

***Journey Through Acts***  
***“I Kept Back Nothing!”***  
***Acts 20:1 - 21:3***

**Introduction:**

1. Whenever You Get Back From A Trip Or A Vacation:
  - People Will Often Ask You:
    - How Was It? How'd It Go?
      - Some Of You Have Asked Those Same Questions:
        - About Our Recent Trip To Italy!
        - And We Enjoy Sharing Our Experiences & Pictures With You!
  - But - When You Ask Those Questions:
    - Most Of The Time:
      - You Aren't Asking For Every Little Detail That Happened On The Trip!
        - Like The Airline Or The Flight Number Or The Length Of Time It Took To Get To The Destination!
    - Most Of The Time:
      - You Are Just Looking For:
        - The Highlights!
        - And What Made The Trip Memorable & Special!
2. Well - As We Continue:
  - Our ***Journey Through Acts*** Tonight:
    - This Is What Luke Records For Us:
      - In Acts 20 - *A Couple Of Highlights*:
        - On The Grand Tour Of Paul Toward The End Of His Third Missionary Journey!
3. **In The First Six Verses:**
  - Luke Covers Over A Thousand Miles:
    - And A Period Of More Than A Year:
      - As Paul Returns To Visit Many Of The Churches That Were Planted:
        - During His Second Missionary Journey!
  - 20:1-6 - “And after the uproar was ceased, Paul called unto him the disciples, and embraced them, and departed for to go into Macedonia. / 2 And when he had gone over those parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece, / 3 And there abode three months. And when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria, he purposed to return through Macedonia. / 4 And there accompanied him into Asia Sopater of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus. / 5 These going before tarried for us at Troas. / 6 And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days!”
    - Now - What All Took Place:
      - During The Time It Took For Paul To Visit All Of These Places?
        - We Can Piece Some Of It Together From His Letters - But The *Highlight*:
          - Is What Took Place In *Troas*!
4. In 20:13-16 - As Paul's Itinerary Continues:
  - Luke Covers Another 200 Miles Or So:
    - And A Period Of Just A Couple Of Weeks:
      - Until He Records For Us:
        - Another *Highlight*:
          - Of What Took Place In The Town Of *Miletus*!
- 20:13-16 - “And we went before to ship, and sailed unto Assos, there intending to take in Paul: for so had he appointed, minding himself to go afoot. / 14 And when he met with us at Assos, we took him in, and came to Mitylene. / 15 And we sailed thence, and came the next day over against Chios; and the next day we arrived at Samos, and tarried at Trogyllium; and the next day we came to Miletus. / 16 For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia: for he hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost! / 17 And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church.”
5. But Then - After The Moving Scene:
  - With The Elders From The Church In Ephesus:
    - In Acts 21 - Paul's Journey Continues!
      - Covering Another 600 Miles Or So Across The Mediterranean Sea!
6. Now - There Are Little Details:

- All Throughout These Verses:
  - That Give Us A Glimpse:
    - Into The Ongoing Opportunities & Obstacles:
      - To Paul's Ministry!
- But - The Holy Spirit Inspired Luke:
  - To Record Just *Two Highlights*:
    - For Us - That May Even Illustrate:
      - The Pattern Of Paul's Ministry:
        - In The Life Of The Church!

7. But - In His Visit:

- With The Elders From The Church Of Ephesus:
  - Back In The Town Of Miletus:
    - Something He Says - In 20:20 - Is Worth Noting - As We Read About These Two:
      - Highlights From Paul's Trip!
  - In The First Part Of 20:20 - He Says These Stirring Words:
    - "I Kept Back Nothing That Was Profitable Unto You!"
      - "I Kept Back Nothing!"
        - These Words Are A Key Truth About Paul's Life & Ministry:
          - For The Lord & His People!
  - He "Kept Back Nothing!"
    - On All Of Those Miles!
      - Through All Of Those Towns!
        - Facing All Of Those Obstacles!
          - And Ministering To All Of Those Churches!
    - Paul - "Kept Back Nothing!"
      - And The Two Events Highlighted For Us:
        - Sandwiched Between The Rest Of His Travels:
          - Prove To Us That He "Kept Back Nothing!"

\* So - Back In The City Of Troas - The *First Highlight* Of The Trip - We Witness Paul - "Keeping Nothing Back":

1. ***In His Communion With The Members Of The Church!***

- **Here Are Some Of The Ruins:**
  - Of The Ancient City Of Troas - Or Troy!
    - And - It Was Here - Where Paul Briefly Visited Back In Acts 16 - And Received His "Macedonian Call!"
  - But - Even Though Paul's Ministry There Was Not All That Long Or Intensive:
    - A Small Church Was Planted - And So - On *This* Visit - Paul & His Small Band Of Missionaries:
      - 20:6 - "Abode Seven Days!"
    - And On That Seventh Day:
      - Paul Enjoyed The Communion Of God's People As They Came Together For Worship On The Lord's Day!
  - And This Is What Happened During That Worship Service:
    - 20:7-12 - "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight. / 8 And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together. / 9 And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep: and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead. / 10 And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing him said, Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him. / 11 When he therefore was come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed. / 12 And they brought the young man alive, and were not a little comforted!"
      - Now - At First - This Worship Service:
        - Appears Pretty Normal & Even Familiar To Us!
  - The Period - Was Normal!
    - It Took Place On "The First Day Of The Week!" (20:7)
      - Sunday - Which Came To Be Known As:
        - The "Lord's Day!" - A Day Adopted By Christians As Their Own Sabbath:
          - To Remember & To Celebrate The Resurrection Of Jesus!
    - Now - A Lot Of Their Services Were Probably:

- In The Evening - Like It Was Here:
  - Because It Was Still A Busy Work Day In The Roman World!
  - And The Believers - Many Who Were Still Slaves & Servants - Had Just Gotten Off Work!
- But They Knew They Needed:
  - Fellowship With God's People:
    - And Feeding From God's Word!
    - And So - We Also See:
- The Purpose – Was Normal!
  - 20:7 - “When the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them!”
  - They Were Following The Basic Pattern Of Worship Established In Jerusalem:
    - Back In 2:42 - “And they continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers!”
    - This Is To Be The Purpose Of Our Services Still! Also:
- The Preaching – Was Normal! (Or - Relatively Normal)
  - Even Though This Meeting Was Special:
    - Because The Preacher Was The Apostle Paul:
      - Yet - He Still Preached The Word Of God:
        - In Order To Encourage Them In Their Faith!
    - And Paul - 20:7 - “Continued His Speech Until Midnight!”
    - And Was - 20:9 - “Long Preaching!”
      - Now, This Might Be How It *Still Feels Like* For Some Of You!
      - But - See - It's Nothing New!
  - Because - The Preaching Ministry:
    - Has Always Been One Of The Most Important Functions:
      - Of The Local Church!
      - And It Should Still Be Normal!
      - We Even See:
- The Place – Was Normal!
  - It Was A Large Room - On A Third Floor:
    - Where Many Could Gather Together For Prayer & Praise & Worship!
  - And - According To 20:8 - “There were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together!”
    - The “Lights” Were Torches:
      - So Everyone Could See Paul - But Along With Those Lights Came:
- The Problems – That Were Also Normal!
  - Those Lights Put Off Heat!
    - And After A Long Day Of Work - As The Fire From Those Torches Heated The Room:
      - It Was Not Uncommon Then - As Well As Now - For The People Of God To Get Tired & To Even Fall Asleep!
    - And This Is What Happened To:
      - Eutychus! 20:9 - “And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep: and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep!”
    - If We Stop There - Again:
      - Everything Seems Fairly Normal & Familiar To Us In That Worship Service!
      - Even Interruptions In The Service May Be Normal - **IE:** Cell Phones - But Not Usually The Kind We Read About Next!
    - Because - When Eutychus:
      - 20:9 - “Sunk down with sleep – [He] – fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead!”
      - Now - That's *Not* Normal!
      - And Paul Was Mortified!
    - So - 20:10 - “Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing him said, Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him!”
      - He Likely Rushed Down To The Side Of That Young Man - Took Him Up Into His Arms:
        - And Felt The Lord Do A Miracle!
        - He Was Revived!
        - “His Life [Was] In Him!”
  - And I Think The Lord Did This:

- Not Just For The Young Man Or For Paul:
  - But For The Whole Church - To Further Demonstrate & Illustrate - That:
- The Power – Was Normal!
  - The Power Of God:
    - In An Assembly Of Believers:
      - Like The One Meeting That Night In Troas:
        - Is A Normal Thing!
  - Now - It May Not Always Be As Visible:
    - Like What Happened To Eutychus!
      - But It Is Just As Real!
  - The Power Of God:
    - Through His Word & His Spirit:
      - Is A Normal Thing Among His People!
    - As The Lord Continues To:
      - Bring Life From Death:
        - Spiritually! And To:
      - Shine Light Into Darkness:
        - As Well As To:
      - Bring Heat Into That Which Is Cold:
        - And Soften That Which Is Hard!
- But - In Troas That Night - The Service Was Not Yet Over!
  - It Continued! 20:11-12 - “When he therefore was come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed. / 12 And they brought the young man alive, and were not a little comforted!”
    - God Was Able To Use Paul:
      - In That Church - Because He:
        - “Kept Back Nothing” - From The Lord & From His People!
    - And What He Did In Troas:
      - He Likely Did In Every Church:
        - Along His Path!
  - That Was Paul’s Motive For Ministry!
    - And He “Kept Back Nothing” To Encourage:
      - And To Edify The Church Of His Savior!

\* But Then - **We Come To The Town Of Miletus** - Where We Find The Second Highlight Of Paul’s Trip - And We Witness Paul - “Keeping Nothing Back”:

**2. In His Challenge To The Ministers Of The Church!**

- 20:17-21 - “And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church. / 18 And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, / 19 Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews: / 20 And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house! / 21 Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.
  - At The Time - The City Of Miletus Was A Coastal Town:
    - About Thirty Miles Away From The City Of Ephesus!
      - **Here Are Some Of The Ruins Of That Ancient Greek Colony!**
  - And It Was Here:
    - That Paul Wanted To Share Some Final Words:
      - With The Elders & Ministers Of The Ephesian Church:
        - To Encourage Them As Well!
    - But It Was To This Group Of Men:
      - He Made This Claim - 20:20 - “I Kept Back Nothing That Was Profitable Unto You!”
        - “I Kept Back Nothing!”
          - For Paul - There Was:
  - A Special Commitment To The Ministry!
    - A Special Commitment!
      - In These Verses, Paul Describes His Own Ministry:
        - And How He “Kept Back Nothing!”

- Nothing:
- In The Manner Of His Ministry!
  - In 20:19 - He Sought To Serve:
    - The Way Jesus Served Him!
    - “With All Humility!”
  - This Is What It Means:
    - To “Keep Back Nothing!”
    - Also - Nothing:
- In The Meaning Of His Ministry:
  - According To 20:20 - He - “Kept back nothing that was profitable unto you!”
  - Later In 20:26-27 - “Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. / For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God!”
    - And In 20:32 - “And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified!”
  - The Word Of God:
    - Was - And Still Is - Profitable!
    - And Is What We Need To Grow In The Grace & Knowledge Of The Lord!
    - And He “Kept Back Nothing!” Also - Nothing:
  - What A Commitment:
    - That We See & Hear In This Moving Scene:
      - Along The Shore Of Miletus!
      - But For Paul - There Was Also:
- A Special Calling To The Ministry!
  - Which He Asks Those Ministers:
    - To Join - Hand-In-Hand!
- 20:22-38 - “And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: / 23 Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. / 24 But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. / 25 And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more. / 26 Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. / 27 For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. / 28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. / 29 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. / 30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. / 31 Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. / 32 And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified. / 33 I have coveted no man’s silver, or gold, or apparel. / 34 Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. / 35 I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive!”
  - The Calling Paul Received From The Lord:
    - Was A Call To Suffer!
    - And A Call To:
      - Complete & Total Surrender!
    - Which He Did Willingly & Cheerfully!
      - In 20:34-35 - “Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me!”
- And With That - Paul Took His Leave!
  - 20:36-38 - “And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all. / 37 And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul’s neck, and kissed him, / 38 Sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more. And they accompanied him unto the ship!”

## **Conclusion:**

1. What A Calling!
  - And What Commitment & Courage & Compassion:
    - We See In These Two Highlights:

- In The Ministry Of God's Servant, Paul:
  - Who - "Kept Back Nothing!"
  - From The Lord & From His People!
- 2. But As Great As The Surrender & Sacrifice:
  - Of Paul - For The Lord - How Much Greater:
    - Was The Surrender & Sacrifice Of The Lord Jesus:
      - For Paul! And For You & For Me!
      - Paul Just Wanted To Reflect, As Much As Possible:
        - His Savior!
- 3. Is This Your Desire Tonight As Well?
  - To "Keep Back Nothing!"
    - Nothing - From The Lord!
      - And Nothing - From His People!
    - This Is As Important:
      - For The Members Of The Church:
        - As It Is For The Ministers!
- 4. Is There Something:
  - You Are Keeping Back?
    - Or - Is There Something Keeping *You* Back:
      - From The Kind Of Commitment:
        - The Lord Deserves?
    - Won't You Surrender That?
      - Won't You Surrender Yourself:
        - Unto Him?
- 5. So That - By God's Grace:
  - When The Highlights Of Your Own Life:
    - Are Given - May It Be Said Of You:
      - That Brother - Or - That Sister:
        - "Kept Back Nothing!"
          - Because The Lord Jesus "Kept Back Nothing" For You!

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