

Paul and the Ephesian Elders Part 1

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[0 : 0 0] 20. Acts chapter 20. Last week we left off at verse 16 where Paul is starting his, we call it farewell tour.

He has visited some of the churches for the last time and now he is, his eye is on going to Jerusalem. He is determined to get there by Pentecost. But before he does, he's going to meet with the Ephesian elders.

And we saw last week where he was at Troas and they met upon the first day of the week. And we talked about how things were beginning to transition to going from meeting on the Sabbath to meeting on the first day of the week.

And to be clear, they weren't disregarding the commandment. But remember, the Sabbath was given to Israel. The Sabbath was given to the Jews as a way of them being different from other people.

And as we move into the new covenant, we celebrate the resurrection. That's our hope. That's the only hope we have. Because Paul said, if Christ be not risen, then we are all still dead in our sins.

[1 : 1 1] So that is our hope of salvation is the fact that not only Christ died, but he rose again. And so now we see that they are meeting together to worship. They're meeting together to have the Lord's Supper, the breaking of bread.

And so they're doing all these things that constitute worship. They're doing it on the first day of the week now because of the transition from old to new covenant. And that doesn't do away with the commandments.

We're still supposed to obey the commandments. First John tells us about that, right? If people aren't obeying the commandments, living a life of disobedience, then you can have a good reason to question their salvation.

So we're still supposed to obey the commandments that God has given us. This one has just kind of transitioned from Saturday to Sunday. But we still worship the Lord and him only.

And we meet together as a memorial of the resurrection. And so Paul has met with them at Troas. We've seen the healing of Eutychus after he fell out of the window and was taken up for dead.

[2 : 1 4] But he was healed. And now Paul has made it to Miletus where he's going to call for the elders of the Ephesian church.

Now remember he spent nearly three years in Ephesus. That was the longest time he spent in any one location was in Ephesus. So this was a special place to him. These were special people.

And later on from prison he's going to write an epistle to them. And so these were special, special people. And so he calls for the elders of the church at Ephesus.

And that's where we pick up in verse 17. And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called the elders of the church. And when they were come to him he said unto them, You know from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, serving the Lord with all humility of mind and with many tears and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews, and how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have showed you and have taught you publicly and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

And now behold I go bound in the Spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there, save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me.

[3 : 40] But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

And now behold I know that ye all among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God shall see my face no more. Wherefore I take you to record this day that I am pure from the blood of all men, for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.

Take heed therefore unto yourselves and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood.

For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, sparing not the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

Therefore watch and remember that by the space of three years I cease not to warn everyone night and day with tears. And now brethren I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

[4 : 54] I have coveted no man's silver or gold or apparel. Yea, you yourselves know that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me.

I have showed you all things, how that so laboring you ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said it is more blessed to give than to receive.

And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down and prayed with them all, and they all wept sore and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more, and they accompanied him unto the ship.

So Paul knew this would be the last time he met with these Ephesian elders. And so he's kind of given them what we would call his farewell address. And so he had been with him for three years.

He had spent a lot of time with him. He had went house to house. He had been faithful ministering there. And so now he is leaving the church in the hands of the elders.

[5 : 57] And so he has called for the elders. And now we talked a little bit about last week, the elders, bishops, pastors, elders. Those are three terms to kind of talk about the same people.

It's just different aspects of their office. The word elder, when we think of elder, we think of the word as somebody being more mature, somebody having experience, not just older in age, but spiritual maturity, spiritual experience, spiritual discernment, judgment, someone with those characteristics.

So that goes with the elder. The idea of bishop is the idea of overseer. The word is episkopos, meaning to view over or to see over something is, is the idea of bishop.

And Paul is going to talk about, they've been given that position. They're overseers. And then the word pastor actually only appears one time in the new Testament. In the form of the word pastor in Ephesians chapter four, verse 11, that same word, the same Greek word is used multiple times in the new Testament, but it's often translated as shepherd.

And so pastor carries the idea of shepherding the flock, which Paul is going to command these elders to do as well. And so you have the same group of people referred to as elders being told to take oversight of the church, be a bishop, and also to feed or to shepherd the church, be a pastor.

[7 : 23] So these are all three aspects of the same office. And there was more than one. There was a plurality. There was a group of these people, all responsible for the pastoral care of the church.

And you find that was common in the new Testament. Paul appointed elders, plural in every church, singular in Galatia. And so a lot of times you had more than one. You had a group of people.

And there are benefits to that. There's shared responsibility. All the load doesn't fall on one person. There's also accountability. There's accountability in numbers. When it's just one person, all the accountability is just there on that one person.

But when it's a shared responsibility, it's also shared accountability. People can hold each other accountable and can motivate each other in that way. And so Paul calls for these elders of the church, and he will commission them.

He will charge them with their responsibilities as part of this farewell address. But the first thing he does is he refers back to his ministry that he's had there in Ephesus. He says in verse 18, And when they were come to him, he said to them, You know from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, serving the Lord with all humility of mind and with many tears and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews.

[8 : 48] So his motive of ministry was serving the Lord. It was never about him. It was never about Paul. And you think about Paul list all his credentials in Philippians chapter 3.

He talked about all that he had done in his past life and all that he had accomplished. And he thought, you know, if anybody had reason to boast, it was him. But he said, I count all of that as done that I may win Christ.

And so for Paul, it was all about Christ. It was all about serving the Lord. It was not about him. It was not about people seeing Paul. It was them seeing Jesus. That's why when Paul said, I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live.

Yet not I, but Christ lives in me. And so it was all about Christ living in him and working out of him. And so that was his motive in ministry, was serving the Lord with all humility of mind.

And so remember when Paul told the Philippians in chapter 2, he said, let this mind be in you, which is also in Christ Jesus. He goes on later to talk about Jesus humbled himself and became obedient unto death.

[9 : 56] Same idea there of humility. That not thinking of yourself more highly than what you are, but having a humility of mind, having a servant's mind, having a servant's heart.

And so Paul served the Lord with all humility of mind and with many tears and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews.

It amazes me. To me, one of the neat things about scripture is we see the humanity of these people that God really used. Think about how God used Peter. On the day of Pentecost, Peter preached and 3,000 were saved.

A few days later, he preached and 5,000 were saved. And Peter was the first one to really give the gospel to the Gentiles. We got two epistles that were written by Peter. So think about all the ways that God used Peter, but think about how human Peter was.

Think about the mistakes that Peter made that are recorded in scripture that we can see. And when we look through this and we've seen Paul's ministry up to this point, Paul was human. Paul faced a lot of the same things we faced.

[11 : 00] He had people that were out to get him. He had times of fear. Right? And when he got to Corinth, the Lord had to comfort him and to encourage him, said, Paul, fear not, for I have many people in this city.

They're not going to do you harm. So Paul faced fear. Paul faced discouragement sometimes. He's the man that said, refuge failed me. No man cared for my soul.

And then there's another part where he says, only Luke is with me. And one of his later epistles. So he faced things. He was a human. He was a human that God used, but he was he was human.

He faced a lot of the same emotions. He faced a lot of the same temptations and trials that we face. And so we look at these people in scripture and somehow we put them on this pedestal of, well, they weren't human like we were.

Yeah, they were. They were human just like we were, but they were totally committed to serving the Lord from their heart. And but we see so we see the humanity of Paul through this.

[11 : 59] He faced many tears and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews. The idea there was the Jews were plotting against him. That's the term lying in wait. They were plotting against him, trying to catch him, trying to trip him up, trying to even take his life in some points.

And we'll read later that some Jews get together and say, we'll not eat or drink until Paul is dead. And so this is a man that was very much hated by people. People were always out to to kill him.

He had to be lowered over a wall at one point to avoid people capturing him. And so he has he's experienced these things. And with those, he experienced the same emotions that other people would.

There were times of fear. There were times of discouragement. There were times of loneliness. These were things that Paul and people at Ephesus could see that people at Ephesus were there with him.

They could see he was a man that was consistent and faithful to the ministry that God had given him. But yet he's also human. And so that's that's the thing we have to realize. Even the best we would consider the best servants of the Lord were human.

[13 : 04] They had their battles. They had their they had their struggles with things. They had their hard times and their difficult times. And Paul went through them as well. And he said, how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have showed you and have taught you publicly from house to house.

So Paul's motive was serving the Lord, but his method was consistency. That's how that's how he was teaching them not only consistent words, but consistent life.

He said, I've showed you and have taught you publicly from house to house. Paul realized the importance of what you do and what you say going together because that's that works together.

Because if you're saying one thing and doing something totally different, you're not going to have any influence. People are not going to respect that. But if you're living and saying matches up, then people are going to respect that.

People are going to take notice of that. And it's interesting that he did it for three years. It wasn't just a few days here and he was gone. They got to see him day after day after day for a long extended period of time, faithfully not only saying something, but faithfully doing what he was saying, showing them, not only telling them, but showing them how to live and showing them by example.

[14 : 25] This is why in one of his epistles he could tell those believers, follow me as I follow Christ. Because his life backed up his words. And so he was consistent in not only what he said, but he was consistent in what he did.

And they matched. They went together. They collaborated together. What he did and what he said were consistent. And what was he doing?

He was testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. That's the way of salvation. That's how a person is saved. Repentance, that's a change of mind.

You take a person that's a sinner. They love sin. They enjoy sin. They pursue sin. That's all they can do. They can't do anything that's not sin because they're totally consumed with it. They're totally ate up with it.

And so they're just a sinner. Sinner by birth. Sinner by nature. Sinner by choice. Sin is totally in control of their life. And that's, and they enjoy it.

[15 : 24] And so there comes a point in time where the Holy Spirit begins to work on them and they start to realize, I'm a sinner. I'm wicked. I deserve to be punished for my sin.

And I need help. And Jesus is the only one that can help me. And I need his help. That's, that's repentance. When you start, when you turn from seeing yourself as somebody that's all right, seeing yourself as somebody that's a good person to realizing, no, I'm a sinner.

I stand justly condemned, deserving the wrath of God. And only Jesus is my help. That's a repentant heart. And when you reach to him by faith and trust him completely, that's believing in him, believing who he is and what he's done.

And he is the savior and that he'll save you. That is repentance and faith working together. And that's what Paul has, has taught these people. Repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

And now behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there. And so a lot of, if you read commentators, you got some that are on both sides of the fence.

[16 : 31] Some commentators will say Paul made a mistake by going to Jerusalem. Others say Paul is in the will of God by going to Jerusalem. It's always good when you can read different commentators and they disagree because that forces you into the scripture.

And you got to think, well, if people, some people say this, some people say this. Well, I got to figure out what's the scripture really, really say. So that's actually more helpful than what we realize sometimes is when we read disagreeing opinions, because that forces us to think, well, what does the scripture say?

Because ultimately that's, that's what's important. It's what, what does the scripture tell us? And so I think you'd be amazed at how many are on one side, how many on the other.

Some disagree that Paul, some say that Paul should not have went to Jerusalem. Paul say that, some say that Paul did. Um, and so I think, uh, one commentator made a very helpful comment when he said, when Paul was not supposed to go somewhere and he tried to, it's like the Lord put up roadblocks.

Think about back in chapter 16, Paul said, I want to go here. And the spirit of God said, no. And he kind of blocked away there. And Paul said, okay, well, I'll go here. No, the Lord wouldn't allow it.

[17 : 43] And so where did he finally end up? He ended up in Macedonia. Macedonia. The Lord showed him a vision of hearing that Macedonian call where the man from Macedonia said, come over and help us. And Paul said, well, that's probably where the Lord wants us to go.

And so that's where he went. And so anytime Paul tried to go somewhere that wasn't where the Lord wanted him to go, it's like God put up a roadblock there and said, no, you can't go there. And so when Paul was going to Jerusalem and wanted to go to Jerusalem, there were no roadblocks there.

There were warnings saying, when you get there, here's what's going to happen. When you get there, you're going to be bound. You're going to be taken as a prisoner. And so there were warnings of this is what awaits you when you get there.

But there was never anything from God to hinder him from going to Jerusalem. So that leads me to think that Paul was right to go to Jerusalem because God didn't stop him. Previously in his missionary journeys, God would stop him when he was trying to go somewhere that God didn't want him to go.

And so by the fact that God allowed him to go to Jerusalem, that was showing that that's where the Lord wanted him. And remember back in chapter 9, the Lord told him, you're going to suffer for my namesake.

[18 : 55] And at one point he told him, you're going to stand before kings and rulers. And that doesn't happen until Paul is imprisoned. And then he's going to appear before Felix and Festus and Agrippa and all these people as a prisoner.

But he's actually fulfilling those things that God promised that he would do in his life and eventually ends up in Rome. And so all of these things happen. I think my belief is that Paul was right.

He was going where the Lord wanted him to go. Had he not been going there, the Lord would have detoured him off to where he was supposed to be. And so Paul is going to Jerusalem and he knows that when he gets there, he knows what awaits him there.

And he is telling these people, you're not going to see my face anymore. He knew this was going to be his last time seeing them. And he knew that, you know, once he got to Jerusalem, that was probably going to start the last chapter of his life.

And they pick up on that. We'll see that at the end of the chapter. They pick up on, he's saying, you know, this is, this is it. I'm going to Jerusalem and there's a imprisonment going to happen there.

[20 : 04] And then they knew that one thing would probably lead to another. And so notice verse 23, save that the Holy Ghost witnesses in every city saying that bonds and afflictions abide me.

But none of these things move me. Neither count I my life dear unto myself so that I might finish my course with joy. And the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus Christ to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

Now, here's another reason I think we can say that Paul was right in his going to Jerusalem. When you read his last epistle to Timothy, 2 Timothy, which is probably the last epistle he wrote before he died.

In chapter, in one of the chapters, he tells Timothy, I have followed a good fight. I have finished my course. And so the fact that he could say, what did he say here?

He said, so that I might finish my course with joy and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus. Some of the last words he writes to Timothy, I have finished my course.

[21 : 04] And so Paul followed where God was leading him. And so he could write to Timothy at the end, I've finished my course. I've kept the faith. And so Paul was determined to serve the Lord.

He was determined to follow the Lord. He was determined to go where he was supposed to go, even knowing that it would probably cost him his life. Did you see that verse 24? But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself.

He said, my life's not dear to me. What's dear to him was finishing his course, finishing the ministry that God had given him. That's what mattered to him. He viewed that higher above his own personal safety.

You know, it's human nature to be self-preservationist, right? We are out for our protection, right? And so Paul was not that way.

Paul said, you know, that's not what's important to me. Protecting my health, my safety, my well-being is not what's important to me. What's important to me is serving the Lord and finishing the course that he has and fulfilling the ministry that God has for him.

[22 : 11] That's what was important in Paul's life. And so he had given them, he had testified of the gospel of the grace of God. Remember, gospel is good news.

And what's the gospel? It's the death, the burial, the resurrection of Christ. You can find that in 1 Corinthians chapter 15, verses 1 through 4. Paul lays that out. Here's the gospel. Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures.

That he was buried and that he rose again according to the scriptures. That's the gospel. And it's the gospel of grace. Grace is unmerited favor. In other words, you don't have to work for it.

Grace is something God gives because he loves you, not because you earned it. If you earn something, it's a wage. If you're given something, it's in grace.

It's in mercy. And it's the gospel of grace. Salvation is by grace. It's a gift. It's unmerited. It's unearned. The moment we start to say, well, I got to do this to earn it, then it's no longer grace.

[23 : 13] It's a wage. There's a difference. So it's the gospel. It's the good news of the grace of God. And grace, someone has defined grace as God giving favor to those who deserve his wrath.

It's a definition of grace. God giving favor or God showing kindness to those who deserve his wrath. So that's what grace is. And it's the gospel of grace.

And he's going to write to these same people in Ephesians and say, it's by grace that you're saved. Through faith and that not of yourselves. It is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.

Verse 25. And now behold, I know that he all among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God shall see my face no more. So here Paul is interchangeably using the idea of the gospel and the kingdom.

Because how do you get in the kingdom? He told Nicodemus, you got to be born again. So if you want to get in the kingdom of God, you got to be born again. How do you get born again? You believe the gospel. And so these two go together, the gospel and the kingdom.

[24 : 17] It says, wherefore, I take you to record this day that I am pure from the blood of all men. And so remember, this is probably a reference back to in the Old Testament book of Ezekiel.

Ezekiel is telling those people or God is telling him, if I set a watchman over my people and they fail to warn the people, their blood will I require at his hands.

And so Paul is telling them, everybody here, I've given you the gospel. I've showed you. I've taught you. I'm pure from the blood of all men. I am not going to be responsible for your eternity, basically, is what he's saying.

Because I've given you the gospel. I've given you the truth. I've showed you and taught you publicly from house to house. Therefore, I'm pure from the blood of all men. None of your blood will be required at my hands.

That's a powerful statement for somebody to be able to say in a city the size of Ephesus. That was as big as it was in that day, as important as it was in that day, for somebody to be able to say, I'm pure from the blood of all men.

[25 : 23] Meaning, I'm not going to be responsible for those who die without God. I've warned them. I've taught them. I've showed them their blood's not going to be required at my hands.

It says, for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. And so that kind of wraps up the part where Paul is kind of reviewing his ministry.

Now he's going to transition from the past to the present. Now he's going to speak directly to these elders that he is called together to meet with him. Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

Now remember, these are the elders. Remember, elder, bishop, pastor, three aspects of same person. Elder, spiritual maturity. Bishop, overseer, pastor, shepherd.

And you're going to see these things in this verse. Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseer.

[26 : 29] Overseer, that's the word episkopos, where we get the word bishop from. Epi, meaning over or above. And skopos, meaning the idea of seeing or viewing.

So to see over, to view over. Episkopos, bishop, overseer. Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseer to feed the church of God.

The feed there is the verb form of the noun we get the word shepherd from. Or pastor. Shepherd. Be a pastor to the flock. Shepherd the flock. Feed.

Feed the flock. Feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood. So Paul is laying on them the responsibility of their position.

And the great responsibility that goes with it. And so Paul is telling them, this group of people you're over, this church that you're over, God purchased at the expense of the blood of his son.

[27 : 28] Your job is to feed them. Your job is to care for them. Your job is to protect them. And so think about the awesome responsibility that lays on a pastor or an elder or a bishop.

You are seeing over a group of people that Jesus purchased with his own blood. And he's saying, these people that I've purchased with my blood.

God the Father is saying, these people that purchased with the blood of my son, your job is to protect them. Your job is to feed them. Your job is to warn them.

Your job is to care for their souls. Think about the responsibility there. Think about the accountability there. That lays on the shoulders of those who are elders, who are bishops, who are pastors.

The accountability is huge. The responsibility is frightening, really. If you think about it that way. Because you are a pastor, an elder, a bishop, is entrusted with a group of people that God says, cost me the blood of my son to get.

[28 : 31] And he gave him willingly and gave him sacrificially and purchased this group of people with his own blood. And now he's saying, your job is to care for them.

Your job is to feed them. Your job is to protect them. That's why these men are given that long list of qualifications in 1 Timothy chapter 3 and Titus chapter 1.

Because of the responsibility, because of the accountability that goes with being in this position that they're in. They have a huge responsibility.

And that's why it says, take heed, therefore, unto yourselves. Take heed. Protect yourselves. Watch yourself. Live like Paul is saying, I showed you how to do this.

So take heed to yourself. You show the people now. You tell the people. You live this in front of them. And now he's laying all these responsibilities on them.

[29 : 30] Because you think about how many, think about all the eyes that are watching these people. Ephesus was a big city. And as far as we know, this is the only church there. So think about all the people that are looking at them.

And going to follow their example. Follow their lead. How many people these people are responsible for. And so that's why Paul lists those qualifications.

Remember, Timothy was actually a pastor in Ephesus for a time. And so when Paul gives those listing of those qualifications in 1 Timothy 3, he's talking to a man that has been here in Ephesus.

And so he's telling them to take heed to yourselves in the flock which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseer. The idea of protector. Someone watching over. Protecting the flock.

Feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood. Be a shepherd to them. Feed them. So that's, you see in there the responsibility of being. That's why they're the elders.

[30 : 29] Spiritually mature. Because it takes that to be the person that's going to be the guardian. Or watch over these and lead these people like a shepherd. A shepherd is to see that they get fed from a reliable source.

The shepherd is to make sure they're protected from things that are outside. Outside that they cannot protect themselves against. And so that's important. And that's why Paul says take heed to yourself.

The shepherd has to live in such a way that the sheep respect and will follow them. They have to take heed to themselves. And it's all the temptations that come against them.

I was reading an article recently. It talked about, you know, pastors are being fired these days at an alarming rate. And they listed some of the reasons. Of course, financial. Mishandlings of finances.

They get in trouble financially. Sexual impurity. They get in trouble with church members or other people besides their wife. And so they have those battles that people are falling to.

[31 : 33] And they're getting fired because they're no longer qualified. And then you have people are going crazy on social media. Posting things that are not uplifting to the Lord.

And bringing discredit to the gospel. And then there are people who are plagiarizing. Who are saying, this is what I've got from spending time in the word. But yet they're going and just copying and pasting.

And preaching somebody else's sermon. And not spending time in the word. And so people are being fired because they're realizing. Churches are realizing they're not. This is what they're commanded to do.

And so a lot of pastors are facing those kinds of situations. Because of failing to do these things that Paul is telling these Ephesian elders.

So the same temptations that were befalling them. Probably greater now because of, think of the internet. They didn't have that back then. And so all the different temptations.

[32 : 28] And all the different things that people are confronted with nowadays. And so it's a real heavy responsibility. Real heavy load of accountability laying on these men that Paul is saying.

It's your responsibility. This section of people. This group of people that cost the blood of the Savior to purchase. You've been given these people to feed.

To protect. To watch over. Think about the level of accountability at the judgment seat. That comes with that. He says, for I know this. That after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you.

Not sparing the flock. So he's warning them. After I leave. People are going to come in. And then also of your own selves shall men arise. Speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them.

So Paul is warning them that there's going to come. Wolves are going to come in. But a lot of times the biggest enemies the church faces is not from without. The biggest enemies the church faces a lot of times is from within their very ranks.

[33 : 32] And that's what Paul is saying here. Also of your own selves shall men arise. People from within are going to cause troubles. So a lot of times if you hear of a church splitting or a church falling or a church no longer being faithful to the gospel.

A lot of times sad to say if you trace it to the source. The source started inside the church somewhere. People get this idea. People get this idea. This temptation comes in.

And people start to go with it. And it just kind of does the ripple effect. And before you know it the church is split. The church is not what it used to be. And if you read Ephesians.

If you read the book of Revelation chapter 2. The first church that John addresses is the church at Ephesus. These people. And Jesus says I have somewhat against you.

You've left your first love. He said repent or else I will come to you quickly and remove the candlestick out of its place. So the very things that Paul was talking about was happening when John is writing some 30 plus years later in the book of Revelation.

[34 : 37] He addresses the church at Ephesus of these very things that Paul said would happen. And so these are things that we have to watch out for. These are things that although the times have changed.

They've not really changed all that much. It's still the same things we have to fight against and we have to battle against. And so next week we'll pick up there with verse 31 and finish with Paul's concluding remarks to the Ephesian elders.

Let's pray. Father we thank you for.