

# 9

## MEETINGS AND FAREWELLS

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ACTS 20-21:14



When Paul said goodbye to the leaders at Ephesus, it was the only address in Acts to a Christian audience. The leaders that are addressed are called “elders,” “pastors” and “overseers.” In our day, when there is much confusion about the nature and purpose of the pastoral ministry, and much questioning about whether pastors are like social workers, psychotherapists, educators, facilitators, or administrators, it is important to let the Bible speak. Pastors are the shepherds of Christ’s sheep, called to tend, feed, and protect. Paul had taken his call as pastor seriously. He had poured his life into the Ephesians, lived well before them and was now leaving them, putting the care of the church in their hands.

### FROM EPHESUS TO MILETUS (20:1-16)

1. Read Acts 20:1-12. Here Luke writes another “we”<sup>1</sup> passage in which he lays out the missionary team’s travels in considerable detail. What does Luke say are Paul’s purposes in his travels?
2. After a passage which summarizes several months of activity over a large region (20:1-6), why does Luke slow down his account to tell a detailed story about Eutychus (20:7-12)?

<sup>1</sup>Paul clearly favored **TEAMWORK** in ministry. He rarely travelled alone and, when he did, he often described his longing for companionship. On this missionary journey he was accompanied by men that represented each of the areas he had ministered to and would be visiting.

3. From verses 7-12, how do you think you would have been affected by the worship service at Troas?

## PAUL'S FOND FAREWELL (20:17-38)

Paul summons the elders of the Ephesian church to meet him at Miletus. As he speaks to them, Paul reflects on his time in Ephesus, the longest period he has ever spent with a church, and on his pattern of ministry and its significance.

4. Read Acts 20:17-38. Describe the tone of this passage.
5. In verses 33-35, what example had Paul set for the Ephesian church? In what ways might we apply this example today?

## ON TO JERUSALEM (21:1-14)

6. Read Acts 21:1-14. What urgent warnings does Paul receive as he travels? How do you think those who observed Paul were affected by his singlemindedness?
7. Paul's friends at Caesarea eventually accepted his decision to go to Jerusalem saying in verse 14, "Let the will of the Lord be done." What are some situations you are facing right now where you need to begin to say, "Let the will of the Lord be done"?