

## The Acts of the Apostles

[Wed. Apr. 8, 2015] Acts Series, Acts 20.25-38 - Craig A. Thurman

Paul makes his final stop in Miletus and calls the Ephesian elders to come to him where he will deliver to them his farewell words. They will not see him again in the flesh, Paul is persuaded of this truth. He has committed himself to being in Jerusalem by the festival of Pentecost.

*19.21 Paul purposed in the spirit ...to go to Jerusalem ... After I have been there, I must also see Rome.*

*20.22 ... I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem ...*

Everywhere he travels the Lord reveals through his people that bonds and afflictions are waiting for him. (Acts 20.23) The remaining parts of chapter 20 are those words that Paul gives to these Ephesian elders. We want to consider this tonight.

Καὶ νῦν ἰδοῦ, ἐγὼ οἶδα ὅτι ἐν οἷς διήλθον  
25 *And now, behold, I know that<sup>1</sup> ye all, among whom I have gone*

κηρύσσων τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ Θεοῦ  
*preaching the kingdom of God,<sup>2</sup> shall see my face no more.*

Καὶ νῦν ἰδοῦ, ἐγὼ οἶδα ὅτι<sup>2</sup> οὐκέτι ὄψεσθε τὸ πρόσωπόν μου<sup>1</sup> ὑμεῖς πάντες  
ἐν οἷς διήλθον κηρύσσων τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ Θεοῦ

Διὸ μαρτύρομαι ὑμῖν ἐν τῇ σήμερον ἡμέρᾳ  
26 *Wherefore I take you to record this day,*  
Lit. Therefore I testify to you *by or in this very day*

Wycliffe (1380) Wherefore I witness to you this day ...

Tyndale (1534) Wherefore I take you to record this same day ...

μαρτύρομαι; 1<sup>st</sup> p s pres ind:

**This verb, μαρτύρομαι, is used three times in the N.T.:**

*Ga 5:3 For I testify μαρτύρομαι again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.*

## The Acts of the Apostles

*Eph 4:17 ¶ This I say therefore, and **testify μαρτύρομαι** in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind...*

σήμερον;

*Mt 6:11 Give us **this day σήμερον** our daily bread.*

*Mt 6:30 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which **to day σήμερον** is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?*

ὅτι καθαρός ἐγὼ ἀπὸ τοῦ αἵματος πάντων  
*that I am pure from the blood of all [men.]*  
I am clean

καθαρός; KJV *clean, clear, pure:*

**This noun is used three times in Scripture:**

*Joh 13:10 Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is **clean καθαρός** every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.*

*Ac 18:6 And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am **clean καθαρός**: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.*

Διὸ μαρτύρομαι ὑμῖν ἐν τῇ σήμερον ἡμέρᾳ ὅτι καθαρός ἐγὼ ἀπὸ τοῦ αἵματος πάντων

27 Οὐ γὰρ ὑπεστειλάμην τοῦ μὴ ἀναγγεῖλαι ὑμῖν πᾶσαν  
*For I have not shunned to declare unto you all*

*have ... shunned, ὑπεστειλάμην; 1<sup>st</sup> p s, aor 1, ind, mid of ὑποστέλλω; ὑπό above, beyond, exceeding, highly + στέλλω avoid, withdraw self; of στέλλω we have recently seen this used in 2Thes.3.6 of **withdrawing** the fellowship of a church for members who were walking disorderly.*

ὑποστέλλω is found only in these places:

*Gal.2.12 [Peter] ... **withdrew** and separated himself; He. 10.38 but if any man **draw back**; He. 11.39 we are not of them who **draw back** unto perdition ...*

## The Acts of the Apostles

*to declare, ἀναγγεῖλαι; aor 1, infin of ἀναγγέλλω; ἀνά re-, new, above + ἀγγέλλω to report, tell, resound; ἀναγγεῖλαι ὑμῖν, reported unto you ...; cf. 20 have shewed.*

*ἀναγγεῖλαι is used in this one other place:*

*Ac 20:20 And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed ἀναγγεῖλαι you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house ...*

**I have gone beyond not to avoid declaring all ...**

*τὴν βουλὴν τοῦ θεοῦ  
the counsel of God.*

*βουλὴν; acc sing of βουλή; βουλήν is translated in Acts 27.12 advised; Lk. 7.30; Eph. 1.11 counsel; βουλή is also translated as Acts 13.36, will; otherwise always counsel.*

**Lk. 7.30 the Pharisees rejected it.**

**Acts 2.23; 4.28; Eph. 1.11 God's counsel is determinate.**

**Heb. 6.17 The counsel of God is immutable, unchangeable.**

And the saints should be taught to know what the counsel of God is!!!  
What is God doing? Whatever it is, it is determinate and unchangeable.

*Eph 1:9 Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:  
10 That in the dispensation of the fulness of times **he might gather together in one all things in Christ**, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; **even in him:***

*11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him **who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:***

*12 That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.*

## The Acts of the Apostles

*13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,*

*14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.*

Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father is the very glory of the eternal counsel of God. We should, as children of God, should know the counsel of God.

Οὐ γὰρ ὑπεστείλαμην τοῦ μὴ ἀναγγεῖλαι ὑμῖν πᾶσαν τὴν βουλὴν τοῦ θεοῦ

Προσέχετε οὖν ἑαυτοῖς καὶ **παντὶ τῷ** ποιμνίῳ  
*28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock,*

**παντὶ τῷ** ... The masc, sing, dative following the Gr. 'pas' is translated to *all (7), unto every one (1), to every one (3), to every (3), among all (1), all (2)*. No matter how we interpret this, whether *to every flock* or *to all the flock* it is qualified by the following words, *over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers*.

*take heed, προσέχετε; 2<sup>nd</sup> p pl pres, imper of πρός to, unto + ἔχω to have, possess, hold; Mt. 6.1 take heed; Mt. 7.15; 10.17; 16.6; Lk.12.1; 20.46 beware; Lk.17.3; 21.34; Acts 5.35; take heed to; Acts 20.28 take heed ... unto.*

ποιμνίῳ; dat, sing of ποίμνιον; a flock, the flock.

ποιμνίον is used five times in the N.T.

*Lk.12.32 little flock; Acts 20.28 the flock ... overseers; (we cannot say that there was a plurality of elders in every Ephesian church, but we can say that they had a flock for which they were accountable to God, and to whom they were to minister); Acts 20.29 not sparing the flock; 1Pe.5.2 Feed the flock of God which is among you; 1Pe.5.3 be ensamples to the flock.*

While there are Scriptures that could be interpreted to mean that elders can care for more than one flock at a time, it is inconsistent

## The Acts of the Apostles

with other Scriptures that tell us that God *sets the members every one of them in the body as it hath pleased Him* (1Co. 12.28); that the office of a bishop is a church office, not an office which is somehow apart from a church relationship. Some might think that Timothy and Titus, because of the epistles that bears their names, were regional bishops, but that is not true. They were in fact the very definition of what we call missionaries. The pastoral letters are the best letters instructing missionaries how to go about conducting the business of establishing churches!

For example,

*Tit 3:10 A man that is an **heretick** **αιρετικον** after the first and second admonition reject;  
11 Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.*

**heretick αιρετικον**, Moulton, 'one who creates or fosters factions.' Likely one who is cannot tolerate differences in a Christ-like fashion. Such cause divisions; a sectarian; while there is no biblical example of church discipline exercised upon a heretic we believe it can, for the good of the body, becomes necessary to put out schismatics; as removing the presence of leaven so that it has no affect on the new loaf. (1Co.5.7) In other words the degree of the body's tolerance to differences will dictate if and when discipline becomes a necessity.

*reject, παραιτου; 2<sup>nd</sup> p s, present imperative of παραιτέομαι.*

*1Ti 4:7 But **refuse** **παραιτου** profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness.*

*1Ti 5:11 But the younger widows **refuse** **παραιτου** [from consideration of church support]: for when*

## The Acts of the Apostles

*they have begun to wax wanton against Christ,  
they will marry;*

*2Ti 2:23 But foolish and unlearned questions  
**avoid** παραιτου, knowing that they do gender  
strifes.*

In what way is this one rejected? Titus is being instructed not to entertain such persons for ministering as an overseer of one of the Lord's churches.

*1Co 11:19 For there must be also heresies among you,  
that they which **are approved** δοκιμοι may be made  
manifest among you. [δοκιμοι, or proved]*

*2Co 13:7 ¶ Now I pray to God that ye do no evil;  
not that we should appear **approved** δοκιμοι, but  
that ye should do that which is honest, though we  
be as reprobates αδοκιμοι [note the negative  
particle, or disapproved].*

Once Timothy and Titus have helped other churches become established in the truth, they can move on to another work. Keep in mind that these early churches had no N.T. Scriptures. Many new churches needed assistance about how to do things. And these men moved from place to place doing just that. And so, while Timothy and Titus may have worked with more than one church at a time they were more of an evangelist than a pastor. As far as I know these men were never called bishops in the sense of holding an office in a church. Their work was an extension of what Paul had taught them to do.

ἐν ᾧ	ὕμῶν <sup>1</sup>	τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον	ἔθετο	ἐπισκόπους
<i>over the which</i>		<i>the Holy Ghost</i>	<i>hath made</i>	<i>you<sup>1</sup> overseers,</i>
<i>in, with, by which</i>			<i>has set, or appointed</i>	

ἐν ᾧ, or *in the which*, is used 56 times in the N.T. and only this once is it translated **over the which**. This phrase is translated *in whom* (most often),

## The Acts of the Apostles

*whereby, in which, in that, wherein* (2<sup>nd</sup> most freq), *wherewith, whereas, with, and while*. We are in no way ever suggesting that we are correcting the KJV Bible when we show such things. We simply explain the sense of the Scriptures. **The phrase 'over the which' takes into consideration the appointed oversight that the man of God has to the assembly of whom he is a part.** Stress is place here: **The pastor forms a part of the congregation for which he cares.** There is no such thing as a ruling party over the church or churches from without or within. It is important that we understand that this **form of church government is one of the outstanding, commendable features of the Lord's true churches. This distinguishes them from all other religious organizations.**

ἐν ὑμῖν

*1Pe.5.2 Feed the flock of God which is among you ...  
in, with, by*

*1Th 5:12 And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour*

ἐν ὑμῖν

*among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you ...*

*Re.2.1 (and so all seven churches) Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write ...*

A pastor is not over a church as being a higher person, but he is over her by both Divine and corporate appointment. His greatest charge will be to *feed the church of God the Word of God.* (*Jn.21.6 Feed my sheep; Acts 20.28 feed the church; 1Pe.5.2 Feed the flock*)

ἔθετο; 3<sup>rd</sup> p s aor. 2, mid of τίθημι; ἔθετο is used eight times in the N.T. (*Mt.14.3; Acts 12.4 put; Acts 1.7 hath put; Acts 19.21 purposed; Acts 20.28 hath made; 1Co.12.18 hath ... set; 1Co.12.28 hath set; 1Thes.5.9 hath appointed.*

*1Co 12:18 But now hath God set ἔθετο the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.*

## The Acts of the Apostles

1Co 12:28 And God **hath set** ἔθετο some in the church (meaning a kind of church, the Lord's church), *first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.*

ἐπισκόπους; acc pl of ἐπίσκοπος; ἐπί upon, over + σκοπός noun, *mark (1)*; verb, σκοπέω, *take heed, mark, look, considering*, [**the idea: examining or recognizing issues among the sheep for good or for worse**]; ἐπίσκοπος is only used five times in the N.T. (Acts 20.28, *overseers (1)*; Phl.1.1; 1Ti.3.2; Tit.1.7, *bishop*; 1Pe.2.25, *Bishop (4)*); the verb ἐπισκοπέω, KJV *He.12.15, looking diligently (1)*; 1Pe.5.2, *taking the oversight (1)*.

ποιμαίνειν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ θεοῦ ἣν περιποιήσατο διὰ τοῦ ἰδίου αἵματος  
*to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.*

*to feed*, ποιμαίνειν; pres infin of ποιμαίνω; KJV *Mt.10.6 shall rule* (marg. shall tend); **feeding** cattle; *Jn.21.6 Feed my sheep*; *Acts 20.28 feed the church*; *1Co.9.7 feedth a flock*; *1Pe.5.2 Feed the flock*; *Jude 12 feeding themselves*; *Re.2.27 he shall rule them with a rod of iron*; *7.17 shall feed them*; *12.5 who was to rule all nations*; *19.15 he shall rule them with a rod.*

### **The church of God:**

The church is not the pastor's church. It is the Lord's church and he must rule, meaning that he is *to attend* and *govern* the Lord's church not by coercion or threatening, but by the Word of God. Most often direction should be gentle (Tit.3.2) and patient (1Ti.3.3), but sometimes it must be sharp. (1Ti.5.20; Tit. 1.13) He is charged with guiding the conduct of the saints by faithful exposition of the Word of God. That means commending good behavior and condemning evil behavior alike.

ἐκκλησίαν; acc sing:

We see have a singular noun, ἐκκλησίαν, used instead of plural. The church is not here in reference to a universal entity, but to a singular church. The word is used most often to speak of a single church, as distinguishable from other churches. It can be used to describe all churches as *one kind of church*; i.e. the Lord's church, or the true church.



## The Acts of the Apostles

περιεποιήσατο; 3<sup>rd</sup> p s, aor 1, ind, mid of περιποιέω; the verb is used only found in this other place(1Ti.3.13 *purchase* to themselves); the noun, περιποίησις, is in Eph.1.14, *redemption of the **purchased possession***; 1Th.5.9 but **to obtain** salvation; 2Th.2.14 to the **obtaining** of the glory of our Lord; He. 10.39 to the **saving** of the soul; 1Pe.2.9 a **peculiar** people.

First, let's notice what this verse could have meant had the plural form of *church* been used [ἐκκλησίας].

You (pl) feed the churches (pl). To emphasize this, we could say, 'you all feed these churches.' This can be interpreted to mean that there is such an entity as a clergy which can rule all of the churches. This doctrine is not taught in the Bible. The Scriptures clearly condemn the teaching of class divisions in a church in at least these four places.

*1Co.1.12 Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ.*

*13 **Is Christ divided?** was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?*

...

*1Co 4:6 And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another.*

*7 ¶ For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?*

The church at Ephesus:

*Re 2:6 But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.*

The church at Pergamos:

*Re 2:15 So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.*

## The Acts of the Apostles

*16 Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.*

**This verse describes for these pastors that their service is to a single kind of body, that is, *the church of God*, and that they shall serve that church.** The truth is, we can only be in one church at a time.

*Joh 10:16 And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be **one fold**, and one shepherd.* (That is, one kind of flock.)

A church has her own officers. Like a husband and wife relationship, the Scriptures teach that a wife is to be subject to *her own* husband; that does not mean that she is to be subject to every man that is a husband.

*Eph 5:24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so **let the wives be to their own husbands** in every thing.*

*Tit.2.4 That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,  
5 To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, **obedient to their own husbands**, that the word of God be not blasphemed.*

*1Pe 3:5 For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, **being in subjection unto their own husband** ...*

She knows who her pastor is, [or pastors are].

*Heb 13:17 **Obey** **πειθεσθε** **them that have the rule over** [ηγουμενων, part, pres; Or that lead] **you, and submit** υπεικετε, pres imper: to yield, give place, submit) **yourselves**: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.*

## The Acts of the Apostles

*Heb 13:24 Salute all them that have the rule over you ηγουμενους, and all the saints. They of Italy salute you. (Certainly suggesting a plurality of elders in a church.)*

Pastors are not lords<sup>1</sup> and they have no Biblical preeminence or superiority<sup>2</sup> over the Lord's church. They do not have to be the best tool in the box, but they must be called of God. They should preach/teach with all authority.<sup>3</sup> The most powerful influence pastors should have with the saints is their humble, gentle leadership by example<sup>4</sup>; living godly lives. (Which, by the way, all of the saints should be applying personally to their lives; not only pastors.) Servants are fellow sheep, and pastors **are never called shepherds in the New Testament**. The New Testament has carefully reserved that blessed title for the Great Shepherd.

<sup>1</sup>*1Pe.5.3 Neither as being lords over God's heritage,*

<sup>2</sup>*3Jo 1:9 I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not.*

<sup>3</sup>*1Ti 4:11 These things command and teach.*

<sup>3</sup>*Tit 2:15 These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.*

<sup>4</sup>*1Pe.5.3 ... being ensamples to the flock.*

*Take heed to yourselves ... to feed the church ...*

It is necessary that a pastor be able, that is he is gifted and apt, to feed the church. The church needs to be fed spiritual food, not sermonettes and programs. That would be like feeding our children on nothing but soda, chips, cakes, and cookies. That diet would make for sickly children, and a lack of feeding the flock the good substance of God's Word will result in a sickly church membership. A church that doesn't know how to think spiritually, make the best spiritual decisions, act like those who have eternal life, and expect the coming of their Lord as promised, etc., etc.

*1Pe 5:2 Feed ποιμάνετε, 2<sup>nd</sup> p pl, aor. 1, imper.*

## The Acts of the Apostles

*the flock of God which is among (ἐν, in, with, or by) you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly ...*

*2Ti 4:2 **Preach the word**; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.*

*Tit 3:1 **Put them in mind** to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work ...*

*1Ti 4:16 **Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine**; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.*

Save thyself and them that hear thee; what does that mean? Doctrines touch our lives in very practical ways; affects our faith. We learn how to obey the commandments of the Lord. We learn how to examine our lives, the life of our church by the Word of God. We learn how to speak gracious words to one another. We learn how to guide everything that we do so that it might be edifying to the body. We learn how to be gentle, loving, forgiving, humble, kind. We learn for ourselves that we should change certain bad behaviors because it is the right and best thing to do, for me, you, and the Lord. We learn how to put our brothers and sister in Christ first.

*2Ti 1:13 **Hold fast the form of sound words** ...*

Feeding the flock is the primary function of a pastor. This church has been a gracious body. You have seen to it that your pastors can minister daily in the Word of God. We have not taken that for granted. And we must not allow ourselves to become distract from this work. Two reasons stand out in my mind as to why pastors, who could have done otherwise, do not minister as they should in the Word and doctrine:

First, because it is probably the single-most difficult thing that one has ever done in his lives. It is certainly the most contrary work to the flesh that any man might do. How does a minister guage

## The Acts of the Apostles

success? Think about this: most of us gauge the success of our work by finishing the day's job, being on schedule for this or that job commitment, the promotion, the job evaluations, and on and on. But this man can't judge it by numbers of people, or by building programs, or by money in the bank. It translates into the lives, the conduct, the behavior of the people that constitute this church. And even that is not necessarily a valid criteria for judging true faithfulness to the Lord.

Second, related to the above: because they aren't feeding themselves. Too many preachers sit down on the day of the message and scribble out a few thoughts, dress it up with a few Scriptures and call that feeding the flock. It would be one thing if there weren't the time, but so many flitter away their time doing so many other things and neglect the most important part of their work. The result: generally a carnal church who doesn't know how to live for Christ, what the Bible teaches on any given subject: about the true God of the Bible, subjection to authority, proper interactions between ourselves, in our workplace, between fathers, husbands, wives, and children, etc.

The apostles, early in their ministry, ordered it so that they might be allowed to continue serving in the Word of God.

*Ac 6:2 Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, **It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables.***

*Take heed to ... **all the flock** ... to feed the church ...*

Pastors are to feed the whole congregation. Pastors should strive to make this Book and open Book for every member of the church. We all have right to this Book. It is for us all, our *way book*. *We all must know how to walk with Christ by faith.*

*Lk.4.17 And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when **he had opened the book**, he found the place where it was written*

## The Acts of the Apostles

...

*21 And he began to say unto them, **This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.** (This couldn't have been any more plain to His audience.)*

Pastors not only need to give the Word of God to every member without discrimination, but they should foster a hunger in them for knowing that Word themselves.

*1Pe 2:2 **As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby ...***

But as babies grow they are to be introduced to more and more solid foods, otherwise they shall be stymied in their growth, harmed in their health, and become weakened. We, the saints of God, must learn to grow into all of the Word of God. We are to believe all that we read and practice all that it teaches. Any less than this and we shall become stunted in our growth.

*He.5.12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.*

*13 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.*

*14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.*

*6.1 ¶ Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, **let us go on unto perfection ...***

Brethren, know what the Bible teaches, be convicted about its truths, and pass those truths along to other brethren. A church that knows her Bible will be a church that continually hungers after righteousness.

The man must be called or sent of God to this work.

*Ro 10:15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent?*

## The Acts of the Apostles

God gifts men with an ability to carry out this work.

*Eph 4:8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts ἔδωκε δόματα, both of the root δίδωμι unto men.*

...

*11 And he gave (ἔδωκε, root δίδωμι) some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers ...*

*1Ti 4:14 Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.*

*2Ti 1:6 Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.*

They are accountable to God for their faithfulness and the manner in which they do their work:

*1Co.9.16 For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!*

*17 For if I do this thing **willingly**, I have a reward: but if against my will, **a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me.***

*1Ti 6:20 O Timothy, keep that **which is committed to thy trust** ...*

*2Ti 1:14 That good thing which **was committed unto thee keep** by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.*

And finally, before we move to the next verse, did you notice these words ... *feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood?*

This tells us in clear terms that our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, who came to us in a human body, born of a virgin is the eternal God, who created all things and by whom all things consist. The Eternal God, in that body of flesh that was made for him in the womb of his mother Mary, died the death of the cross, and shed His blood to purchase, **especially His church,**

## The Acts of the Apostles

(yes He died for everyone that believes) and to bring her to Himself for all of eternity, where He shall receive a peculiar glory through this church throughout all ages, world without end. (Eph.3.21) That this Jesus that died for us is God is repeated again and again in Scripture:

*1Jo 3:16 Hereby perceive we the love of **God**, because **he laid down his life for us ...***

*Joh 20:28 And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.*

*Ac 7:59 And they stoned Stephen, **calling upon God**, and saying, **Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.***

*Ac 16:31 And they said, **Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ**, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.*

...

*34 And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, **believing in God** with all his house.*

*Tit 2:13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the **glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ ...***

*Zec 14:5 And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: **and the LORD my God shall come**, and all the saints with thee.*

*1Th 4:14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will **God bring with him.***

*1Ti 3:16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: **God was manifest in the flesh**, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.*



## The Acts of the Apostles

*Heb 1:6 And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.*

Προσέχετε οὖν ἑαυτοῖς καὶ παντὶ τῷ ποιμνίῳ ἐν ᾧ ὑμᾶς τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἔθετο ἐπισκόπους ποιμαίνειν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ θεοῦ ἣν περιεποιήσατο διὰ τοῦ ἰδίου αἵματος

μετὰ βαρεῖς εἰσελεύσονται  
29 For I know this, that after my departing **shall** grievous wolves **enter in**

βαρεῖς; nom, pl, masc of βαρύς; KJV *heavy burdens, weightier matters, grievous wolves, weighty and powerful letters; usually heavy, burdensome, and destructive wolves who bring doctrines, traditions not Biblically derived, imposing Old Covenant works and casting out grace, which things choke the life out of the church and ruin or spoil the faith of God's elect.* (Col.2.8)

*Mt 23:4 For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.*

*2Pe 2:1 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.*

εἰσελεύσονται; 3<sup>rd</sup> p pl, fut, ind of εἰσέρχομαι; εἰς for, into, unto + ἔρχομαι to come; KJV *shall enter in or into*, 6 times;

εἰς ὑμᾶς μὴ φειδόμενοι τοῦ ποιμνίου  
*among you, not sparing the flock.*

φειδόμενοι; nom, pl, masc, part, pres of φείδομαι; this is the first time that this Greek word is used in the N.T.; once translated *forbear* in 2Co.12.6; here, **not to refrain from causing damage to the flock of God.**

Notice that these wolves are not of the church membership as yet. There is not an elder among them yet that is so. But as we shall see in the next

## The Acts of the Apostles

verse there is in every preacher the potential to deviate from the truth of the Word of God for base reasons.

ἐγὼ γὰρ, οἶδα τοῦτο, ὅτι εἰσελεύσονται μετὰ τὴν ἄφιξίν μου λύκοι βαρεῖς εἰς ὑμᾶς μὴ φειδόμενοι τοῦ ποιμνίου

καὶ ἐξ **ἀναστήσονται** διεστραμμένα  
30 *Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, deviations*

ἀναστήσονται; 3<sup>rd</sup> p pl, fut, mid of ἀνίστημι; ἀνά re-, new, above + ἵστημι to stand; KJV Mt.12.41 shall rise; Mk.11.32 shall rise up; Acts 20.30 shall ... arise; 1Thes.4.16 shall rise.

διεστραμμένα; nom, sing, fem, part, perf, **pass** of διαστρέφω; διά + στρέφω to turn, to turn back; the part, perf, pass is used in Mt.17.17; Lk.9.41 O faithless and **perverse** generation; Phl. 2.15 midst of a crooked and **perverse** nation. **LXX** translates this root *perverse, perverseness, & crooked*.

Some of these elders shall speak *perverse* things, things that are *twisted* from the truth? I think that this presents for us the susceptibility or vulnerabilities of all men that come into the office of a bishop. Some men are moreso affected than others. But I don't think there is a man that isn't somehow touched with this propensity. I can tell you this, that there isn't a man in the office of the pastor who relishes being proved wrong. Not one. And yet we must all be proved wrong at some point. Pride can be a problem.

Never exalt the pastor.

And why will some of these dear brethren speak *perverse, twisted* things?

ἀποσπᾶν  
**to draw away disciples after them.**

## The Acts of the Apostles

ἀποσπᾶν; pres **infin**, act of ἀποσπάω; ἀπό from, forth, , off, since + σπάω KJV *drew* a sword (only used twice in N.T.); ἀποσπάω is only used in Mt. 26.51 **drew** his sword; Lk.22.41 he **was withdrawn** from them; Acts 20.30 **to draw away** disciples after them; Acts 21.1 **after we were gotten** from them.

Let us consider Paul's shocking revelation of some of these *elders* that had come a good distance to see him. Of these *some* would rise up and become those who shall speak *perverse things to draw away* disciples after them. How is this possible? Because sometimes men, called of God, elders, pastors, bishops, teachers promote themselves to be what they are not; and the disciples so often want it so.

2Co 4:2 But have **renounced** ἀπειπάμεθα the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor **handling the word of God deceitfully**; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

Root ἀπειπέιν; only time used in the N.T.; **LXX** Job 6.14; 19.18, *rejected*; 3Ki.11.2 (1Ki.11.2), *forbade*; Job 10.3, *disowned*.

2Pe 3:16 As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which **they that are unlearned and unstable wrest**, [not because they aren't Christians, but because they are unlearned and unstable, ἀμαθεις και αστηρικτοι, in the Word of God] **as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.**

ἀμαθεις; nom, pl, masc of ἀμαθής; ἀ negative particle + μανθάνω to learn, understand; these are undisciplined in the teachings of Jesus Christ. And as a result:

ἀστήρικτοι; nom, pl, masc of ἀστήρικτος; ἀ + στηρίζω fixed, established, stablished, stedfast, strengthened; so this one has not become fixed upon the truths of the Word of God.

## The Acts of the Apostles

[Notice that such persons become the targets of false teachers/antichrists. 2Pe.2.14]

Did Paul know who they were? The Scriptures do not say, but we do know that this was revealed to him by Holy Spirit. The truth of the matter is that the Lord knew who they were that would deviate from the truth, and yet He allowed and even directed them to accomplish His perfect will.

(1Co.11.19) At the moment they all had the same doctrines, had a zeal and love for Paul, for the Word of God, for the Lord Jesus, for the church of God, and had come to Paul in a moment's notice to hear him, and sorrowed because they would not see him again in this life.

But know this, that Paul makes a distinction between those who are called *wolves* and some of these elders that shall err in their ministry. There were those who would *enter the flock* that are wolves. They are reprobates, false teachers, antichrists, and not of the sheep. The churches are amply warned to stand fast in the Word of God and thereby oppose them. But in this verse these pastors are even warned of their own snares that lay before them.

Pastors must be diligent to resist and fight against fleshly lusts that tag along with this office. Pastors, can abuse their trust and misuse their influence among the children of God; they can abuse their authority as overseers; and can misuse the generosity of the saints for the ministry. Those are the cold hard facts of every God-called man in the ministry. How many well-meaning God-called men have fallen prey to the evils of power over people's lives? How many ran so well, and then have fallen? If pastors do not faithfully occupy themselves in the ministry of the Word of God it is that much more likely that they shall fail and fall.

καὶ ἐξ ὑμῶν αὐτῶν ἀναστήσονται ἄνδρες λαλοῦντες διεστραμμένα τοῦ ἀποσπᾶν τοὺς μαθητὰς ὀπίσω αὐτῶν

Διὸ γρηγορεῖτε μνημονεύοντες ὅτι τριετίαν  
31 Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years

This gives us the total time that Paul was in Ephesus. (Acts 19.8, 10)

## The Acts of the Apostles

<sup>6</sup>νύκτα καὶ ἡμέραν <sup>2</sup>οὐκ <sup>1</sup>ἐπαυσάμην <sup>7</sup>μετὰ <sup>8</sup>δακρύων <sup>3</sup>νουθετῶν <sup>5</sup>ἕνα <sup>4</sup>ἕκαστον  
<sup>1</sup>I *ceased* <sup>2</sup>not <sup>3</sup>to warn <sup>4</sup>every <sup>5</sup>one <sup>6</sup>night and day <sup>7</sup>with <sup>8</sup>tears.

*ceased*, ἐπαυσάμην, 1<sup>st</sup> p s aor 1, ind, mid of παύω; Lk.5.4 **had left speaking**; Lk.8.24 and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water: and they **ceased**, and there was a calm; In Acts this word is used six time (9 times by Luke the evangelist) Acts 5.42 they **ceased** not to teach and preach; 6.13 This man **ceaseth** not to speak blasphemous; 13.10 **wilt** thou not **cease** to pervert; 20.1 And after the uproar **was ceased**; 20.31 I **ceased** not to warn every one; 21.32 they **left** beating of Paul;

νουθετῶν; nom, sing, masc, part, pres of νουθετέω; first time used in the N.T.; also translated *admonish* (4), Ro.15.14; Col.3.16; 1Thes.5.12; 2Thes.3.15; *warn* (4), 1Co.4.14; Col.1.28; 1Thes.5.14

Διὸ γρηγορεῖτε μνημονεύοντες ὅτι τριετίαν νύκτα καὶ ἡμέραν οὐκ ἐπαυσάμην μετὰ δακρύων νουθετῶν ἕνα ἕκαστον

παρατίθεμαι

32 *And now, brethren, I commend you to God,  
I stand you along side of God*

παρατίθεμαι; 1<sup>st</sup> p s pres, ind, mid of παρατίθημι; παρά near, beside + τίθημι to stand, set, appoint;;

1Ti 1:18 ¶ *This charge I **commit** παρατίθεμαι unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare ...*

Paul, says in affect, I'm never making the trip this way again. I can say nothing more. There is nothing more that I can do. Your questions, your needs all fall between you and the Lord.

καὶ τῷ λόγῳ τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ τῷ δυναμένῳ ἐποικοδομῆσαι,  
*and to the word of his grace, which is able to build [you] up,*

## The Acts of the Apostles

δυναμένω; dat, sing, masc, part, pres of δύναμαι; first use in the N.T.; δυναμένω is found four times (Acts 20.32 *which is able*; Ro.16.25 *that is of power*; Eph.3.20; Jude vs. 24 *that is able*).

ἐποικοδομῆσαι; aor 1, infin, act of ἐποικοδομέω; ἐπί upon + οἶκος house + δέμω Moulton, to *construct*; ἐποικοδομέω is used 8 times in the N.T. (1Co.3.10 (twice), 12, 14; Eph.2.20; Col.2.7; Jude 20). Or, *which is able to construct your house ... the house or your life ...*

*Mt.7.24 Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which **built his house upon a rock**:*

*25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.*

καὶ δοῦναι ὑμῖν κληρονομίαν ἐν  
*and to give you an inheritance among*  
with

δοῦναι; aor 2, infin of δίδωμι to give.

κληρονομίαν; acc sing of κληρονομία; κλήρος + νέμομαι Thayer's, to *possess*; B-D-A-G to *graze or feed cattle*; κληρονομία is always translated with the English word *inheritance*.

<sup>2</sup>τοῖς <sup>3</sup>ἡγιασμένοις <sup>1</sup>πᾶσιν  
<sup>1</sup>*all* <sup>2</sup>*them* <sup>3</sup>*which are sanctified*.

ἡγιασμένοις; dat, pl, masc, part, perf, **pass** of ἀγιάζω; ἡγιασμένοις is used four times in the N.T., Acts 20.32; 26.18 *which are sanctified*; 1Co.1.2 *that are sanctified*; Jude 1 *sanctified*. **Their having been made holy through the blood of Christ, dedicated, set apart to the service of God, is an accomplished fact.**

## The Acts of the Apostles

*1Co 6:11 And such were some of you: but **ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified** in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.*

*He.10.9 Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.*

*10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*

...

*14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.*

Now they are pointed to the grace of God in this holy standing so that they continue to walk holily, in the absence of Paul.

*Joh 17:17 Sanctify them **through thy truth**: thy word is truth.*

*He.10.19 ¶ Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,*

*20 By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;*

*21 And having an high priest over the house of God;*

*22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.*

This is all that Paul, or any minister of the gospel can do, with the hopes that they shall stand unto the day of Christ. The term *the word of His grace* means the whole sum of His grace which is communicated through His revealed Word, which informs us of the inheritance that awaits the faithful children of God. *Knowing* that we have an inheritance awaiting us should move us to live in holy expectation of that day when we shall receive it of our Lord.

Καὶ τα νῦν παρατίθεμαι ὑμᾶς ἀδελφοί, τῷ θεῷ καὶ τῷ λόγῳ τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ τῷ δυναμένῳ ἐποικοδομησαί, καὶ δοῦναι ὑμῖν κληρονομίαν ἐν τοῖς ἡγιασμένοις πᾶσιν

## The Acts of the Apostles

33 *I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel.*

I have not lusted upon no one's silver, gold, or apparel.

οὐδενός; is used in vs. 34; 27.34; means *nothing, none*;

ἀργυρίου ἢ χρυσίου ἢ ἱματισμοῦ οὐδενός ἐπεθύμησα

34 *Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me.*

you[rselves] know, γινώσκετε, 2<sup>nd</sup> p pl, pres, ind, act of γινώσκω, to know.

ὑπηρέτησαν; 3<sup>rd</sup> p pl, aor 1, ind of ὑπηρετέω; ὑπηρετέω is found only three times and always in the book of Acts (13.36 *after ... had served*; 20.34 *ministered unto*; 24.23 *to minister*); meaning his hands were *his helpers* to supply the needs of mine and my travelling companions.

Αὐτοὶ δὲ γινώσκετε ὅτι ταῖς χρεῖαις μου καὶ τοῖς οὖσιν μετ' ἐμοῦ ὑπηρέτησαν αἱ χεῖρες αὐτῶν

35 *I have shewed you all things,*

*Shewed*, ὑπέδειξα; 1<sup>st</sup> p s, aor 1, ind of ὑποδείκνυμι; ὑπό under, from, by, of + δείκνυμι to shew; KJV **Mt.3.7**; **Lk.3.7**, *hath warned*; Lk. 6.47; Acts 9.16, *will shew*; Lk.12.5, *will forewarn*; Acts 20.35 *have shewed*.

ὑπέδειξεν, 3<sup>rd</sup> ps, aor 1, ind:

**Mt 3:7 ¶** *But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned ὑπέδειξεν you to flee from the wrath to come?*

**Lu 3:7** *Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned ὑπέδειξεν you to flee from the wrath to come?*



## The Acts of the Apostles

In other words, Paul had showed [or, warned] them how to do all the things necessary to be proper ministers of the gospel of Jesus Christ. This is another instance where the word *all* does not mean everything without exception. Paul could not have possibly showed these men *all* things without exception, and that is not the meaning here. He showed these these men everything that was needful for them to fulfil their ministry. And that is explained in the following words:

*how that so laboring ye ought **to** support the weak,*

*to support, ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι; pres infin of ἀντιλαμβάνομαι; ἀντί for, in the room + λαμβάνομαι to take, receive; found three times in the N.T., Lk.1.54 holpen; Acts 20.35 to support; 1Ti.6.2 partakers; **to stand for the weak in providing the things that they have need of when it is our power to do so.** These are those who cannot do for themselves. Otherwise, everyone had the duty to provide for themselves. (2Thes. 3.6)*

*the weak, ἀσθενούντων; gen, pl, masc, part, pres of ἀσθενέω; ἀσθενούντων is used three times, Jn.5.3 impotent folk; Jn.6.2 that were diseased; ἀσθενέω is translated as sick, impotent, diseased, and most often weak, as in weak in faith, or through offense, or incapable in ourselves to accomplish, and being subject to death.*

*And to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.*

Either this phrase, *the words of the Lord Jesus τῶν λόγων τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ*, is a result of a number of our Lord's sayings, which would lead us to conclude, as Paul did, that Jesus taught, *It is more blessed to give than to receive*; Or, that Jesus said these very words, but we do not have them recorded anywhere else in the N.T. Both might be correct, but if I had to choose which is best, between the former and the latter, it would be the latter. There is no doubt that our Lord said these words because that is what Paul says here.

John Gill supplies there references which would lead us to conclude this message of our Lord: Lk.6.30 *Give to every man that asketh thee,*

## The Acts of the Apostles

31 *And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also the them likewise, 35 But love your enemies, and do good, and lend hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil, 38 Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again; 14.13, 14 But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.*

*Mt 19:21 Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and **give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven:** and come and follow me.*

It is the giver that is blessed, more than the receiver. The giver shall receive of the Lord what the receiver may never be able to return.

*Pr 19:17 He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and that which he hath given will he pay him again.*

*Pr 14:21 He that despiseth his neighbor sinneth: but he that hath mercy on the poor, happy is he.*

*Pr 22:9 He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor.*

*Pr 28:27 He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack: but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse.*

*Heb 7:7 And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better.*

Πάντα ὑπέδειξα ὑμῖν ὅτι οὕτως κοπιῶντας δεῖ ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι τῶν ἀσθενούντων μνημονεύειν τε τῶν λόγων τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ ὅτι αὐτὸς εἶπεν Μακάριόν ἐστιν δίδοναι μᾶλλον ἢ λαμβάνειν

θεῖς τὰ γόνατα

## The Acts of the Apostles

36 ¶ *And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all.*  
places [the] knees

θείς; nom s, masc, part, aor 2, act of τίθημι; to put, lay.

θείς τὰ γόνατα is used 3 other times in the N.T. (Lk.22.41; Acts 7.60; 9.40) and always translated *kneeled down*. The plural θεντες τα γονατα is used in Acts 21.5, *we kneeled down*.

Καὶ ταῦτα εἰπὼν θείς τὰ γόνατα αὐτοῦ σὺν πᾶσιν αὐτοῖς προσηύξατο

ικανὸς δὲ ἐγένετο κλαυθμὸς πάντων  
37 *And they all wept sore,*

καὶ ἐπιπεσόντες ἐπὶ τὸν τράχηλον τοῦ Παύλου κατεφίλουν αὐτόν  
*and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him,*

*kissed, κατεφίλουν; 3<sup>rd</sup> p pl, imperf act of καταφιλέω; κατά down, according to, as, concerning + φιλέω the act of a friends affection or love; καταφιλέω is used six times and always translated with the English kiss. (Mt.26.49; Mk.14.45; Lk.7.38, 45; 15.20; Acts 20.37)*

ικανὸς δὲ ἐγένετο κλαυθμὸς πάντων καὶ ἐπιπεσόντες ἐπὶ τὸν τράχηλον τοῦ Παύλου κατεφίλουν αὐτόν

ὀδυνώμενοι μάλιστα ἐπὶ τῷ λόγῳ ᾧ εἰρήκει  
38 *Sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake,*

ὀδυνώμενοι; nom pl masc, part, pres, **pass** of ὀδυνάω; is found only 4 times in the N.T. (Lk.2.48 *sorrowing* [as over a lost child]; Acts 20.38 *sorrowing*; Lk.16.24, 25 *tormented* in the flames of hell). The noun form, ὀδυνή, is Ro.9.2 Paul said that he had a *continual sorrow* in his *heart* for his kinsmen in the flesh; And those saints who for the pursuit of riches, 1Ti.6.10, *pierce themselves through with many sorrows*.

οὐκέτι μέλλουσιν τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ θεωρεῖν προέπεμπον δὲ αὐτόν  
*that they should see his face no more. And they accompanied him*

## The Acts of the Apostles

προέπεμπον; 3<sup>rd</sup> p pl, imperf, act of προπέμπω; πρό before, first, above + πέμπω to send; Or, being sent. KJV Acts 15.3 *being brought on ... way*; 20.38 *accompanied*; 21.5 *brought ... on ... way*

εἰς τὸ πλοῖον  
*unto the ship.*

ὀδυνώμενοι μάλιστα ἐπὶ τῷ λόγῳ ᾧ εἰρήκει ὅτι οὐκέτι μέλλουσιν τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ θεωρεῖν προέπεμπον δὲ αὐτὸν εἰς τὸ πλοῖον