

## Acts of Jesus A final farewell II notes

We started last time looking at Paul's final farewell to the elders at the church of Ephesus and we will continue in that vein picking up where we left off.

### Acts 20:21-30

- V. 20-21 – We saw that Paul started and ended there with a emphasis on the sufficiency of the Word of God and that we don't really need anything more than the Word of God in the presence of the Holy Spirit.
- He sums up the message that he preached continually for those 2 ½ years he was among them: “**Repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus.**”
- Sounds like a message only towards the lost, but, in fact, it is a message for both the lost and the saved.
  1. There is a repentance towards God and faith towards Jesus that saves.
    - Repent means to turn—turn from whatever you think that will get you into heaven.
    - “There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.”
    - Faith towards Jesus alone saves: **John 3:16, John 3:36.**
    - You need to do this or you will not see Heaven.

2. There is a repentance towards God and faith towards Jesus that should be a regular part of the life of a growing Christian.
  - These represents the steps that save, but it is also the steps of the saved.
  - Repentance is spoken much more in the N.T. to the saved than it is to the lost.
  - We fall into sin: start thinking, acting, believing wrong -- we need to repent, that is, turn from whatever it is.
  - Next we refocus our faith in Jesus and His plan for our life.
  - This process is repeated many times over in the growing believer's life.
  - These become steps in the Christian walk.

**vv. 22-25** – We are told in **Acts 19:21** that Paul determined by the leadership of the Holy Spirit that he should return to Jerusalem.

- When was the last time you were bound in the Spirit?
- The church today is desperate for believers who will follow the leadership of the Holy Spirit no matter what he asks them to do.
- Look how effective Paul's life was—it was because he was willing and obedient no matter what the cost.
  
- As a pastor, I have heard a whole lot of “I think the Lord is leading me”  
But the vast majority of that leading is to go somewhere comfortable and do something easy.
- In Christian circles there is a preponderance of “the Lord is calling me (to the easy life)” and a very small percentage if not entirely absent are the voices that say He's calling them to a life of self-sacrifice.
- I heard a whole lot of the “Lord is moving us to this island” – first of all, who am I to say?!

--If our church was in the inner-city slums of downtown Houston, I'd be  
More ready to hear a word like that.

It's hard to be in the will of God because to follow Him will bring many  
trials and testing and temptations from the enemy.

--It's far harder to be out of the will of God!

**VV. 26-27** – This is a concept from the book of **Ezekiel 33:8**—this is what shaped Paul's thinking.

--Are you innocent of people's blood?

--Have you told them what you should have told them?

**V. 28**– elders and church leaders have two responsibilities: watch themselves and watch those that  
God has entrusted to them.

1. Notice first of all he instructs these elders to watch themselves

--It is only as they obey the truth themselves that they will be able to  
instruct and lead others.

--Jesus operated on this same basis: **John 10:37**

--Can you say that as a church leader?

--Could you say that to your children?

--Sunday School class?

--To others who know you to be a Christian?

**The first and most important thing that you as a leader can offer a would-be follower is your  
own personal holiness!**

2. The second thing that he tells the elders to do is watch the church

Several things that we must understand from this verse.

1. The church is like a flock of sheep that need a shepherd.

--Going it alone as a Christian is not smart at all.

--Not any smarter for a sheep to go it alone in world of wolves.

2. The elders are the shepherds.

--"Pastor" is a holdover from Latin that means shepherd.

--Remember this word elder is interpreted pastor, bishop, overseer, and  
elder.

3. Who makes them overseers? The Holy Spirit.

--**I Tim. 5:19** – many need only suspicion to speak against an  
elder...Not smart!

4. What do they oversee? The Church.

--Do not speak lightly of this entity (the church)...she is very precious  
to God.

--What is the most valuable thing on the planet earth? The Church.

--It is the most important thing on God's schedule.

--**What concerns the Church is the most important thing in the  
world.**