

Seven Life Lessons from Paul's Ministry

Acts 20:17-27

17 From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church. 18 And when they had come to him, he said to them: "You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you, 19 "serving the Lord with all humility, with many tears and trials which happened to me by the plotting of the Jews; 20 "how I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house, 21 "testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. 22 "And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, 23 "except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me. 24 "But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God. 25 "And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, will see my face no more. 26 "Therefore I testify to you this day that I *am* innocent of the blood of all *men*. 27 "For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.

Background Details (17)

- **Places**
 - Miletus
 - Ephesus – place Paul spent over 2 years
- **People**
 - Paul
 - Elders of the assembly
- **[Purpose]**
 - To speed his way to Jerusalem
 - To charge the elders of Ephesus regarding their duties

Life Lessons From Paul's Life & Ministry (18-27)

1. **Paul Lived His Life Consistently (18)**

- *Begin today – "From the very beginning onward"*
- *Be seen with an observable, "among you" lifestyle*
- *Be able to point to your life as an example to others*

2. **Paul Served the Lord Continually (19)**

- *with a tender spirit – "humility" ("while slaving")*
- *with a broken heart – "tears" – hard, hurtful*
- *with a battered body – "trials" from plotting Jews*

3. **Paul Taught Others Unreservedly (20-21)**

- **Why he taught**
 - Kept nothing back that was *helpful*
- **How he taught**
 - Proclaimed
 - Taught
- **Where he taught**
 - Publicly
 - House to house
- **Who he taught**
 - Jews
 - Greeks
- **What he taught**
 - Repentance toward God
 - Faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ

4. **Paul Faced Spiritual Resistance Bravely (22-23)**

- *His Duty: I go bound to Jerusalem (22)*
- *His Destiny: Chains and tribulations await me (23)*
- *His Determination: I do not let these things move me (24a)*
- *His Disregard for Self: I do not count myself dear (24b)*

5. **Paul Purposed to Finish Successfully (24)**

- *He chose based upon his goal to finish his race with joy (24c)*
- *He chose based upon his goal to finish his ministry (24d)*
 - Received from the Lord Jesus
 - To testify of the Gospel of God's grace

6. **Paul Embraced Friendships Loosely (25)**

- *Gave up the temporal relationships for eternal impact*

7. **Paul Succeeded Fully at God's Assignment (26-27)**

- *Claim: I am innocent of the blood of all men*
- *Reason: I have not shunned to declare all of God's counsel*
 - "Keep the main thing the main thing" but not the only thing!
 - Focusing on the majors at the cost of the minors is *distortion*