

ACTS

Chapter 20

Note from Kathy

Have you ever spent an hour or two looking through old photographs? Were you struck by the thought of how much everything and everyone has changed? Change is inevitable! Minutes change to hours, hours to days, days to weeks, weeks to months, months to years and years to a lifetime. What is important is to value and make the most of the moments. I am so proud of you for studying God's word. You are not merely spending your time, you are investing your time in things of eternal value. I promise you will see a change.

Acts 20:1-3

When the uproar had ended, Paul sent for the disciples and, after encouraging them, said goodbye and set out for Macedonia.² He traveled through that area, speaking many words of encouragement to the people, and finally arrived in Greece,³ where he stayed three months. Because some Jews had plotted against him just as he was about to sail for Syria, he decided to go back through Macedonia.



Observation

1. The uproar in Ephesus had ended. What did we find Paul doing as chapter 20 opened?
2. Highlight the places mentioned in Acts 20:1-6. Locate these places on your map Key Places in the Book of Acts on page 74. We want to become familiar with Paul's journey. Scripture says Paul set out for Macedonia and then on to Greece. What was he doing all along the way?
3. According to verse 3, Paul stayed in Greece for three months. When he was about to set sail for Syria, what information did he receive that changed his plans?
4. Where did Paul go instead?

Acts 20:4

He was accompanied by Sopater son of Pyrrhus from Berea, Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica, Gaius from Derbe, Timothy also, and Tychicus and Trophimus from the province of Asia.

Acts 20:7-12

On the first day of the week we came together to break bread. Paul spoke to the people and, because he intended to leave the next day, kept on talking until midnight. There were many lamps in the upstairs room where we were meeting. Seated in a window was a young man named Eutychus, who was sinking into a deep sleep as Paul talked on and on. When he was sound asleep, he fell to the ground from the third story and was picked up dead. Paul went down, threw himself on the young man and put his arms around him. "Don't be alarmed," he said. "He's alive!" Then he went upstairs again and broke bread and ate. After talking until daylight, he left. The people took the young man home alive and were greatly comforted.

5. Fill in the chart below with the details of Paul's traveling companions.

Name	Area they are from

6. Paul's traveling companions went by ship to Troas, but Paul went up through Macedonia to the city of Philippi. What Jewish holiday did he celebrate with the Philippians? _____

7. Sailing from Philippi to Troas, Paul joined his friends again. Briefly summarize the amazing events from verses 7-12.

Look up the young man's name. Did he live up to the name he was given?

8. It will be a long and difficult journey to reach Jerusalem by Pentecost. Paul chose not to stop in Ephesus to see the leaders there. What did he do in order to have one last opportunity to encourage them?

9. In verse 21, what did the apostle Paul state has been his message to both the Jews and Gentiles?

10. This was an important meeting. Look at Acts 20:18-35. List the things Paul shared with these leaders that would serve as examples to them of how to lead the church. Later Paul would write to the Corinthian leaders, "Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ."

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■ Acts 20:23-24

I only know that in every city the Holy Spirit warns me that prison and hardships are facing me.²⁴ However, I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God’s grace.

■ Acts 20:36-38

When Paul had finished speaking, he knelt down with all of them and prayed.³⁷ They all wept as they embraced him and kissed him.³⁸ What grieved them most was his statement that they would never see his face again. Then they accompanied him to the ship.

11. Paul is aware of what the future holds for him. What did Paul say the Holy Spirit warned him repeatedly in verse 23?
12. Read Acts 20:24 again. What was Paul's heart on the matter of his future?
13. What did Paul do when he had finished instructing them?
14. What was the response of those with Paul that day? Why did they feel this way?

Application

1. Paul was a man on a mission. He traveled many miles on his first two missionary journeys, sharing the gospel and establishing strong communities of believers. But, this third journey focused on revisiting those areas and strengthening the disciples. Would you say you are a woman with a mission? Like Esther in the *Old Testament*, perhaps you are where you are, “for such a time as this.” What has God called you to do?

2. Paul was a wise man. He traveled and ministered with a group of like-minded believers. There is an old saying, “Show me your friends, and I’ll show you your future.” Friends have a very powerful impact on our life. Do you have friends like these?

Name one friend (first name only) who consistently points you back to God's amazing grace? _____

What does having a group of Christian friends around you do for you?

3. Take a moment to reread the resurrection story of Eutychus in Acts 20:7-12. Were you able to picture this event? Have you ever been blessed by the miraculous healing of someone you loved? How did you feel?

Are you still thanking the Lord for that extraordinary blessing?

Sharing your testimony of God's grace in your life, could be as simple as sharing the story of that miraculous healing. Imagine the stories of healing, resurrection and grace the apostles shared.

4. While the small band of traveling missionaries stopped in the city of Miletus, Paul sent for the leaders of the church at Ephesus. One last time together, one last opportunity to encourage them in their walk of faith. Everyone is leading someone. Who are you encouraging today?

Words are not the only way we lead. What are some ways you encourage those around you?

5. As Paul spoke to his friends in Miletus, he reminded them of the example he had set for them. He encouraged them to serve others as he had served them. Do you feel this way? What are some other ways you testify to the good news of God's grace and how it has changed you?

Do you want others to follow your lead, to live as you have set the example? Is there one thing that comes to your mind that you believe needs to change, so that you too could gladly say, follow me?

6. When Paul finished speaking he prayed with his friends. They all wept and embraced him and kissed him. They were very grieved that Paul had said he would never see them again. They knew he was a man who only spoke with the Holy Spirit instructed him to say and that his words could be trusted. Have you experienced the pangs of separation when God called someone you love to move away?

Goodbyes can be extremely difficult, but they are a part of life. Does the thought of eternity together ease the pain? How did you handle your last difficult goodbye? How do you typically respond to change?

7. What are some of the character qualities you have seen in the apostle Paul that you would like to see more of in your own life? What might you do to help build those qualities in yourself?

8. How does it help you on a daily basis to know God is in control of this world and all the details of your life?

9. Do you believe life is about the here and now or that there is a greater meaning and purpose?

If you believe there is a greater meaning and purpose in life, what is it, and what part are you playing in it?