"Commended To The Word Of Grace Despite: Betrayal, False Teaching, Persecution, & Subversion!"

Acts 20:28-38

"Therefore, Take Heed to Yourselves (Ephesian Church Leaders & Elders) and to All the Flock, 11 among which the Holy Spirit has made You Overseers, to Shepherd the Church of God which He (Jesus Christ) Purchased with His Own Blood. For I know this, that after My Departure Savage Wolves 12 will come in among You, Not Sparing the Flock." 12a Also, from among Yourselves Men Will Rise Up, Speaking Perverse Things, 12b to Draw Away the Disciples After Themselves. 12c Therefore Watch, 11a and Remember 11b that for three years I Did Not Cease to Warn Everyone night and day with Tears. 11c So now, Brethren, I Commend You to God and to the Word of His Grace, 9 which is Able to Build You Up 9a and Give You An Inheritance 9b Among All Those Who Are Sanctified. 9c I have coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. 13a Yes, You Yourselves know that these hands have provided for My Necessities, and for Those Who were with Me. 13b I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that You must support the weak. 13 And Remember the Words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive!" And when He (Paul) had said these things, He knelt down and prayed with Them All. Then They all wept freely, and fell on Paul's Neck and Kissed Him, 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. Acts 20:28-38 (NKJV)

REVIEW!

Paul Had Left Ephesus For Jerusalem Via A Revisiting Plan of Existing Churches In: Athens, Corinth, Achia, Berea, Thessalonica, Philippi, Troas, Assos, Mitylene, Samos, Tropylium, & Miletus. From Miletus He Awaited The Ephesian Church Leaders.

CQ1?

"Why Did He Feel The Need To Summon The Full Ephesian Church Elders When He Just Was With Them For A Continual 2.5 Years, & Had Only Left Them About 3 Months Ago?"

CA₁

The Holy Spirit Had Showed Him The Urgency & Need For The 2nd Impromptu Visit In A Vision!

From Miletus He (Paul) sent to Ephesus and called for the Elders of the Church ... Acts 20:17
Paul's Final Speech To The Ephesians

"Paul's Last Will & Testament To Us Today!" - Acts 20:18-35
Outline of Speech

	Outline of Speech	
I.	Reminder Of Past Dealings	(18-21)
	A. Living In Humility & Service	(18-19a)
	B. Persecution & Proclamation	(19b-20)
	1. Openly & Privately	
	C. Testifying To All Alike	(21)
	1. Repentance By Faith	
II.	Foreshadowing Of Persecution & Imprisonment	(22-23)
	A. Jerusalem & Rome	
III.	Personal Cost of Testifying to Gospel	(24)
IV.	Prophecy & Farewell	(25)
٧.	Last Will & Testament	(26-27)
VI.	Charge To The Church Elders	(28-31)
	A. Be Alert & Guard As Shepherds	(28)
	B. Unbelievers – Wolves Will Come From Outside	(29)
	C. Imposters – Wolves In Sheep's Clothing Will Arise From Within	(30)
	D. Be Watchful & Give Warning To All In The Flock	(31)

VII. Final Farewell	(32-35)		
A. Commendation Of Grace, Holiness, & Inheritance Of Eternal Life	(32)		
B. Provide For Yourself In Order To Serve & Save Others	(33-35a)		
C. Admonition To Serve & Give & Not Be Served & Receive	(35b)		
The Scope Of The 1 st Half Of Paul's Message To The Ephesians Acts 20:18:27			
I. Reminder Of Past Dealings	(18-21)		
A. Living In Humility & Service	(18-19a)		
B. Persecution & Proclamation	(19b-20)		
1. Openly & Privately			
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1. Repentance By Faith	, ,		
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A. Jerusalem & Rome	,		
III. Personal Cost of Testifying to Gospel	(24)		
IV. Prophecy & Farewell	(25)		
V. Last Will & Testament	(26-27)		
The Scope Of The 2 nd Half Of Paul's Message To The Ephesians Acts 20:28-35			
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C. Admonition To Serve & Give & Not Be Served & Receive	(35b)		
${f Q}$			
"What Is The Most Important Duties Of Church Leaders / Elders / Pastors In The Church?" A			
To Always Be Alert, On Guard, & Watchful First For Their Own Minds & Souls, A*			
& Then Also For The Rest Of The Flock Against False Teachers From Outside & Within B*			
VI. Charge To The Church Elders	(28-31) A* - B*		
A. Be Alert & Guard As Shepherds	(28) ^{A*}		
B. Unbelievers – Wolves Will Come From Outside	(29) ^{B1*}		
C. Imposters – Wolves In Sheep's Clothing Will Arise From Within	(30) B2*		
D. Be Watchful & Give Warning To All The Flock	(31) B3*		
"Therefore, Take Heed to Yourselves (Ephesian Church Leaders & Elders	and to All the Flock, 11		
among which the Holy Spirit has made You Overseers, to Shepherd the Church of God which			
He (Jesus Christ) Purchased with His Own Blood. A* For I know this, that after My Departure			
Savage Wolves 12 will come in among You, Not Sparing the Flock. 12a B1* Also, from among			
Yourselves Men Will Rise Up, Speaking Perverse Things, 12b to Draw Away the Disciples After			
<u>Themselves.</u> 12c B2* Therefore <u>Watch</u> , 11a and <u>Remember</u> 11b that for three years I <u>Did Not Cease</u>			
to Warn Everyone night and day with Tears. 11c B3*	Acts 20:28-31		

Jesus Taught His Apostles, "The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. I AM the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd gives His Life for the Sheep. ...

... But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep. I AM the Good Shepherd; and I know My Sheep, and AM known by My Own. As the Father Knows Me, even so I Know the Father; and I lay down My Life for the Sheep!"

John 10:10-15

Jesus Warned His Apostles, "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore, by their fruits you will know them!"

RECALL That The Ephesian Church Is Warned Again Later!

Jesus Instructed John The Apostle, "Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left Your First Love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; 1 repent 2 and do the first works, 3 or else I will come to you quickly and remove your Lampstand from its place, unless you repent!"

Revelation 2:4-5

SEE APPENDIX

Ephesian Church Is Warned A 3rd Time In The Next Generation (Circa 108 -109 A.D.) "Ignatius' Epistle To The Ephesians"

Q

"Why Is God's Word Of Forgiveness, Grace, Mercy, & Love, So Important To The Life Of The Believer, The Life Of The Church, & The New Life Offered To All The Unbelievers?"

Α

God's Word Is Written As His Eternal Plan & Will; & The Reality Of The Word of God Becoming Flesh & Offering Us. His Very Life Of Holiness & Obedience, & His Presence Living Within Us, Is The Only Way To Life In This Flesh & Unto Eternal Life Forever!

Speech Outline

VII. Final Farewell (32-35)

A. Commendation Of Grace, Holiness, & Inheritance Of Eternal Life (32)

So now, Brethren, I Commend You to God and to the Word of His Grace, 9 which is Able to Build You Up 9a and Give You An Inheritance 9b Among All Those Who Are Sanctified." 9c Acts 20:32

Q

"What Are The Most Important Things To Do To Provide For & To Demonstrate Approved & Effective Leadership & Service To Others Within The Church?"

Α

Provide For Yourself & Your Family, & Work Side-By-Side, In A Ministry Of Presence & Transformation Among God's People. So That, He Might Be Present Among You & Transform You All, Into His Image & Likeness In This Life!

Speech Outline

B. Provide For Yourself In Order To Serve & Save Others

(33-35a)

"I <u>have coveted no one's</u> silver or gold or apparel. ^{13a} Yes, You Yourselves know that these hands have provided for <u>My Necessities</u>, and for <u>Those Who</u> were with <u>Me</u>. ^{13b} I <u>have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that You must support the weak. ¹³ Acts 20:33-35a</u>

(Continued Over)

Q

"What Is Our Mission That Jesus Gave To Us To Do While We Are Alive On Earth?"

Α

Serve Others - Rather Than Only Serving Yourself

&

Save Others – Rather Than Only Saving Yourself!

Speech Outline

C. Admonition To Serve & Give & Not Be Served & Receive

(35b)

"And Remember the Words of the Lord Jesus,

that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive!""

Acts 20:35b

Jesus Told His Apostles, "And as you go, preach, saying, 'The Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand.'
Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give. Provide neither gold nor silver nor copper in your money belts, nor bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor staffs; for a worker is worthy of his food. Now whatever city or town you enter, inquire who in it is worthy, and stay there till you go out. And when you go into a household, greet it. If the household is worthy, let your peace come upon it. But if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. And whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet. Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the Land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the Day of Judgment than for that city!"

Paul's Final Moments With His Brothers & Elders Is Spent Praying For Them & For The Church of God!

... And when He (Paul) had said these things, He knelt down and prayed with Them All. Then They all wept freely, and fell on Paul's Neck and Kissed Him, 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.

Acts 20:28-38

Q

"What Should Our Last Will & Testament Be Before God & Man?"

Α

That We Have Shared All That God Has Shared With Us:

Using All Our Resources & Even Our Very Lives.

So That, Everyone We Meet Is Offered: God's Forgiveness, Grace, Mercy, Love, Salvation, & His Abiding Presence, That Already Dwells In Us By The Holy Spirit of God!

"Let Us The True Disciples & Followers Of God,
Continue To Count The Cost & Pay Whatever Is Necessary,
For The Sake Of The Gospel & Kingdom Of Our Lord & Savior Jesus Christ.
For Our Lord Testified, "I Have Come To Serve & Not Be Served & To Seek & Save The Lost!"

(Continued Over to Appendix)

Appendix

"The Epistle of Ignatius To The Ephesians" 108 – 109 A.D.

Greetings

Ignatius, who is also called Theophorus, to the Church, which is at Ephesus, in Asia, deservedly most happy, being blessed in the greatness and fulness of God the Father, and predestinated before the beginning of time, that it should be always for an enduring and Unchangeable Glory, being united and elected through the True Passion by the Will of the Father, and Jesus Christ, Our God: Abundant Happiness through Jesus Christ, and His Undefiled Grace.

Chapter I: Praise of the Ephesians

I have become acquainted with your name, much-beloved in God, which ye have acquired by the habit of righteousness, according to the faith and love in Jesus Christ our Savior. Being the followers of God, and stirring up yourselves by the Blood of God, ye have perfectly accomplished the work which was beseeming to you. For, on hearing that I came bound from Syria for the common name and hope, trusting through your prayers to be permitted to fight with beasts at Rome, that so by martyrdom I may indeed become the disciple of Him 'who gave Himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God,' I received, therefore, your whole multitude in the Name of God, through Onesimus, a man of inexpressible love, and your bishop in the flesh, whom I pray you by Jesus Christ to love, and that you would all seek to be like him. And blessed be He who has granted unto you, being worthy, to obtain such an excellent bishop.

Chapter II: Congratulations & Entreaties

As to my fellow servant Burrhus, your deacon in regard to God and blessed in all things, I beg that he may continue longer, both for your honor and that of your bishop. And Crocus also, worthy both of God and you, whom I have received as the manifestation of your love, hath in all things refreshed me, as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ shall also refresh him; together with Onesimus, and Burrhus, and Euplus, and Fronto, by means of whom, I have, as to love, beheld all of you. May I always have joy of you, if indeed I be worthy of it. It is therefore befitting that you should in every way Glorify Jesus Christ, Who has glorified you, that by a unanimous obedience 'ye may be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment, and may all speak the same thing concerning the same thing,' and that, being subject to the bishop and the presbytery, ye may in all respects be sanctified.

Chapter III: Exhortations to Unity

I do not issue orders to you, as if I were some great person. For though I am bound for the Name of Christ, I am not yet perfect in Jesus Christ. For now I begin to be a disciple, and I speak to you as fellow\ disciples with me. For it was needful for me to have been stirred up by you in faith, exhortation, patience, and long-suffering. But inasmuch as love suffers me not to be silent in regard to you, I have therefore taken upon me first to exhort you that ye would all run together in accordance with the will of God. For even Jesus Christ, our inseparable life, is the manifested will of the Father; as also bishops, settled everywhere to the utmost bounds of the earth, are so by the will of Jesus Christ.

Chapter IV: More Exhortations to Unity

Wherefore it is fitting that ye should run together in accordance with the will of your bishop, which thing also ye do. For your justly renowned presbytery, worthy of God, is fitted as exactly to the bishop as the strings are to the harp. Therefore in your concord and harmonious love, Jesus Christ is sung. And do ye, man by man, become a choir, that being harmonious in love, and taking up the song of God in unison, ye may with one voice sing to the Father through Jesus Christ, so that He may both hear you, and perceive by your works that ye are indeed the Members of His Son. It is profitable, therefore, that you should live in an unblameable unity, that thus ye may always enjoy Communion with God.

Chapter V: In Praise of Unity

For if I in this brief space of time, have enjoyed such fellowship with your bishop-I mean not of a mere human, but of a spiritual nature-how much more do I reckon you happy who are so joined to him as the Church is to Jesus Christ, and as Jesus Christ is to the Father, that so all things may agree in unity! Let no man deceive himself: if anyone be not within the altar, he is deprived of the Bread of God. For if the prayer of one or two possesses such power, how much more that of the bishop and the whole Church! He, therefore, that does not assemble with the Church, has even by this manifested his pride, and condemned himself. For it is written, 'God resists the proud!' Let us be careful, then, not to set ourselves in opposition to the bishop, in order that we may be subject to God.

Chapter VI: Have Respect to the Bishop as to Christ Himself

Now the more any one sees the bishop keeping silence, the more ought he to revere him. For we ought to receive everyone whom the Master of the House sends to be over His Household, as we would do Him that Sent Him. It is manifest, therefore, that we should look upon the bishop even as we would upon the Lord Himself. And indeed Onesimus himself greatly commends your good order in God, that ye all live according to the truth, and that no sect has any dwelling place among you. Nor, indeed, do ye hearken to any one rather than to Jesus Christ speaking in truth.

Chapter VII: Beware of False Teachers

For some are in the habit of carrying about the Name of Jesus Christ in wicked guile, while yet they practice things unworthy of God, whom ye must flee as ye would wild beasts. For they are ravening dogs, who bite secretly, against whom ye must be on your guard, inasmuch as they are men who can scarcely be cured. There is One Physician Who is possessed both of flesh and spirit; both made and not made; God Existing in Flesh; True Life in death; both of Mary and of God; first possible and then impossible, even Jesus Christ Our Lord.

Chapter VIII: Renewed Praise of the Ephesians

Let not then any one deceive you, as indeed ye are not deceived, inasmuch as ye are wholly devoted to God. For since there is no strife raging among you which might distress you, ye are certainly living in accordance with God's will. I am far inferior to you, and require to be sanctified by your Church of Ephesus, so renowned throughout the world. They that are carnal cannot do those things which are spiritual, nor they that are spiritual the things which are carnal; even as faith cannot do the works of unbelief, nor unbelief the works of faith. But even those things which ye do according to the flesh are spiritual; for ye do all things in Jesus Christ.

Chapter IX: You Have Given No Heed to False Teachers

Nevertheless, I have heard of some who have passed on from this to you, having false doctrine, whom ye did not suffer to sow among you, but stopped your ears, that ye might not receive those things which were sown by them, as being stones of the temple of the Father, prepared for the building of God the Father, and drawn up on high by the instrument of Jesus Christ, which is the cross, making use of the Holy Spirit as a rope, while your faith was the means by which you ascended, and your love the way which led up to God. Ye, therefore, as well as all your fellow travelers, are God-bearers, Temple-bearers, Christ-bearers, Bearers of Holiness, adorned in all respects with the Commandments of Jesus Christ, in Whom also I exult that I have been thought worthy, by means of this Epistle, to converse and rejoice with you, because with respect to your Christian life, You Love Nothing but God Only.

Chapter X: Exhortations to Prayer and Humility

And pray ye without ceasing on behalf of other men. For there is in the hope of repentance that they may attain to God. See then, that they be instructed by your works, if in no other way. Be ye meek in response to their wrath, humble in opposition to their boasting: to their blasphemies return your prayers; in contrast to their error, be ye steadfast in the faith; and for their cruelty, manifest your gentleness. While we take care not to imitate their conduct, let us be found their brethren in all true kindness; and let us seek to be followers of the Lord, Whoever was more unjustly treated, more destitute, more condemned? That so no plant of the devil may be found in you, but ye may remain in all holiness and sobriety in Jesus Christ, both with respect to the flesh and spirit.

Chapter XI: An Exhortation to Fear God

The last times are come upon us. Let us therefore be of a reverent spirit, and fear the long-suffering of God, that it tend not to our condemnation. For let us either stand in awe of the wrath to come, or show regard for the grace which is at present displayed-one of two things. Only in one way or another, let us be Found in Christ Jesus unto the True Life. Apart from Him, let nothing attract you, for whom I bear about these bonds, these spiritual jewels, by which may I arise through your prayers, of which I entreat I may always be a partaker, that I may be found in the lot of the Christians of Ephesus, who have always been of the same mind with the Apostles through the Power of Jesus Christ.

Chapter XII: Continued Praise of the Ephesians

I know both who I am, and to whom I write. I am a condemned man, ye have been the objects of mercy; I am subject to danger, ye are established in safety. Ye are the persons through whom those pass that are cut off for the sake of God. Ye are initiated into the Mysteries of the Gospel with Paul, the Holy, the Martyred, the Deservedly most happy, at whose feet may I be found, when I shall attain to God; who (Paul) in all his Epistles makes mention of you in Christ Jesus.

Chapter XIII: Exhortation to Meet Together Frequently for the Worship of God

Take heed, then, often to come together to give Thanks to God, and show forth His Praise. For when ye assemble frequently in the same place, the powers of Satan are destroyed, and the destruction at which he aims is prevented by the Unity of Your Faith. Nothing is more precious than Peace, by which all war, both in heaven and earth, is brought to an end.

Chapter XIV: Exhortations to Faith and Love

None of these things is hid from you, if ye perfectly possess that faith and love towards Christ Jesus which are the beginning and the end of life. For the beginning is faith, and the end is love. Now these two, being inseparably connected together, are of God, while all other things which are requisite for a holy life follow after them. No man truly making a profession of faith sins; nor does he that possesses love hate anyone. The tree is made manifest by its fruit; so those that profess themselves to be Christians shall be recognized by their conduct. For there is not now a demand for mere profession, but that a man be found continuing in the power of faith to the end.

Chapter XV: Exhortation to Confess Christ by Silence as Well as by Speech

It is better for a man to be silent and be a Christian, than to talk and not to be one. It is good to teach, if he who speaks also acts. There is then One Teacher, Who spoke, and it was done; while even those things which He did in silence are worthy of the Father. He who possesses the Word of Jesus, is truly able to hear even His very silence, that he may be perfect, and may both act as he speaks, and be recognized by his silence. There is nothing which is hid from God, but our very secrets are near to Him. Let us therefore do all things as those who have Him Dwelling in us, that we may be His Temples, and He may be in us as Our God, which indeed He Is, and will manifest Himself before our faces. Wherefore we justly love Him.

Chapter XVI: The Fate of False Teachers

Do not err, my brethren. Those that corrupt families shall not inherit the kingdom of God. If then, those who do this as respects the flesh have suffered death, how much more shall this be the case with anyone who corrupts by wicked doctrine the Faith of God, for which Jesus Christ was crucified! Such a one becoming defiled in this way, shall go away into everlasting fire, and so shall every one that hearkens unto him.

Chapter XVII: Beware of False Doctrines

For this end did the Lord suffer the ointment to be poured upon His head, that He might breathe immortality into His Church. Be not ye anointed with the bad odor of the doctrine of the prince of this world; let him not lead you away captive from the life which is set before you. And why are we not all prudent, since we have received the Knowledge of God, which is Jesus Christ? Why do we foolishly perish, not recognizing the Gift which the Lord has of a Truth Sent to us?

Chapter XVIII: The Glory of the Cross

Let my spirit be counted as nothing for the sake of the cross, which is a stumbling block to those that do not believe, but to us salvation and life eternal. 'Where is the wise man? where the disputer?' Where is the boasting of those who are styled prudent? For our God, Jesus Christ, was, according to the Appointment of God, conceived in the womb by Mary, of the Seed of David, but by the Holy Ghost. He was born and baptized, that by His Passion He might purify the water.

Chapter XIX: Three Celebrated Mysteries

Now the Virginity of Mary was hidden from the prince of this world, as was also Her Offspring, and the Death of the Lord; Three Mysteries of Renown, which were Wrought in Silence by God. How, then, was He Manifested to the world? A star shone forth in heaven above all the other stars, the light of which was inexpressible, while its novelty struck men with astonishment. And all the rest of the stars, with the sun and moon, formed a chorus to this star, and its light was exceedingly great above them all. And there was agitation felt as to whence this new spectacle came, so unlike to everything else in the heavens. Hence every kind of magic was destroyed, and every bond of wickedness disappeared; ignorance was removed, and the old kingdom abolished, God Himself being Manifested in Human Form for the Renewal of Eternal Life. And now that took a Beginning which had been prepared by God. Henceforth all things were in a state of tumult because He Meditated the Abolition of Death.

Chapter XX: Promise of Another Letter & Exhortations to Steadfastness and Unity

If Jesus Christ shall graciously permit me through your prayers, and if it be His Will, I shall, in a second little work which I will write to you, make further manifest to you the nature of the dispensation of which I have begun to treat, with respect to the New Man, Jesus Christ, in His Faith and in His Love, in His Suffering, and in His Resurrection. Especially will I do this if the Lord make known to me that ye come together man by man in common through grace, individually, in one faith, and in Jesus Christ, Who was of the Seed of David according to the flesh, being both the Son of Man and the Son of God, so that ye obey the bishop and the presbytery with an undivided mind, breaking one and the same bread, which is the medicine of immortality, and the antidote to prevent us from dying, but which causes that we should live forever in Jesus Christ.

Chapter XXI: Conclusion

My soul be for yours and theirs whom, for the honor of God, ye have sent to Smyrna; whence also I write to you, giving thanks unto the Lord, and loving Polycarp even as I do you. Remember me, as Jesus Christ also remembered you. Pray ye for the Church, which is in Syria, whence I am led bound to Rome, being the last of the faithful who are there, even as I have been thought worthy to be chosen to show forth the honor of God. Farewell in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ, Our Common Hope.