

“Footprints on our Hearts!”

1. **Intro:**

- 1.1. Well, **last week** we left off with a **frenzied riot** in **Ephesus**. Demetrious & his mob were ready to tear them all apart in a bloody rage. Fortunately, though, God used a simple **town clerk** to quiet them down & restore reason.
 - 1.1.1. So Paul **packed his bags & charts a course** to Macedonia.
 - 1.1.2. Let's join him & see where his next adventure takes us.
- 1.2. “Some people come into our lives and quickly go. Some stay for a while, **leave footprints on our hearts**, and we are never, ever the same.” Flavia Weedn
 - 1.2.1. That seems to be a good description of...brother Paul!

2. **FOOTPRINTS ON OUR HEARTS! (1-16)**

- 2.1. **NEXT BATTLE!** (1-6)
- 2.2. Uproars usually cease, so be patient; but be sure to get ready for the next battle.
- 2.3. After **Greece**, he wintered in **Corinth** (ad 56-57) where he penned the **letter to the Romans**, preparing the way for what he hoped would be a *pastoral visit* to the capitol city of the Roman Empire.
 - 2.3.1. He also coordinated the **offerings** to bring to Jerusalem.
- 2.4. (3) Paul & his friends uncovered a plot on Paul's life. Once at sea probably murdered. So he changes his plans.
 - 2.4.1. He journeys by land to **Macedonia** & sailed from there to **Jerusalem**.
- 2.5. (6) He is joined again by Luke (**we**) & they remain in Philippi until after the Passover
- 2.6. **SLEEPY SAINTS!** (7-12)
- 2.7. (7) One of the earliest references to Christians meeting for worship on **Sunday**.
- 2.8. Since he was leaving the next morning by ship, Paul spent **all the time he could** w/the Christians in Troas, talking far into the night.
 - 2.8.1. **And he talked, & he talked, & he talked!**
 - 2.8.2. Every pastor is excited to hear that even the apostle Paul put people to sleep also! 😊
- 2.9. **There's a lot of reasons you can fall asleep in church:**
 - 2.9.1. **[1]** The church can get stuffy/warm/or poorly ventilated, in Eutychus' case, the flickering of the lamps casting hypnotizing shadows & raising the temperature in the room. He probably had taken refuge in the window to catch a breath of **fresh air** to **fight drowsiness**.
 - 2.9.2. **[2]** If you **don't get sleep** the night before;
 - 2.9.3. **[3]** Lack of interest in spiritual things;

- 2.9.4. [4] A boring preacher (poorly organized; rambling material; monotone delivery; too much time spent on needless detail; being out of touch w/people's needs)
- 2.10. Read - Eccl.12:9-11
- 2.10.1. He pondered & sought out – He studied many subjects, some conclusions he wrote down in Proverbs.
- 2.10.2. Set in order/arranged – After studying, he weighed his conclusions carefully, & then, put them in an orderly fashion.
- 2.10.3. Acceptable words – He used acceptable words (delightful, gracious, pleasing)
- 2.10.3.1. You can use delightful words w/o diluting the message!
- 2.10.3.2. Like Jesus was able to combine Grace & Truth!
- 2.10.4. Like Goads – The goads prod the people to pay attention & to pursue truth.
- 2.10.5. Like Nails – The nails give them something to hang what they learned.
- 2.10.6. Good teaching requires both:
- 2.10.6.1. Students – motivated to study & learn!
- 2.10.6.2. Teachers – that nail down lessons, so they make sense!
- 2.11. **HURRYING TO JERUSALEM!** (13-16)
- 2.12. (13) On foot - probably to gain opportunity for quiet fellowship w/God.
- 2.13. (14) Paul boarded the coastal ship that skirted the rugged shoreline, a sort of *commuter* boat.
- 2.14. (16) Sometimes God's servants just need to be alone to **think, meditate, pray.**
- 2.14.1. Paul knew he was facing danger in Jerusalem.

3. **FAREWELL ADDRESS! (17-31)**

- 3.1. (17) Paul's farewell message to the Ephesian elders.
- 3.1.1. He is going to review with them his **past ministry**, his **present concerns**, & **future dangers**.
- 3.2. This is **very unusual** as it is the only address that Paul made to Christians in Acts.
- 3.3. Also, you may not know, **Ephesus** became the center of world Christianity for the next 200 years!!!
- 3.3.1. Paul wrote **1 Cor** from there; Timothy succeeded Paul in Ephesus, Paul wrote **1 & 2 Timothy** to him while he was there; The apostle John took up residence there & wrote **1,2,3 John** as well as **his gospel** there.

- 3.4. **PAST MINISTRY!** (18-21)
- 3.5. He reminds them of his conduct, style of ministry, & devotion while among them.
- 3.6. (20) **Public & Private** – sounds like both **pastoral** as well as **homiletical**.
- 3.6.1. **Preaching** is the easy part...its **living it** that makes ministry real, practical, sympathetic, alive.
- 3.6.2. Not like some pastors who are “on weekdays **invisible** & on Sundays **incomprehensible**.” Or,
- 3.6.2.1. “The preacher who preaches **cream**, but he lives **skim milk!**”
- 3.7. (21) **Repentance & Faith** must go together to complete each other **like** a **door** & its **post**.¹
- 3.7.1. **Repentance** is **the door** which shuts out our sin.
- 3.7.2. **Faith** is **the post** on which its hinges are fixed.
- 3.7.2.1. A **door** w/o a **doorpost** to hang on...is not a door at all.
- 3.7.2.2. A **doorpost** w/o the **door** hanging on it...is of no value whatever.
- 3.7.3. “**What God has joined together, let no man separate!**”
- 3.7.4. **Repentance** = turning from sin; **Faith** = trusting Christ for salvation.
- 3.7.4.1. **Let go of sin, lay hold of Christ!**
- 3.8. **Patrick Morley** writes that the church’s integrity problem is in the misconception “that we can **add Christ** to our lives, but **not subtract sin**. It is a change in **belief** without a change in **behavior**.”
- 3.9. **PRESENT CONCERNS!** (22-27)
- 3.10. (24) Will we finish our race with **joy**?
- 3.11. (24-26) Paul saw himself as **an accountant** (I count); **a runner** (I may finish my race); **a steward** (the ministry which I received); **a witness** (to testify); **a herald** (preaching the kingdom); **a watchman** (innocent of blood).²
- 3.11.1. What a responsibility it is to be a servant of God!
- 3.12. Christian teachers must deliver **the whole counsel of God**. The **positive**, & the **negative**, the **soothing** & the **corrective**.
- 3.12.1. Paul, **by lip & life** proclaimed **the whole counsel of God**.
- 3.13. **FUTURE DANGERS!** (28-31)
- 3.14. To sum up Paul’s speech, “*I’ve done all I can for you. Now it’s up to you.*”
- 3.15. (28) This is a scriptural pattern that a minister take heed 1st to **himself**.
- 3.15.1. “**Water never rises above its level**” – what we **are** will determine our **preaching**, & what we **do** will never rise above what we **are!**

¹ From Best of Spurgeon; Acts 20:21

² Warren Wiersbe; With The Word; pg.722

- 3.15.2. **Spiritual health today is no guarantee of spiritual health tomorrow!**
 3.15.2.1. We need to **consciously & consistently** sustain the **character traits** that foster **holiness**.
- 3.16. **Shepherd** - Our Lord is called the **Good Shepherd** who **died**(Jn.10:11);
Te Great Shepherd who **lives**(Heb.13:20); The **Chief Shepherd** who **is coming again**(1 Pet.5:4).
 3.16.1. His **ministers** are rightfully called shepherds, & their people sheep.
 3.16.2. Howard Hendricks said, "If you can't stand the **smell of sheep**, you shouldn't be a **shepherd**."
- 3.17. **UPWARD HOPE!** (32-38)
- 3.18. (32) What a beautiful benediction. He calls them to look upward!
 3.18.1. He commends them to **God & the word of His grace**.
 3.18.2. Which would **build them up & give them their full inheritance** as members of the Christian community.
- 3.19. (34) Paul shows his hands as he spoke.
- 3.20. (35) **It is better to give than receive**. Paul drops us **a flower** from the Masters speech.
 3.20.1. More blessed it is, because it is more **God-like**; It is more **fruitful**;
 It is the consequence & consummation of receiving.
- 3.21. (36-38) How sweet the friendship!
 3.21.1. **It takes a minute to say hello and forever to say goodbye!**
 3.21.2. **How lucky I am to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard.** Carol Sobieski and Thomas Meehan, *Annie*
- 3.22. **A missionary** returning home after many years of service was asked, "Tell me what you found when you arrived in **New Guinea**." "**Found?** I found something that looked more hopeless than if I had been sent into a jungle of tigers." "**What do you mean?**" "Why, the people seemed utterly devoid of moral sense. If a mother was carrying her little baby and the baby began to cry, she would throw it into the ditch and let it die. If a man saw his father break his leg, he would leave him by the roadside to suffer by himself. They had no compassion whatever. They didn't even know what the word meant." "**Well, what did you do for them?**" "I thought it best to show them my faith by my works! When I saw a baby crying, I picked it up and consoled it. When I saw a man with a broken leg, I sought to mend it. When I found people distressed and hungry, I took them in, comforted them, and fed them. Finally they inquired, 'What does this mean? Why are you doing this for us?' Then I had my chance, and I preached the gospel!" "**Did you succeed?**" "My friend," **said the missionary**, "when I returned home on furlough, I left **a church!**"
- 3.23. **Prayer:** Lord may we *stay for awhile* in peoples lives, **that** we might *leave endearing footprints* on their hearts!