

Ministry of The Holy Spirit
Paul's 3rd Missionary Journey Resumes: Final Words, Part 2
Acts 20:24-38

Last time...Paul resumed his 3rd Missionary Journey, departing from Philippi on his way to Jerusalem

He had many words to say in Troas

He has final words to say to the elders of the church at Ephesus; we covered Past and Present, got as far as v22-24

Words that mean more to us today than they did a year ago, or maybe even a week ago

A. Israel imploding?

7 weeks before the 75th Anniversary of the re-birth of the State of Israel:

Vocal and violent political “Progressives” seeking the overthrow of a conservative Gov’t in order to protect and advance the LGBTQ+ rebellion against the Living God

Note: Both “progressive” (improvement) and LGBTQ+ are

- global movements
- spiritual diseases
- mental illness in danger of becoming a reprobate mind

On the verge of civil war

National shutdown

- Shopping malls are closed
- Doctors only take urgent cases
- The international airport is closed
- Hotel chains are shutting down
- Schools & universities are closed
- All national parks are closed
- All government offices are closed
- All museums are closed
- All banks are closed
- IDF reservists refusing to report

Dangerously close to a military coup

Emboldening Israel’s enemies e.g. Russia and Iran

Halted, albeit temporarily perhaps, by Netanyahu’s delay

B. Shooting in a Christian elementary school in Nashville

Shooter: female wanting to be a male...a Tran with resentment toward the very school she attended with a manifesto yet released – push back from LGBTQ+...hmmmm

Responses from the vocal and violent “Progressives”:

- Journalists blamed Christians and conservatives for banning drag shows in Tennessee as the cause of the shooting
- journalists, entertainers and activists mocked the prayer of Christians
- NBC News suggested trans people are the real victim of Nashville's massacre instead of the students and staff of the private Christian school, running the headline, "Fear pervades Tennessee's trans community amid focus on Nashville shooter's gender identity."
- Top executives at CBS News are demanding staff (news anchors included) to not say the Nashville shooter responsible for killing six people as "transgender,"
- Arizona Gov. Katie Hobbs' press secretary, Josselyn Berry, issued a general death threat on Twitter to “transphobes” hours after the school shooting in Nashville: "Us when we see transphobes," Berry's tweet read, including a GIF of a woman wielding two handguns. (She subsequently resigned)
- Who are the “bad guys”?
 - Christians who believe the Bible, have a Biblical worldview
- Who is the victim?
 - the trans shooter
- Who is the martyr?
 - the trans shooter
- What community is under attack, the Christians or the trans?
 - the Christians

C. In Texas

- A Transgender activist spoke in favor of drag performances during a fiery speech at the Texas State Capitol in an address that led to a physical altercation. She compared Texas state lawmakers to the Nazis in opposition to legislation that would prohibit public libraries and other venues from receiving state funding if they host drag shows.
- An LGBTQ student group at West Texas A&M University filed a lawsuit against its president after he canceled an on-campus charity drag show that he claimed was demeaning to women.
- Activist and trans woman Charlotte Clymer, a biological male, insisted during a recent interview on MSNBC that "God made me in her image. God made me transgender." He alleged that being transgender was so natural, that God created them that way.

D. In NC

- A drag queen did something lewd to a young girl during an LGBTQ pride event at a North Carolina school that enrolls students as young as 14. A video showed multiple adults laughing and watching the drag performer do what he did

E. In USA

- 3/31/23: Trans Day of Visibility
- 4/1/23: Trans Day of Vengeance in Washington DC...cancelled
- A University of Pittsburgh classroom erupted with laughter after a professor argued with swimmer Riley Gaines that an archeologist cannot discern whether a person was male or female by examining their bones...The different bone structure between male and female humans has been a mainstay of anthropological study and forensics, though some parts of modern academia are now denying this observable difference in order to cater to transgender ideology
- A public school teacher trained in sensitivity to transgender students said just two weeks after the public school "training session" one 8th grade boy arrived at school in high heels, a short skirt, open blouse, make-up, and women's jewelry. He demanded to use the girls' restroom. Bizarre things like this are very real, they are increasingly common, and now they are not only protected but promoted. Our government schools have deteriorated into propaganda machines that secretly work for the most perverse while working against those who truly have right to raise their children—parents.

F. In Canada

- The New York Post reported that a bearded male powerlifter identified as a woman to enter the Heroes Classic in Lethbridge, Alberta. Silverberg proceeded to lift almost 370 pounds, shattering the existing Alberta record of 275 pounds.

The Biblical worldview's stance on homosexuality has been branded by the secular humanist worldview as "homophobia"

Now the Biblical worldview's stance on transgenderism and drag queens is branded as "transphobia"

The LGBTQ+ agenda and behaviors are attacks on the image of God and the "progressive" agenda is Is 5:20

We believe the Bible is the inerrant, infallible, and inspired words of God

We have not fear, but power, love, and a sound mind (2 Tim 1:7)

Even world-renowned atheist Richard Dawkins recently stated that talk of more than 2 genders, male and female, is pure nonsense.

Delusional: “having false beliefs even when confronted with facts, usually the result of mental illness”

Fact: On the 6th day of creation...Gen 1:26-27
2 genders...undeniable for nearly 6000 years across the globe...
until now

Q: Is transgender delusion the “strong delusion: in 2 Thes 2?
2 Thes 2:11-13 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them
that perish; because they received not the love of the truth,
that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall
send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:
That they all might be damned who believed not the truth,
but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

The world is in birth pangs – they are becoming stronger and are coming more
frequently
Who thinks persecution of the Church is NOT coming to USA, perhaps with
Trans and drag queens leading the assault?
Who would have ever thought, even in your wildest imagination, that we would
be here?!
Yet here we are, and suddenly

v24

When comes the judgement of God?
Suddenly

How imminent is the return of Jesus Christ?!

Acts 17:30 Because He (God the Father) hath appointed a day, in the
which he will judge the world in righteousness by *that* man
(Jesus Christ) whom he hath ordained; *whereof* he hath
given assurance unto all *men*, in that he hath raised him
from the dead.

Heb 10:25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the
manner of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*: and so much
the more, as ye see the day approaching...a day ordained
by God from before the foundation of the world is upon us!

As we continue our march to the Finish Line...

This time...the remainder of Paul’s final words to the elders of the church at Ephesus
Acts 20:25-38
Final words to the Ephesian elders – Future

v25 All ya'll will not see me again, nor will I see you again...this side of eternity
Paul's expectation: my ministry and my life in this temporary living space very well may
end in Jerusalem (v19b, v23)

v26-27 Facing that possibility (not running from it), Paul is clean before God...

1. there is no blood on his hands!

Ezk 33:1-9

2. he has declared/taught them the entire counsel of God

Kept nothing back, it is all profitable...v20

2 Tim 3:16-17 All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is*
profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for
instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be
perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

There is a radical difference between teaching the Bible

- verse-by-verse, from Genesis 1:1 to Revelation 22:21
- carefully considering every word (1 Sam 3:19) from a word-
for-word translation, not just every thought or a paraphrase
of what God has said
- every topic of what God has said
- in context
- Scripture interpreted by Scripture

and teaching **from** the Bible

- topical teaching, which comes with the risk of not rightly
dividing the Word of Truth (not every topic, not in context)
- using a verse as a springboard and justification for man to
teach what he wants to teach

v28 Take heed...be careful to do as Paul has done

- faithful watchman on the wall to tend/protect the flock of God
- teaching the entire counsel of God to feed the flock of God

Echoed thru Peter, who was so instructed by the risen Lord Jesus (John 21:15-17)

1 Peter 5:1-4 The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder,
and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the
glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God (all the words of
God, NOT the words of men or the words of men about the Word
of God) which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by
constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;
Neither as being lords over *God's* heritage, but being ensamples to
the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall
receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

The church of God, which He has purchased with His own blood
Jesus Christ is...God

This is NOT the church of

- Doug
- Chuck
- Greg
- Joel

Matt 16:15-18 ...upon this rock I will build my church

John 10:11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

Is 40:11 He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry *them* in his bosom, *and* shall gently lead those that are with young.

Jer 3:15 And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.

Eph 4:11-14 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

When does this unity of the faith happen?

In Rev 4...in the Throne Room

Because v26 is not true in most fellowships (faithful watchmen)

Because v27 is not true in most fellowships

and because...

v29-30 Paul knows by personal experience and by revelation of the Holy Spirit that after his departing

1. grievous wolves will enter in

Matt 7:15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

John 10:10a The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy

2. from within shall men will arise

a. speaking perverse things

Gal 1:7 there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

“Progressive” agenda

Woke-ism changing truth and diluting the Word of God
LGBTQ+ acceptance and advancement

b. to draw away disciples after them

false shepherds wanting a personal following for self-glory,
self-enrichment, control over others (lord over)

cults

2 Cor 11:13-15 For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore *it is* no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

2 Peter 2:1-3 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

Rom 16:17-18 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.

Church history: persecution, Church thrived, Satan joined the Church

v31 Paul spent a total of 3 years in Ephesus with this church, being a faithful watchman and a loving, selfless overseer warning of these things

Therefore, in these final words regarding the future

- watch...just as Jesus taught in Matt 24, Matt 25, Matt 26
Cannot watch if are asleep or distracted!
- remember...as Jesus taught in John 15 and John 16
Cannot remember if not in the Word of God every day or in fellowship where iron sharpens iron

These are words for today!

Phil 2:15-16a be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life

1 Tim 4:1-2 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

1 Tim 6:3-5 If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, *even* the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.

2 Tim 3:1 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

2 Tim 4:3-4 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

v32 As Paul is on his way to Jerusalem...expecting trouble and maybe even the end of his ministry and earthly life...he commends/commits God's church at Ephesus to

- God...Whose Church they are
- the Word of Grace...the Gospel of Grace that
 - is ALWAYS under attack in the world, even to this day
 - is able to build up/edify (1 Cor 14:3)
 - gives us an inheritance – eternal life, set apart from the world and unto God Himself (Eph 2:8-9)

The old narrow path, not the “progressive” broad way in the world
No other gospel
No other Shepherd
No other God

Now in closing...his Farewell

v33-35 Paul has declared and lived before them the heart of God and mind of Christ

- coveted nothing in this world...only them
as he did the Corinthians (2 Cor 12:14-15)
- not burdened them but have lightened their load
as in Corinth
- modeled, was an example of
 - Rom 15:1 We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.
 - these words of Jesus not recorded in the Gospels
 - Giver (James 1:17), not a taker
Luke 6:38a Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over
 - cheerful Giver (2 Cor 9:7)
 - The Law of Love, the Royal Law

v36-38 Paul's final words conclude with prayer

The pain of separation sets in as these brethren part ways

- the elders back to Ephesus (with Timothy?)
- Paul on to Jerusalem and whatever awaits him there...led of the Spirit

Regarding the church at Ephesus:

- fast forward perhaps 5 years, Paul is inspired to write a letter to the Ephesians
 - Ch 1-3 the riches we have in Christ
 - Ch 4-6 the responsibilities we have in Christ...walk, stand
- fast forward perhaps 35 years, Jesus dictates a letter to the church at Ephesus
 - Rev 2:1-8
 - eyes on the wolves and dividers speaking perverse things
(Acts 20:28-30)
 - but eyes off Jesus, not taking care of 1st things 1st
 - result: lampstand taken
 - today: Ephesus is only ruins

Regarding us, as a church and as individual followers of Jesus Christ:

- We are in the world but not of the world
- Examine ourselves:
 - Are we taking care of 1st things 1st, is Jesus still our first love?
 - Are we heeding the warning of the Holy Spirit regarding wolves and perverse things?
 - Are we going to stand for the Truth (The Word of God, a Person)?
 - No compromise
 - No add to or take from
 - No watering down

Defining and establishing Truth is not given to man

Science does not define truth, Science discovers evidence of Truth
established by the Creator

The Source of Truth is the Creator, not me or any other creature

What is given to men: to believe God (His revealed Truth) or to not believe

Truth does not change, depending on whether we believe it or not

Truth is not what men think is true (relative to me) but is which is revealed
by God

If I believe (“identify”) that I am a female, am I a female?

If I believe that, I am delusional

What is true **is** true, regardless of what I think about it

- Where are we going?

Toward trouble!

A smooth sea never made a skilled sailor

Christians will become shipwrecked or become very skilled sailors

And toward the Rapture!

Until our ministry is finished, what is the Christian response to the deluded in the
world?

To be Christ-like

- Know who the enemy is – the deceiver, not those who are
opposing themselves and taken captive by the devil
- Bless those that persecute you (Rom 12:14)
- Avenge not yourselves (Rom 12:18)
- Be not overcome of evil but overcome evil with good (Rom 12:21)
- Earnestly contend for the faith (Jude 3)
- Love (John 3:16, Rom 5:8)
- Be not deceived (Matt 24:3)...no matter how many times or
how loudly a lie is spoken, it remains a lie
- Guard your heart and your mind (Phil 4:7)
- put on the armor of God (Eph 6:10-18)

- a. With Whom and where do we want to go?
 - Rom 8:14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.
 - wherever the Spirit leads in these spiritually fierce times...
 - “Here I am Lord, send me.”