

# Paul's Parting Proclamation

Acts 20:17-38

# Paul's Parting Proclamation

- When Christians part on friendly terms, such partings can generate an odd mix of healthy emotions: sorrow, comfort, and joy.
- While parting with faithful brethren is sorrowful, for Christians there is great hope of reuniting with them.

# Paul's Parting Proclamation

- “Those who do not weep, do not see.” (Victor Hugo)
- “Sorrow prepares you for joy. It violently sweeps everything out of your house, so that new joy can find space to enter. It shakes the yellow leaves from the bough of your heart, so that fresh, green leaves can grow in their place. It pulls up the rotten roots, so that new roots hidden beneath have room to grow. Whatever sorrow shakes from your heart, far better things will take their place.” (Jalaluddin Rumi)
- Psalm 126:5 - “Those who sow in tears Shall reap in joy.”

# Paul's Parting Proclamation

- Acts 20:17-23 - "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."

# Paul's Parting Proclamation

- Acts 20:24-28 - “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. 28 Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.”

# Sorrow

- Acts 20:36-38 - “And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. 37 Then they all wept freely, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him, 38 sorrowing most of all for the words which he spoke, that they would see his face no more. And they accompanied him to the ship.”

# Sorrow

- Permanent partings bring sorrow because they end an active loving relationship.
- We are deeply grieved when they end, and that is natural and by design. God created us to develop attachments to precious things: our parents, our spouses, our children, our brethren, our friends, our God and our Savior, our souls
- God inspired the Bible writers to use five words for love, inspired them to write that love is His defining characteristic, and built all of His law and will on the two great commandments of love.
- Let sorrow remind us, not of our loss, but of our love for one another.

# Comfort

- Jesus provided great comfort to His disciples at His parting
  - John 14:1-3 - “Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. 2 In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.”

# Comfort

- He gave them even more comfort by telling them how they can get there
  - John 14:6 - “Jesus said to him, I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”

# Comfort

- We are comforted by trusting and believing Him, and we continue to be comforted by our faith that the Way He gave us will one day reunite us
- Parting brings comfort because it gives us an opportunity to exercise our faith and to choose to hope for a reunion
  - Acts 20:32 - “So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.”

# Joy

- We will see the face of God and His Son
  - Rev. 22:1-5 - “And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. 2 In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. 3 And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. 4 They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. 5 There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.”

# Joy

- We will be together forever
  - Rev. 22:14 - “Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city.”

# Joy

- Parting brings joy because it reminds us of a place where there will never be another parting.
  - 1Thes. 4:13-17 - “But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. 15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.”

# Joy

- Our love for our brethren and our desire to see them again can motivate us to greater faithfulness and obedience in anticipation of the great joy that awaits us as we are reunited in heaven.
  - Acts 20:29-38

# Joy

- Acts 20:29-38 - “For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. 31 Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears. 32 So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. 33 I have coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. 34 Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me. 35 I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, It is more blessed to give than to receive. 36 And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. 37 Then they all wept freely, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him, 38 sorrowing most of all for the words which he spoke, that they would see his face no more. And they accompanied him to the ship.”

# Paul's Parting Proclamation

- 2Tim. 1:7-12 - “For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. 8 Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God, 9 who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began, 10 but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, 11 to which I was appointed a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. 12 For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day.”