

Acts 20:17-38

A Snapshot of a Great Christian Life

**Paul's Farewell to the Leaders of Ephesus Bible Fellowship
Reveals Key Truths about Excellence in the Christian Walk**

Paul Summarizes

His Past Ministry in Ephesus v17-21

Reflection: From the first day to the last day: he served with humility (he never forgot he was a sinner saved by grace) and in/in spite of tears/trials due to persecution.

Paul Anticipates

His Future Ministry in Jerusalem v22-24

Anticipation: he was going to Jerusalem with a financial gift for the Church/Christians in and around that city, realizing being there could be dangerous (even fatal) for him.

Paul Solemnizes

His Responsibility as a Minister v25-27

Perspective: Anything we can touch and everyone we can see....can "be gone" in five seconds or less, but the Kingdom and the Counsel of God continues forever.

Paul Commands

The Ephesian Elders to Defend the Church/Christians v28-31

Initiative: Church leaders must help believers see spiritual wolves for what they really are. As a general rule, the best defense is a good offense, thus Christian leaders (really all Christians) should know the AIMS of the faith so well they can spot counterfeits.

Paul Entrusts

The Ephesian Elders to God and His Word v32-35

Appreciation: Rather than worshipping our worries or our wins, believers should actively appreciate God's provision all around us generally, and go out of our way to actively express appreciation to godly encouragers who directly impact our lives specifically.

Paul Bids His Battle Buddies a Fond and a "Final" Farewell v36-38

As far as the record of the New Testament goes (it is inerrant but it makes no effort to be comprehensive-see John 20:30-31) this IS the last time Paul saw these men on Planet Earth. Realizing that, he made it a point to share "all of the above" with them.

Take This To Heart

If consistency was easy, everybody would be consistent...
...but be consistent even though it is hard!

If you want to be better than average in anything, including in the Christian life, you must do certain things "average people" simply won't take the time and/or make the effort to do.....but do them and keep doing them anyway!

The Rest of the Story

In 96 AD (Revelation 2:1-7) the Lord Jesus said to Ephesus Bible Fellowship:
you have left (not lost) your first love....to get it back you must
1: remember from where you have fallen (the past)
2: repent-stop rationalizing (about the present)
3: do the deeds you did at first (as you move into the future).