

I. PAUL PREACHES TO PASTORS

- A. Third visit to Ephesus (vs. 17)
 - 1. He was minded to be in Jerusalem for the day of Pentecost
 - a. God was driving him in his mission
 - b. There was WORK left for Paul to do
 - c. ROM. 1:15 – “So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.”
 - 2. Paul loved this church and the people there dearly
 - 3. He tells them EPH. 1:16 – “Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers;”
- B. Paul lands at Miletus and tarries long enough to send 30 miles to Ephesus
 - 1. The letter to the Ephesians has a different opening than other letters
 - a. 1 COR. 1:2 – “Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:”
 - b. 1 THESS. 1:1 – “Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.”
 - c. Some are written to the “bishops (pastors) and deacons”
 - i. Which means the church or churches
 - ii. Can’t have a bishop without a church and vice versa
 - d. But Ephesians opens: EPH. 1:1 – Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus:”
 - 2. A group of Pastors (or Bishops) come to a preachers’ meeting at Miletus
 - a. Some say that is because of a “plurality of elders”
 - i. The church at Antioch certainly had several pastors
 - ii. ACTS 13:1 – “Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.”
 - b. It could be that several small churches were started
 - c. BUT Jesus addresses only one in REV. 2:1 – “Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks;”
 - 3. And the Letter to Ephesus discusses UNITY of a church

- a. And deals MUCH with church doctrine
 - b. EPH. 5:23 – “For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.”
 - c. Demonstrating the opposite of a “universal” church (“the” wife)
- C. They met for FELLOWSHIP and INSTRUCTION

II. PAUL PREACHES THE PURCHASE

- A. Churches are a PURCHASED possession of Jesus Christ (vs. 28)
- 1. There is a cost to anything valuable (a stick of gum or a diamond ring)
 - a. Whenever the government offers something for free
 - b. It isn’t FREE or it isn’t VALUABLE – cannot be both!
 - c. Certainly, FREEDOM isn’t FREE
 - 2. When He went to the Cross, it was for you and me!
 - a. ROM. 5:12 – “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:”
 - b. ROM. 6:23 – “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”
 - c. ROM. 8:3 – “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:”
 - 3. He paid the price of sin IN FULL!
 - 4. His BLOOD ALONE is sufficient
 - a. Plus nothing, minus nothing
 - b. He loved YOU so much that He came to die in YOUR place
 - c. The death of ONE INFINITE God or your INFINITE DEATH in Hell
- B. He PURCHASED HIS Church
- 1. MATT. 16:18 – “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”
 - a. Not ONLY in the future, not JUST in the past
 - b. But ONGOING – He will CONTINUE to build His church
 - 2. THIS church is His Bride, His Body, His Building
 - 3. He is the Bridegroom of the Bride
 - a. The Head of the Body
 - b. The Chief Cornerstone of the Building
 - c. It is HIS – be careful attacking His Love
 - 4. He receives GLORY in the church at Ephesus
 - a. EPH. 3:21 – “Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.”
 - b. He receives glory in THIS church!
- C. Paul recounts to them the character of his ministry among them

1. His service:
 - a. To the gospel, the LORD, to the Ephesians
 - b. Paul served in HUMILITY (vs. 19)
 - c. Be careful of a man who has to have his signature everywhere!
2. His method:
 - a. Publicly from “HOUSE TO HOUSE” (vs. 20)
 - b. We see this in ACTS 5:42 – “And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.”
 - c. That’s is VISION and ACTION together!
3. His audience:
 - a. Jews and Greeks (vs. 21)
 - b. We are debtors to ALL people
4. His message:
 - a. Repentance and Faith (vs. 21b)
 - b. Same message as John the Baptist – MATT. 3:1 – “In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea,”
 - c. Same message as Jesus Christ – LUKE 13:3 – “I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.”

III. PAUL PREACHES ABOUT PRESSURE

- A. Ministry has pressures, but so does simply living the Christian Life!
 1. Paul talks about the afflictions he has had (vs. 22-25)
 2. But He doesn’t NAME them!
 - a. Some people you worry to ask them how they are
 - b. They might just tell you! How much time do you have?
 - c. Some people RELISH in reliving their trials and tribulations
 3. I’m not talking about a testimony of what God has done
 - a. The purpose of a testimony is to bring glory to GOD
 - b. Not pity to one’s self!
- B. If anyone had a reason to have self-pity, it would be Paul
 1. 2 COR 11:23-28 – “Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. (24) Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. (25) Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; (26) In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; (27) In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. (28) Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.”
 2. How many of us can claim anything close?

3. And even there, Paul is speaking “as a fool” – to make a point!
4. We have the record in Acts (stonings, beatings, murderous intent)
- C. And YET – Paul knew he must press on!
 1. Despite knowing what lay before him at Jerusalem (vs. 23)
 2. He told the PHIL. 3:14 – “I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”
 3. God has put pressure on him
 - a. Time – we only have so much
 - b. Burden for the Lost – in human strength an impossible task
 - c. Resources – never enough yet always sufficient

IV. PAUL PREACHES ON PROTECTION

- A. Wolves and danger to the flock (vs. 29-30)
 1. We well know the phrase “wolves in sheep’s clothing” (even cartoons)
 2. MATT. 7:15 – “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.”
 3. Wolves from WITHOUT (vs. 29)
 - a. LUKE 10:3 – “Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves.”
 - b. We go out among them!
 4. Wolves from WITHIN (vs. 30)
 - a. But sometimes they attack from INSIDE!
 - b. ROM. 16:17 – “Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.”
 - c. Separate from them! Rebuke them!
- B. Paul admonishes them: WATCH (vs. 31)
 1. They are now the shepherds
 2. They have the charge to be caretakers
 3. And Shepherds need good sheep dogs too!
- C. Paul admonishes them: REMEMBER (vs. 31)
 1. That’s what Paul did for three years – follow his example
 2. PHIL. 3:17 – “Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.”
 3. Paul bids them a sorrowful farewell (vs. 36-38)
 4. Until the meeting in the air!

V. PAUL PREACHES OUR POSITION

- A. We are Saved – our sin debt paid by the BLOOD of Jesus Christ!
- B. His message never changed!
- C. Be Saved Today!