

# SERMON NOTES AUGUST 4, 2019

## ***Pay Careful Attention to Yourself***

Acts 20:17-38

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**Overview:** Paul's farewell address to the Ephesian elders is the only speech in Acts that is addressed to a Christian audience. He thus gives us insight into the nature of the church, structure of the church, and purpose of the church. Using his life as a model of biblical leadership, Paul also recounts his persistence in preaching truth in the face of opposition and his efforts to proclaim the gospel to non-Christians. Though reluctant to depart, he is determined to leave the church in good hands, so he warns them of dangers to come and commends them to God and the Word. The parting scene at the end of the chapter is one which every church should long to replicate as it illustrates the beautiful bond between a pastor and his congregation.

**01. Pray for a pastor whose energy is evident, whose mind is solid, and whose heart is tender.**

**02. Pray for a pastor who serves the Lord, submits to Scripture, and works well with others.**

**03. Pray for a pastor who edifies the saints, evangelizes the lost, and recognizes danger to all.**

**04. Pray for a pastor whose reputation is above reproach, whose life is accessible, and whose aim is to finish well.**

THIS PROMISE IS FOR YOU AND FOR ALL

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION & DISCOVERY

1. Although Paul was an apostle (a very important position in the church) his life was on full display for others to see (verses 18 and 34). Why is it important for pastors to be approachable rather than distant or removed from others? How important is it to you that those who preach the gospel also live a life that is above reproach? See 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 for further insight.

2. Paul's announces his intention to go to Jerusalem as an act of obedience to God (verse 22) knowing that "imprisonment and afflictions" await him (verse 23). Using Paul's example of obedience in the face of certain troubles, what lessons might we learn when considering a move to another place or pursuing another career? How easily are you enticed by looking for something better than what you already have or something to make your life easier?

3. Paul's chief concern in this chapter is that the leaders who remain in his absence will protect the church from harm (verses 28-31). What types of threats did Paul warn them about? How did he point to his ministry as an example in remaining faithful to God and His Word? What difficult doctrines or applications might pastors be tempted to omit today?

4. Why did Paul work outside of the church in order to generate income (verses 33-35)? What advantages did this decision provide for Paul as it relates to preaching the whole counsel of God? What disadvantages might have occurred due to Paul dividing his time between teaching, preaching, and tent-making?

5. Paul's love for the Ephesians did not prohibit him from leaving, and their love for him allowed him to go. Why is it important for churches to have their primary focus on the Lord rather than His servants? How can churches become too attached to a pastor, in his presence or in his absence? What comforts can we derive knowing that God moves people we love but still provides ways in which we can grow in Christ?

**For Further Reading:** Joel Beeke, *Reformed Preaching: Proclaiming God's Word from the Heart of the Preacher to the Heart of the People* (Crossway, 2018).

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