

Christianity is a Team Sport - Acts 20:1-16
Notes, Family Worship, Bible Reading

Notes from the Sermon

Acts 20 is the continuation of Paul's Third Missionary Journey. His three-year stay in Ephesus comes to an end with a riot, after which Paul decides to visit some of the churches he planted in Macedonia and Greece. His plan was to visit those churches, collect an offering, and then return to Jerusalem with that offering to help the struggling Christians there. The text tells us that Paul had given "much encouragement" to the churches as he visited them. In visiting and revisiting the churches he had planted; Paul is demonstrating his Pastor's heart. His team needed encouragement! What an example for us today! The Christian life was never meant to be lived alone! Life is hard and as a body of believers we need to encourage each other in the faith! We all need an encouraging team!

Paul stayed in Corinth for three months. On a side note, Paul stayed very busy during his stay there. It was during this three month stay in Corinth that Paul wrote his letter to the church at Rome. Many theologians consider Romans to be his greatest writing, especially Romans Chapter 8! But as he was preparing to sail back home to Syria, he learned of a plot to take his life. Apparently, this attempt on his life was to take place at sea during his trip home. So Paul decides to return home by first heading north, back into Macedonia, allowing him to pay one last visit to the churches in Berea, Thessalonica and Philippi.

At this point in the story our author, Luke, gives us the names and hometowns of several of Paul's traveling companions. Luke gives us the starting lineup for Paul's traveling team! If you are a football fan, do you enjoy watching a game on television when they introduce the starting lineups? As a football nerd, I really enjoy those games where each player introduces themselves including the college they attended. Here in Acts, we learn that Paul recruited a man or two from several of the churches he had planted and now had revisited. But why?

In many respects, Paul was a marked man. As we have followed his journey through the book of Acts, we have already seen several times where he was in danger, arrested, beaten, and threatened. In this part of the story, he had just avoided an assassination attempt by changing his route home. Add to his infamy the fact he was carrying a sizable amount of money, collected from his church visits and he would be an even target for violence. It is very likely Paul recruited this team for additional protection. Oh, how we need to make sure our church today is a safe place! As a church family, we need to offer protection for every member! We need to know our team has our back!

And while we are thinking about that offering money, having a man or two on his team from each of the churches that gave those offerings guaranteed accountability and integrity to the process of delivering the funds to the believers in Jerusalem! Now, this element of teamwork is not the most fun. But Paul's example of building accountability into his life by having an accountability team is so valuable to us in today's world of temptations.

Luke tells us that when the team was united at Troas, they gathered together on the first day of the week, on Sunday, to break bread. They spent time in fellowship with each other. This was the day before Paul intended to continue his journey to Jerusalem and Paul preached until midnight when tragedy struck. A young man fell asleep during the sermon and fell from a third story window and was killed. But God used Paul to perform a miracle and raise the young man from the dead! There is some humor in this

story as the young man's name is Eutychus, and the root word for this name means "Lucky"! As amazing as this was, after this miracle, they shared a meal and talked until dawn! It is just as important for the church today for believers to spend time in fellowship with each other... to share a meal... to spend time with fellow believers. So many people today feel isolated and alone. Even with round-the-clock access to "social" media, more and more people are withdrawing, attempting to live life by themselves. Perhaps a more appropriate name would be "anti-social" media!

This passage of scripture illustrates the importance of "team" in living the Christian life! Whether the benefits of "team" are encouragement, protection, accountability, or fellowship, we all need a great lineup to help keep us pointed toward Jesus.

Bible Reading for the Week

Daily Bible Readings

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Ephesians 4	Ephesians 5	Ephesians 6	Psalm 31	Psalm 32	Psalm 33	Psalm 34

Reading from this past week: Acts 20:1-16

Reading in preparation for this coming Sunday: Acts 19:21-41

Family Worship

Song - *You are My King (Amazing Love)*

<https://youtu.be/oqLa4EWyuhA>

Gospel Project

Unit: Warnings to the People

Story: We are to repent of sin

Big Picture Question: What is repentance?

Answer: Repentance is turning from sin and turning to Jesus?

Scripture: Matthew 3

New City Catechism

Question #44: What is baptism?

Answer: Baptism is the washing with water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Verse: Matthew 28:19

Scripture

Acts 20:1-16

- What is it about this story that catches your attention the most?
- Have you ever encountered someone who says "I don't need to attend a church to be a Christian." How do you respond to this statement?
- In today's "anti-social media" world, do you think it is harder or easier to have a trustworthy team?
- What can you do today to encourage a fellow believer?

Prayer

*Pray for your Community Group and its leaders

*Pray that God would help us understand how much we need each other and that our faith is a team sport.