when Elisha was come into the house, behold, the child was dead, *and* laid upon his bed. He went in therefore, and shut the door upon them twain, and prayed unto the LORD. And he went up, and lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands: and he stretched himself upon the child; and the flesh of the child waxed warm. Then he returned, and walked in the house to and fro; and went up, and stretched himself upon him: and the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes. And he called Gehazi, and said, Call this Shunammite. So he called her. And when she was come in unto him, he said, Take up thy son. Then she went in, and fell at his feet, and bowed herself to the ground, and took up her son, and went out.

Studying this passage this week, another revelation:

The next time someone in here falls asleep...

- greatly comforted the followers of Jesus Christ in Troas with Good News – he is alive
  - John 14:12      *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.*
  - 2 Cor 12:12      Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.

Then...Paul (v11)

- returned to the upper room on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor
- put some fuel in the tank
- and continued preaching and teaching for another 6 hours...  
18 – 24 hours in total

Now Monday morning, Paul leaves Troas, as he had planned

v13-15 Luke and the others leave Troas by ship to Assos

Paul, on the other hand, walked from Troas to Assos

Why walk?

While it would be a more direct route, it would have also given Paul precious time alone with the Lord...very needful time of spiritual rest and re-charging

Paul rejoins the others on board at Assos and all sail on to

1. Mitylene
2. Chios
3. Samos
4. Trogyllium
5. Miletus

for Paul's next appointment on his way to Jerusalem

v16-17 Paul is focused on getting to Jerusalem with the love gift of the Gentile churches in time for the next Jewish feast – Pentecost, 50 days after Passover

He is on a schedule, there is some time pressure

He is determined to speak to the elders of the church at Ephesus but going to Ephesus would surely bust his schedule of getting to Jerusalem for Pentecost

Paul had spent a total of 3 years there, has many beloved brethren and friends there and they would certainly and lovingly detain him from his appointed rounds

Therefore, Plan B: sail past Ephesus and have the elders would walk about 30 miles to Miletus and meet him there

He is expecting that this will be the last time he sees them and they see him (v25), so he has some “final words” to share with them (v18-35)

Past (v18-21)

Present (v22-24)

Future (v25-31)

Farewell/Carry on (v32-35)

v18-19 Final words to the Ephesian elders – Past

They know by personal experience how the Apostle Paul conducted himself among them, from Day 1 and every day thereafter:

- serving the Lord...never himself
- with all humility of mind...the mind of Christ  
Phil 2:7-8 made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

**Matt 11:28-30** Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden (working so hard to earn God's pleasure by your works, never knowing what is "good enough"), and I will give you rest (I am Good enough for you!). Take my yoke upon you (My righteousness, Matt 6:33), and learn of me (I will do all the heavy lifting, I will teach you of faith, apart from which it is impossible to please the Father); for I am meek (humble) and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest (eternal) unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. (I am pleasing to the Father, apart from Me you never can be, John 15:5b.)

- with many tears...the endless heartache and heart break of a pastor
- (with many) temptations...trials, tribulations, and afflictions
  - 2 Cor 11:23-28 imprisoned, beaten, stoned, shipwrecked, in peril everywhere by everyone, sleeplessness, etc
  - 2 Cor 12:7-10 thorn in the flesh...My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness...Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.
- by the lying in wait of the Jews
  - religious, the traditions of men that make of no effect the Word of God
  - self-righteous, "saved by works"...being 'good enough'
    - Judaizers, false apostles with a false gospel
    - unbelieving, Christ-denying
  - children of the flesh, not the children of promise
  - the greatest burden of his heart (Rom 9:1-8)

v20 They know by personal experience how the Apostle Paul conducted his ministry to them:

- kept nothing back that was profitable, for their good
  - 2 Cor 12:15a And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you
  - Is 21:10 that which I have heard of the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, have I declared unto you.
  - the antithesis of Gnosticism with its secret knowledge only the elites know and hold over the common folks to control them
- declared
  - both publicly and "privately" house-to-house
  - Acts 5:42 daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.

- to both Jews and Gentiles (the Gospel)
  - Heb 6:1                      the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,
  
- repentance toward God
  - Matt 3:1-2                John the Baptist's 1<sup>st</sup> words
  - Matt 4:17                Jesus' 1<sup>st</sup> words
  - 2 Cor 7:10                For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.
  - turn from Self and the world and turn to God for salvation from death
  
- faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ
  - Rom 1:16-17            For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.
  - John 6:29
  - Eph 1:7                    In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

This week at the softball field I had a conversation with a friend and fellow softball player who is caring for his wife who is failing

What I can I ask my wife to make sure she goes to heaven when she passes?  
 (a question planted by Dennis)  
 (evidence that his love for his wife and their circumstances have been used by God to soften his heart and that the Lord opened a door that had been shut)

Be direct: After you take your last breath, where are you going?

She will probably say, "To heaven."

Ask her, "Why? Why would God let you into heaven?"

She will say, "Because I am a good person."

That is one of many wrong answers; there is only one right answer

I shared the Gospel with him, the simplicity and perfection of Jesus Christ  
 He went and asked his wife those questions...and got the answers he expected

So the Holy Spirit stirred me to put on paper for him a response to:

"I am going to heaven because I am a good person."

Meaning: I can earn the salvation of my soul

My merit/performance can be good enough to obligate God to let me into heaven

If that were true,

- I do not need Jesus Christ, nobody does
- God is NOT a loving God but a very cruel and malicious and terrible God for sending Jesus Christ to unnecessarily suffer and die for my sins

Several pages of Scripture to read

But God is NOT cruel and malicious and terrible, He is loving!

And I do need Jesus Christ!

I cannot earn my salvation

My merit/performance is insufficient for God to let me into heaven

So that statement, “I am going to heaven because I am a good person,” is not true, it is a deception.

How can I be saved from eternal death?

1. **Confess:** agree with God – I am a sinner, I have offended God, I am not good enough to get into heaven
2. **Repent:** turn from trusting “I am good enough” to trusting Jesus Christ, who is perfect
3. **Call** on the name of the Lord – ask Jesus Christ into your heart
4. **Receive** by faith the gift of salvation from eternal death

John 5:24      *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.*

v22-23    Final words to the Ephesian elders – Present

I go bound in the spirit...Spirit-led, his steps being directed by the Lord for the Lord's purpose

Jer 10:23      O LORD, I know that the way of man *is* not in himself: *it is* not in man that walketh to direct his steps.  
(Jeremiah's path was a very difficult one!)

Prov 16:9      A man's heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps.

Acts 16:6-9

unto Jerusalem...the very heart of Judaism, territory hostile to Jesus Christ and the Gospel of Grace, with a love offering from the Gentile churches to the persecuted church there

not knowing the things that befall me there...walking by faith like Abraham (Heb 11:8), given direction and having the Big Picture but not the details

save/except knowing the Holy Spirit's testimony in every city that waiting are:

- bonds/chains
- afflictions...trouble

Paul did not know any details but he was told the bottom-line by the Holy Spirit:

Trouble is in store for you in Jerusalem

God tells His friends what (Big Picture) He is doing so they won't be surprised

If the Holy Spirit told me to go somewhere, was directing my steps, and told me that trouble certainly awaits me...would I go? Would you?

Phil 1:29 For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake

2 Tim 3:12 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution

We are not to go looking for trouble but as we go, led by the Spirit, sometimes trouble finds us

So be it.

v24 But...contrary to v22 (not knowing) and v23 (knowing with certainty that trouble awaits)

none of these things move me...what I do not know and what I know for certain

- do not deter me from going where the Holy Spirit is leading me
- cannot change my mind to serve the Lord with all humility of mind, tears, and temptations/trials
- do not affect my decision to follow the Lord, do not cause me to stop walking
- I will walk the talk

John 16:33 *In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.*

Acts 14:22 Confirming the souls of the disciples, *and* exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

1 Thes 3:3-4 no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto. For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know.

1 John 5:4-5 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, *even* our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?



neither count I my life dear unto myself...life on earth in this temporary housing is not the prize I have fixed my eyes on

so that I might finish

1. my course

- priestly schedule in the house of God (1 Chron 23)
- with joy (transcends circumstances)

John 15:11 *These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and *that* your joy might be full.*

2. the ministry

- received from the Lord Jesus (unlike the false apostles, Judaizers)

Acts 9:15-16 *Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.*

(including the trouble awaiting in Jerusalem now)

Gal 1:11-12 But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught *it*, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

- to testify of the gospel of the grace of God  
Eph 2:8-9

Given the enormity of what he said, how can Paul have this mindset?  
Is he foolish, does he have a death wish?

Paul is going to Jerusalem, into “the lion’s den” of hostility to the Gospel

v19

persecution by the Jews at every stop in his journeys

He thinks this is the last time he will see these brethren (on earth)

v25

Not sweating the details but keeping the Big Picture in focus, Paul has a rational mind set

What is the “worst” thing that could happen to him in Jerusalem?

He gets killed...like Stephen and the Apostle James and the prophets before him

But God...has conquered death

1 Cor 15:45-58

Heb 2:14-15 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage

And remember, Paul was given “a taste of heaven”!

2 Cor 12:1b-4 I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

So Paul is seeing and thinking clearly

1 Cor 6:19-20 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Rom 14:8 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

Phil 1:20-23 According to my earnest expectation and *my* hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but *that* with all boldness, as always, *so* now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether *it be* by life, or by death. For to me to live *is* Christ, and to die *is* gain. But if I live in the flesh, this *is* the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:

Phil 3:14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

high calling: “Come up here!”

John 14:1-3

2 Tim 4:6-8 For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished *my* course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

So with clear eyes and a clear mind (2 Tim 1:7), Paul is

- focused on the Finish Line
- resolved to finish well, walking by faith over fear
- intent on hearing Matt 25:21, 23
- knowing that time is short (1 Cor 7:29)

We live in spiritually fierce times...perilous times

- Trouble is around every corner
- Truth has fallen in the street
- Good is called evil and evil is called good
- Lawlessness and violence rule entire cities
- a monetary/financial crisis time bomb is ticking
- the sin of the Amorites (LGBTQ+, Lev 18, Lev 20, especially the delusion of transgenderism) is sweeping the globe
  - attacking the image of God
  - A Bible College in England fired and threatened to report a theologian for a viral tweet in which he said homosexuality is "invading the church."
  - our God-less Gov't is trying to prevent parents from knowing what the public school systems are teaching our kids – the LGBTQ+ perversion
- new pestilences are brewing in the world
- Russia, Iran, and Syria...bolstered by China...are an increasing threat to Israel (but we know what happens)

Do these things, do the Days of Noah and the Days of Lot cause me to stop following Jesus, no matter where He leads me and no matter how much trouble awaits me there?

Will I, when the heat is on,  
save my life and then lose it...am I my own?  
or  
lose my life for Jesus' sake and then find it...am I purchased by the blood of God?

Will I finish well my priestly course and the ministry given to me by Jesus Christ,  
come what may?

Are there ANY conditions on my following Jesus Christ?

Do I "own" 2 Cor 4:1-11 and Acts 20:24?

Is God done with the Church?

- Asbury Christian University in KY
- Morehouse College
- Spelman College
- Clark Atlanta University

Do I want to be a part of what God is doing where He has planted me?