

Living Out Our Faith Part 28

Acts 20:1-12

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V1-6

- Verse 1 - Paul is leaving the church where he'd ministered for three years. No doubt emotions are running high on both sides. The word "embrace," used in Verse 1 in some versions of the Bible means to cover or envelope with one's arms. This is the normal response when a departure has been handled properly. Notice there is no hint of animosity or relief that he's leaving; just a sense of sadness with acceptance, knowing Paul must fulfill his ministry. He's going to visit the churches God had used him to plant. Paul had known it wasn't enough to simply start these churches: he'd also been called to establish them, to root them thoroughly in the Faith, to strengthen them so they may endure the trials they would no doubt face in the coming years (**2 Corinthians 11:23-28**). Verse 2 in **2 Corinthians 2:12-13** says Paul first went to Troas expecting to see Titus there and get a report of how the Corinthians had received his first letter to them, but Titus wasn't present. What was there, we're told, was an open door to preach the gospel. After taking advantage of that, Paul had departed to find Titus.
- **2 Corinthians 7:5-7** says Titus gives Paul good news, so Paul ventures to Corinth and stays three months. It was during this time Paul wrote the book of Romans.
- Verse 3 shows why we must remain flexible: Paul's original plan had been to go to Syria, but he learns of the Jews plotting to kill him so he re-routes northward passing again through Macedonia heading toward Philippi.
- Verse 4 lists Paul's traveling companions:
 1. Sopator of Berea - The same one mentioned in **Romans 16:21** (maybe related to Paul)
 2. Aristarchus of Thessalonica - Nearly lost his life in the riot at Ephesus; we later read of him being a fellow prisoner with Paul in Rome (**Colossians 4:10**)
 3. Secundus - Accompanied Paul through Asia and Troas
 4. Gaius of Derbe
 5. Timothy - Paul's protégé
 6. Tychicus - Everything you need to know about him is found in **Ephesians 6:21**
 7. Trophimus - A Gentile who followed Paul to Jerusalem, and eventually became ill (**2 Timothy 4**)
- All seven of these traveling companions had been won to the Faith by Paul and became stewards of the faith: Men who could be trusted with the things of God and the souls of people.

V7-12

- Verse 7 is irrefutable evidence that the early church met on Sundays, and the reason was to break bread which is a reference to keeping the Lord's Supper (communion). So if you run into people who are dogmatic about the church meeting on Saturday, here are three fundamental truths to keep in mind:
 1. The early church met on Sundays because it was the day Jesus rose from the dead.
 2. Communion was a big part of the early church (believers "broke bread" then, which is a reference to communion).
 3. New Testament Scripture does not require us to keep the Sabbath (**Colossians 2:16-17**)
- Verses 7-12 - Luke had joined the party again in Verse 6 [see the word "we"] so the extended narrative we're reading in Acts is a firsthand account (for all of you who think I'm killing you with my long sermons!)
- Paul speaks until midnight, but a young man is overcome by sleep. He tries to stay awake by sitting in a window hoping the night air would keep him alert but it doesn't as we read in Verse 9. Amazingly, Paul calmly goes down and "embraces" (this is a different word in the original language from the word used in Verse 1; this word means to cover) the young man. Using not CPR but TLI (The Lord's Intervention), Paul attends to the boy and he recovers. Afterward Paul comes up gets a sandwich and resumes his message until daybreak. You can believe no one fell asleep when he resumed. In Verse 12 we see that the young man comes up and the Body is encouraged!