

Building Our Church Legacy

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[0:00] Just get overwhelmed with God's grace, you know what I mean? Isn't God's grace good?

Let's take our Bibles, let's go to the book of Acts chapter 20. Acts chapter 20, if you're visiting with us or need to pull out that Bible in the chair in front of you.

Pull that out, go towards the back, find page 109, 109, 109, Acts 20.

I'm going to study the first 16 verses this morning. Acts 20, verses 1 through 16. Again, page 109 in that Bible.

And after the uproar had ceased, Paul sent for the disciples. When he had exhorted them and taken his leave of them, he departed to go to Macedonia.

[1:10] And when he had gone through those districts and had given them much exhortation, he came to Greece. And there he spent three months. And when a plot was formed against him by the Jews as he was about to set sail for Syria, he determined to return to Macedonia.

He was accompanied by Sopater of Berea, the son of Purus, and my heir, Starchus and Segundus of the Thessalonians, Gaius of Derbe and Timothy and Tychicus and Trophimus of Asia.

But these had gone on ahead and were waiting for us at Troas. And we sailed from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread and came to them at Troas within five days. And there we stayed seven days. And on the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul talked to them, intending to depart the next day.

And he prolonged his message until midnight. And there were many lamps in the upper room where we were gathered together. And there was a certain young man named Eutychus, sitting on the windowsill, sinking into a deep sleep.

As Paul kept on talking, he was overwhelmed, overcome by sleep, and fell down from the third floor and was picked up dead. But Paul went down and fell upon him.

[2:30] And after embracing him, he said, Do not be troubled, for his life is in him. And when he had gone back up and had broken the bread and eaten, he talked with them a long while until daybreak and so departed.

And they took away the boy alive. And they were greatly comforted. But we, going ahead to the ship, set sail for Assis, intending from there to take Paul on board.

Thus he had arranged it, intending himself to go by land. And when he met us at Asos, we took him on board and came to Middelie. And sailing from there, we arrived the following day, Abbas at Chios.

And the next day we crossed over Samus. And the day following, we came to Miletus. For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus in order that he might not have to spend time in Asia, for he was hurrying to be in Jerusalem, if possible, on the day of Pentecost.

In Time Magazine, this past week, January 20th, an article is entitled, What History Can Teach President Obama About His Legacy?

[3:42] How much control, says the writer, does a U.S. president have over his legacy?

Wednesday, the writer's writing this, marks the beginning of President Barack Obama's final year in office for previous U.S. presidents.

This has been a time, excuse me, yes, this has been a time to sure up their legacy. The writer goes on and brings up Andrew Johnson in his article, America's first post-Civil War president and the first president to be impeached.

But what is Andrew Johnson's legacy in recent years? His pet mice. Mice, yes, his pet mice.

During the dark days of Andrew Johnson's impeachment, he would actually woo the mice there in the White House with flour and water.

The writer continues on later on in the article, On leaving office, Johnson no doubt wished to be remembered as a staunch defender of states' rights, white supremacy, and the U.S. Constitution. [5:04] His opponents, meanwhile, expected the outgoing president to be remembered as a stubborn, obstructionist bigot who squandered an opportunity to remake the South.

At the end of the article, he says, A foe to so many of his fellow humans, this new Andrew Johnson lives on as a friend to mice. It's an unlikely legacy.

To say the least. One that America's 17th president scarcely could have seen coming. But such is often the case with presidential legacies. No matter what a president does well in office, a legacy is crafted by those who come after.

Will that be the same thing for us? Will that be the same thing for us as a church? A legacy means something handed down by a predecessor.

Simple definition. Will that be the same thing for us? Will that be the same thing for us? Will that be the same thing for us? Will that be for us then? No matter what a church does? A legacy is crafted by those who come after us.

[6:20] What kind of legacy will we leave as a church in the years to come? In October of this year, I'll be here 10 years.

The longest tenor of a pastor in the history of this church. The longest was almost 8 years. The average is 2.4 years in this church.

What kind of legacy will we be known for over the next decade? Over the next 10 years?

What kind of legacy do we want to leave? Will it be those who come after us that will leave that legacy? Do we want that? As we come to this portion of Acts, let's just do it.

Let's just be who we are. Let God use us to fulfill His mission. We come to this where I title Building Our Church Legacy.

[7:33] Building Our Church Legacy. Here in chapter 20. These first 16 verses of chapter 20. What kind of legacy do we want to leave as a church?

As we are fulfilling God's mission, we are building a legacy. And hopefully He's involved with us with the legacy that we want to build.

What legacy is that? As God has been so gracious to us, saving and transforming us in the Lord Jesus Christ, He will work in us to leave a legacy of grace, encouragement, training, and devotion to the gospel.

what kind of legacy? What kind of legacy? We want to leave a legacy of grace. A legacy that we're known to be a church of encouragement.

We're known as a church that loves to train up others. We're known as a church that's devoted to the gospel word. It just comes out of us like sweat.

[8:55] We proclaim the gospel word. It's that kind of legacy. A legacy of grace, encouragement, training, devotion.

Those are our four key words. Specifically emphasizing the word grace. It's a church where leaders are full of grace and the people are full of grace and encouraging words.

Leaders train up others to be leaders and the people are devoted to the gospel word. So God has been so gracious to us.

He will work with us to build our church legacy. Legacy built on grace. Built on encouragement. Built on devotion to Christ.

That type of legacy. It's leaders who are gracious encouraging God's people. It's leaders who train up others to be leaders.

[10:02] It's people who are devoted to the gospel word. It's members who sacrifice so much to hear the gospel taught over and over again day in, day out.

When we look at this passage, I mean, we see Paul leaves Ephesus. He travels to various areas. He's strengthening the believers. He goes to Greece. Achaia, kind of. Macedonia. There's a plot to kill him. He stops in Troas. We get a little snapshot of what he was doing in Troas.

And then he ends up stopping at these different ports. And then he comes to Miletus. where he's going to address the elders of the church of Ephesus, which we'll look at next week.

Why was Paul taking all this time with the believers? What was he doing?

[11:00] Well, he knew he wasn't going to be back. He knew he wasn't coming back. He wanted to confirm the believers and the faith and give one last training exercise to those in leadership.

What kind of Paul do we see here? Well, normally people think Paul is the male chauvinist, right? Roar women.

That's the type of Paul people. Or maybe it's the Paul who's like... That's not the Paul you see here. You see a gentle Paul.

Thoughtful, gracious, kind, encouraging pastor and a reproducing leader. That's the type of Paul you see here. Not the typical, stereotypical type dude, Paul, guy thing.

A shepherd. Intentional in his warnings and encouragements. You see, themes here in just these 16 verses which gives you just a historical narrative themes of pastoral care, leadership, sacrifice, even the gracious power of God.

[12:20] So let's move into the text. I'll take bigger chunks like the first three verses. I want to center on something here in this first verse after the uproar had ceased, Paul had sent for the disciples.

And when he exhorted them to leave the part of good Macedonia. Probably engaging with them, both dialogue and teaching them. But wait a second.

Put the brakes on. One writer puts it like this, quote, Paul was so centered on the welfare of others that he sent for the disciples in order to encourage them, end quote.

There was this major upheaval in chapter 19. Paul wanted to address this mob. They would have torn his limbs off his arms.

And after it ceased, what did he do? He sent for the disciples because he wanted to encourage them? Give them some encouraging words in the midst of the opposition? This guy's amazing.

[13:22] We need more shepherds like this. We need more leaders like this. We need to pray that I will be like this. Pray that I will be this kind of shepherd.

Pray that we'll have more shepherds and leaders in this church like this. He left them coming to Macedonia, going through those churches, probably giving them exhortation too.

Stopped in Greece, which is Achaia. Notice verse 3, he spent three months there, probably exhorting them too. Maybe he visited Corinth during that time.

Notice that he sought to go to Syria. A plot was formed against him, so he determined to return to Macedonia, probably by land, rather than by sea. We see that Paul, Paul had a heart to see these churches endure and stand firm.

What a gracious guy. What a gracious pastor. Not only is he gracious, is he encouraging with his words, not only is Paul such a gracious pastor, but then you see a guy who loved to train up others.

[14:48] You have to train up men, verse 4. Accompany by, look at these guys, Sepertor, Berea, Sennepurus, Aristarchus, Seguntus, Gaius, Timothy, Tychicus, Trophimus.

And then verse 5, all of a sudden you have this, and we, so he picks up Luke, and Philippi, he's in Philippi, picks up Luke, so now Luke's with him now too.

Seven co-workers traveled with him, men represented the churches, and there was a collection that they gave to the church in Jerusalem, which Luke doesn't make mention of it, so I'm not going to make much of it.

But also, what I do want to make mention is, Paul was committed to training other men to be leaders. In 2 Timothy, chapter 2, Paul writes this to Timothy, And the things which you've heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.

So Paul taught Timothy, he says, entrust us to faithful men, so then they'll teach others. So you've got four different groups coming here in 2 Timothy, chapter 2, verse 2.

[16:12] Paul is teaching Timothy to teach other men to teach other men. And you see that happening here in verse 20, excuse me, in chapter 20, verses 4 through 6. Paul was committed to training other men, and having them with him, and encouraging these guys.

Gracious, encouraging, pastor, what an example for us. And then it says here in verse 6 that they came to Troas within five days, and they were there for seven days.

And then, starting in verse 7, you get a little, everything kind of slows down, you kind of give all these things that Paul was doing, just pastoral care and everything, and it just kind of, errrr, slows down, and Luke kind of, zeroes in on, just a short little ministry and trust for about a week.

He's there. What happens? Verse 7, on the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul was talking to them and telling them to depart the next day.

Now this, this tells us a few things. Luke just kind of, well this is what we're doing, but, but, he's assuming quite a few things for us.

[17 : 31] Notice, first, the early church gathered on Sundays. When we gathered together, first day of the week. Second, for their gatherings, they would break bread.

Bread is good, I love bread. But probably they were partaking of the Lord's Supper, and maybe they had a meal together. But third, notice, that they met in the evening because of work schedules. There was no such thing as a weekend in the Roman Empire. There was no such thing as a three day weekend either. Let alone a two day weekend, or a one day weekend. There was no weekend. That's an American commodity.

American advantage that we have. There was no such thing as a weekend. You worked seven days a week, man. So they were gathering in the evening times.

And it was, kind of from the text, we see it was not just a structured meeting, but also an informal gathering. It was both. Because he was, he was speaking, his message was like a sermon.

[18 : 40] So he was going to leave the next day, so he was there for a week. He was going to leave the next day. And he spent even more time addressing the Christians. And so he prolonged his sermon, or his message, his exhortation until midnight.

Well, you think my sermons are long? I, shame on you. I know nothing. Today will be like 34, 35 minutes.

I mean, his is like four hours. Notice, verse 8, and there are many lamps in the upper room where we were gathered together. Many lights, torches in the upper chamber.

So, Paul could keep preaching, but maybe it was affecting the air quality. Because of those torches were burning. And, obviously, there are a large house, a believer who was well off, or some host, maybe it was a, a tenement building of some kind, we don't know.

But then we get this, here in verse 9, a certain young man, the word can be somewhere, he could be anywhere to 8 to 14 years old.

[19 : 52] My question is, where was this boy's parents? You know what I'm saying? Anyways, there's a certain young man named Eutychus sitting on the windowsill, sinking into a deep sleep, and as Paul kept on talking, he was overcome by sleep, and fell down from the third floor, and was picked up dead.

Paul kept talking, Eutychus was overcome by sleep, he fell down and was killed, from that third floor. The fall killed him.

And Paul went over to the boy, went down, fell upon him, embraced him, he announced, don't be troubled, he's alive. It's interesting, you know what Eutychus means?

Fortunate. He was fortunate, he sure was. This is the final miracle that you see in the book of Acts that was done by Paul.

Notice how God showed his powerful grace to this young man. But there's a principle here. Sermon sleeping may be lethal. So I'm just saying, I'm just saying.

[21 : 09] You have a miracle to edify the people here. Yes, a miracle that shows Paul's authority, but really, you have a miracle that points to God's grace in giving new life through Jesus Christ's resurrection.

God loves to show his grace to undeserving people. If you're here today, you're not a follower of Jesus, God loves to show, he'll show his grace to you.

He loves to show grace, his arms are wide open to sinners. He loves to show undeserved favor to sinners. If you just come, repent, and put your trust in Jesus Christ alone, God will show you his grace.

He loves to do that. He'll show it to you today. Notice there in verse 11, he got back up, broke the bread, they ate, talked with them a long while until daybreak.

No one's going to fall asleep now. I'm going to fall asleep. I'm awake. No way, man. I don't want to fall down. You know what I'm saying? Well, maybe it brought some questions too.

[22 : 20] The people were excited. There's a huge discussion. Wow, you know, it's not every day some kid falls down from a window and then he breaks his neck and Paul raises him from the dead.

Then he departs. Notice he's spending every last minute he could with them. It's just his grace, this pastoral concern and love that he has for this people.

And then it says in verse 12, they took away the boy of life. They were greatly comforted. Highly comforted.

This tells us that Paul truly loved God's people. Shepherds love God's people. Yes, even those who fall asleep during the message.

But you also see something here. You also see members, people who love the gospel word. It's amazing to see the commitment of time these people gave to hearing the word of God.

[23:34] Paul went till midnight and not one person became weary or complaining of the hour except a young person to whom God showed his great grace and mercy. It's amazing you see this that these people I mean they're staying up late because they just love to hear the gospel truth, the gospel word.

They love to hear it. They love to hear grace. They love to hear about mercy. They love to hear about Jesus Christ. They can't get enough of it. So much so they're awake all night.

With all kidding aside about Eutychus, we should take advantage of the time we get to meet together. This is the legacy we want to leave, right?

We want to leave a legacy of grace and encouraging words and training but also as a people that we are those people at Godwood Bible Church they love to hear the gospel of grace.

Let me think about it. First of all you don't have to work. Most of you don't have to work on Sunday. Sandy is sometimes the word but at least she gets the mornings off, praise God.

[25:00] some people they have to work on Sundays but most of us here we don't have to do that. Second, we don't start our service like really, really early or really, really late.

Don't listen to Susanna. She wants it to start at 1 a.m. but yeah. If we do that you can hand out chocolate to all of us and we can stay away.

But our first hour starts at 9.15 I was part of some churches they started at 8 o'clock on Sunday? Are you kidding me?

Oh, you hated getting out of bed. Oh, I'm going to go worship God now. Our main service starts at 10.30 You know, we have much to be thankful for as American Christians, don't we?

I mean, if you think about there in India up early or late at night that's when they're meeting man. There ain't no four day weekend type stuff.

[26:13] How much will we sacrifice to hear the gospel taught all the time? Is that the legacy we want to leave? Graciously, I encourage you.

Graciously, can I say, is this gathering with God's people important to us? How do we know it's important to you? You'll take time to invest in them by being on time, getting involved, sticking around to talk, maybe a phone call during the week, lunch with somebody, helping someone in need.

People help us, we were in need, we were just down with the flu this past week. I mean, are we going to have a legacy of just devotion to each other, to the gospel, to the gospel word, to grace? We want to leave that legacy, right? And I say these things, not to bring guilt, but I say these things in grace, and for us to be thankful for God's grace to us, just as he showed this grace to Eutychus. I mean, we have the privilege of being able to hear God's word prayed, read, sung, preached. Going into verse 13 through 15, Luke says, going ahead to the ship, set sail for Asos.

[27:49] Asos. Asos, intending from there to take Paul on board, he arranged it, intending by himself to go by land, maybe for his own safety, we don't know. He met us at Asos, we took him on board, came to Miletene, arrived at the found day in Kios, next day crossed over Samus, came to Miletus.

These short one day trips from port to port, it was typical because of the winds, rocky coasts, they were very tricky to navigate. And then 15 into 16, finally came to Miletus, 30 miles south of Ephesus.

He decided he wanted to sail past Ephesus because he didn't want to spend time there in Asia. He was trying to get back to Jerusalem for the day of Pentecost. He didn't want a rest being delayed due to visits or even for safety reasons.

And here, which we'll pick up next week, he would summon the elders of the church of Ephesus. And then you come to one of the great messages that Paul gives to the elders of the church of Ephesus, which I'm excited for us to look at that next week.

What's Paul known for? The missionary, right? The evangelist, right? The dude who wrote most of the New Testament.

[29:14] Here we see Paul the pastor. Paul, who desired to teach and spend time with the people and poured his life into them.

He wanted to equip them theologically and spiritually for the race that they would persevere when he was gone. He wanted to leave that legacy with them. Grace, encouraging words, training them and have a people that are devoted to the gospel. He wanted to leave behind followers of Jesus Christ who would stand firm in the gospel with gospel faithfulness.

So he would take the time to teach the believers handling the truth. He wanted to see them be a people of grace, encouragement, devotion to the gospel.

He was coming to training up new leaders. He knew he wouldn't always be around. So he knew he had to train up men who would continue the ministry he had begun.

[30:23] Men who would teach the people, proclaim the gospel, and they would endure by the grace of God, in God's grace. As God has been so gracious to us, saving and transforming us in the Lord Jesus Christ.

He would work in us to leave a legacy of grace, encouragement, training and devotion to the gospel. I appreciated Travis's question yesterday at the end of our conference.

He asked, what do you want to see, what do you want to see God do in your own life, and what do you want to see God do in the life of the church for you men pastor?

It's like every single one of us said, we just want to see God just show his grace to us because we know we're sinners, we know we fail you, we do.

We want to see God working in us and our hearts to be men of grace, but then to have churches that are people of grace as well. we are on a slippery slope.

[31:41] Legalism or license, we need to be on grace, right there in the middle. We want to leave that legacy, are we going to leave that legacy?

Let this be a challenge for us as a church, to be a people of grace. God help us.

Spirit of God help us. Your gospel word so infect our lives that comes out of our mouths and our actions is grace.

compassion. Truth, yes, we want to hold the truth, but as John says, truth and love, truth and love. Take a few moments and sit, ponder, think what we've been encouraged what's encouraged us from God's word this morning.

[33:06] We'll have a few moments of silence and do our time of giving in our last two songs, our prayer, closing prayer. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.