

September Teaching Theme: What is the Gospel?

讲员 Speaker: Rev. FenFen Xie

题目 Topic: 宣教途中的临别赠言 “Parting Words on Mission”

经文 Scripture: Acts 20:17-38

Monthly Theme: This month’s theme is “the Gospel” and its implications. **The Gospel of Jesus the Christ is a royal announcement that Jesus is King and his Upside-Down Kingdom will reign forever**, thus we must give our allegiance to King Jesus. Those who give their allegiance to King Jesus are given the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, our Advocate - a downpayment of our inheritance in the Kingdom. **The Spirit applies *the benefits of the gospel* to those who respond with *allegiance*!**

This week we are going to begin examining what it means to be a “**community on mission**,” as the transition between our last two months talking about “The Gospel” and our theme of “Mission” for October. This week Rev. FenFen Xie examined Paul’s farewell address to the Ephesian Elders before he returns to give a financial gift to help the church in Jerusalem. Paul knows that he is wanted to Jerusalem and will likely be arrested or killed, but the value of the church and the mission of God compels him to face such danger. We know that Paul does end up being arrested and brought all the way to Rome on house arrest, according to Acts.

Resources:

Bible Project Video: [The Gospel of the Kingdom](#) (English) (5:48)

Bible Project Video: [The Gospel of the Kingdom](#) (Chinese) (4:22)

If you have not watched this video yet as a group do so this week

For the sermon PPT, see Email Attachment.

[Sermon Video](#)

For the **Memorization Tool:** If you would like to do this in Quiz format feel free to use my Quizziz Game - <https://quizizz.com/admin/presentation/5f525d946e86cd001e481796>

Important Notes (Pastor Will):

Context of Acts 20:

- At this point in the story, Paul is completing his 3rd Missionary Journey by returning to Jerusalem. Luke does not say why Paul is returning to Jerusalem, but we know from his letters that Paul had been collecting money from the churches to bring back to Jerusalem to help the poverty-stricken Christians there. (See Acts 24:17, Rom 15:25-31, 1 Cor 16:1-3, 2 Cor 8-9).
- Paul is a wanted man in Jerusalem for preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, thus he knows his return will likely result in his execution or arrest. Knowing this he feels the need to have the elders of the Ephesian church to come to meet him on the way so that he can give them a farewell address and impart some last chance wisdom. This is address is what we are reading in Acts 20:17-38.

- Paul is willing to face danger and sacrifice potentially his very life for the sake of Unity in the Church (reconciliation between Jew and Gentile) and for continuing the mission of the Church. This posture gives us insights into both the cost and call of true discipleship and the Gospel lived out. Paul's journey to Jerusalem in many ways mirrors Jesus in many ways as both go to Jerusalem knowing they will be arrested and face death for the sake of the People of God.
- We know that Paul does get arrested in Acts 21, which begins his 4th Missionary Journey (sort of) in his being tried and taken all the way to Rome. He is arrested under accusations that he is (1) teaching against the Jewish people, (2) teaching against the law, (3) teaching against the temple, and (4) bringing Gentiles into the inner courts of the temple. We see that even in Paul's arrest the truth of the Gospel and its "barrier-breaking" power were evident in Paul's ministry.

Discussion Questions:

1. Read Acts 20:17-38 together. First, recall the context of the passage above in "Important Notes," then read the passage together. What observations do you make and what stands out to you? How would you summarize the passage? 一起阅读使徒行传20 : 17-38。首先，回顾上面“重要说明”中段落的上下文，然后一起阅读该段落。您所做的观察是什么？您如何总结这段话？
2. What do you think is Paul's humility in this passage? Have you encountered any humble person in your life or church? How does his humility touch you? 你认为，在这段经文中，保罗的谦卑有哪些表现？在你生活或教会当中，有否遇到谦卑的人？他的谦卑有哪一点触动了你？
3. In this passage, Paul mentioned the responsibilities and ministries of the church. Name some. What do you think are the most important duties and ministries of the church? 在这段经文中，保罗提到了教会的职责及事工，有哪些？你认为，教会最重要的职责和事工是什么？
4. Through Paul's mission to Ephesus and his exhortation to the elders in Ephesus, talk about your understanding of the mission of the early church and the inspiration for today. 通过保罗对以弗所的宣教及对以弗所长老的劝勉，谈谈你对初期教会宣教的认识，以及对今天的启发。
5. What does Paul's willingness to risk his life for the Gospel and the sake of the Church tell you about Christian life and discipleship? Why do you think the cause of generosity and reconciling unity is so important to Paul? 保罗愿意为福音和教会的缘故而冒生命危险向您讲述基督徒的生活和门徒训练吗？您为什么认为慷慨和和解的事业对保罗如此重要？
6. Spend extended time praying with one another that we would become the fullness of the Christian community God is calling us to and for any needs in the group. 花更长的时间互相祈祷，我们将成为基督徒团体的充实，上帝正在呼召我们满足团体中的任何需要。

Memorization Tool:

- What is the Gospel? - The Gospel of Jesus the Christ is a royal announcement that **Jesus is King** and his Upside-Down Kingdom will reign forever.

- How should we respond to the Gospel? - We are called to respond by **giving our allegiance** (inclusive of faith, loyalty, trust) to King Jesus.
- Our hope is looking forward to Jesus' return establishing the **New Heaven and New Earth**, where those who give King Jesus allegiance will reign with God forever.
- The Gospel benefit "justification": Those who give their allegiance to King Jesus are **declared not guilty, being** freed from both the penalty of sin and the power of sin.
- The Gospel benefit "reconciliation": God through Jesus has **healed the fractured relationship between God and humanity**. From this place, we can seek reconciliation in our human relationships.
- The Gospel benefit "ransom": God through Jesus' death on the cross has **bought us out of slavery to sin** and now empowers you through the Holy Spirit to live as the "new humanity."
- The Gospel benefit "adoption": Those who give their allegiance to King Jesus are now **adopted into the royal family of God** and can call God "Abba" (Daddy)
- The Gospel benefit "sanctification": We are being **transformed** by the work of the Spirit and are called to choose to live a "transformed" life.
- The Gospel benefit "glorification": Those who give their allegiance to Jesus will ultimately be **transformed** into the likeness of Jesus in both bodily and spiritual form, no longer experiencing pain and suffering.
- The Gospel benefit "Missional Community": Those who give their allegiance to King Jesus are now apart of a unique community (The Church) called to be "on mission" together in the world through **both word and action**.

Sermon Summary (Elder Yin):

宣教途中的临别赠言
谢牧师, 9/27/20

“保罗从米利都打发人往以弗所去，请教会的长老来。他们来了，保罗就说：「你们知道，自从我到亚细亚的日子以来，在你们中间始终为人如何，服事主，凡事谦卑，眼中流泪，又因犹太人的谋害，经历试炼。你们也知道，凡与你们有益的，我没有一样避讳不说的，或在众人面前，或在各人家里，我都教导你们；又对犹太人和希腊人证明当向神悔改，信靠我主耶稣基督。现在我往耶路撒冷去，心甚迫切，不知道在那里要遇见什么事；但知道圣灵在各城里向我指证，说有捆锁与患难等待我。我却不以性命为念，也不看为宝贵，只要行完我的路程，成就我从主耶稣所领受的职事，证明神恩惠的福音。「我素常在你们中间来往，传讲神国的道；如今我晓得，你们以后都不得再见我的面了。所以我今日向你们证明，你们中间无论何人死亡，罪不在我身上。因为神的旨意，我并没有一样避讳不传给你们的。圣灵立你们作全群的监督，你们就当为自己谨慎，也为全群谨慎，牧养神的教会，就是他用自己血所买来的。我知道，我去之后必有凶暴的豺狼进入你们中间，不爱惜羊群。就是你们中间，也必有人起来说悖谬的话，要引诱门徒随从他们。所以你们应当警醒，记念我三年之久昼夜不住地流泪、劝戒你们各人。如今我把你们交托神和他恩惠的道；这道能建立你们，叫你们和一切成圣的人同得基业。我未曾贪图一个人的金、银、衣服。我这两只手常供给我和同人的需用，这是你们自己知道的。我凡事给你们作榜样，叫你们知道应当这样劳苦，扶助软弱的人，又当记念主耶稣的话，说：『施比受更为有福。』”

使徒行传 20:17-35

一、前言

这段圣经有人称为是保罗的临别赠言或者临终赠言，和古希腊伟大人物临终的言语相似的描述手法。保罗是如何的人？他称自己不是英雄，而是上帝的如隶。保罗给我们树立榜样，让我们知道如何走完我们跟随神的一生，成为在神里面道德模范。

二，保罗服事主的榜样

1, 保罗的生活方式

这段圣经中看到保罗在服事主的过程中，做到凡事谦卑，眼中流泪，经历试炼，“服事主，凡事谦卑，眼中流泪，又因犹太人的谋害，经历试炼。”使徒行传 20:19

谦卑，原文是上帝的奴隶，如何做上帝奴隶，要谦卑，如何成为谦卑，谦卑伴随着他的困苦，眼泪，试炼。放下自己的地位。

玻利维亚牧师的见证。在很多苦难中学完了他的神学博士学位，苦难是服事主的一部分，是一定会有的，但在苦难中不苦毒，而继续谦卑为主作工。

“我凡事给你们作榜样，叫你们知道应当这样劳苦，扶助软弱的人，又当記念主耶稣的话，说：『施比受更为有福。』”

使徒行传 20:35

是服事人还是被人服事，谦卑和服事有关，有能力的人，也需要来服事人，成谦卑。有时服事带着自己的观点和方法。当初的教会中有人持着错误的服事态度，是为自己的利益。保罗说他不是为了私意而服事。

2, 保罗的领袖职份

“圣灵立你们作全群的监督，你们就当为自己谨慎，也为全群谨慎，牧养神的教会，就是他用自己血所买来的。”使徒行传 20:28

保罗这里说作为教会的领袖，需要圣灵作全群的监督，你要对圣灵敏感，要谨慎，要让圣灵有机会来作工。圣灵立我们成为监督，因为教会之上有圣灵。因为圣灵使我们承认我们是罪人。教会和启业不一样，圣灵让我们知道我们是罪人，就是监督要靠圣灵才能成长。教会是以血换来的。但有更新的能力，因为有圣灵。徒20:24，需要有圣灵所给的恩惠的道。教我像保罗一样谦卑，流泪，试炼。靠圣灵不是靠能力或策略。检察自己内心是否有让圣灵的带领。

三，结语

在今天这个时代特别在病毒横行的时代，虽然我们只能在网上敬拜，我们要时时注意要让圣灵来带领我们的生治和事奉。

Paul's testimony or farewell address

Acts 20:17-35

Pastor Xie

Many consider this passage as Paul's Final exhortation or Farewell address

The format of Paul's speech is similar to the final words of Ancient Greek people, including inviting people he knew, giving advices, reflecting on his deeds, his blessing and prayers, often ending with crying and embracing each other. Like the example of Jacob to his 12 sons in Genesis.

Although literature is in similar style but different, Luke wanted us to know what kind of person Paul was. Paul didn't mean to model himself as a hero, but was influential to the elders of church in Ephesus as a slave or servant of the Lord. Besides defending himself, he listed how he walked the journey for the Lord, obeyed His commands to accomplish His goal.

1. Paul's life style

Acts 20:19 serving the Lord with all humility, with tears, with trials

To serve the Lord is to become His slave.

With humility

With tears

With trials

But how?

Humility is a very abstract word, invisible. Though we could not see humbleness but we could see his actions, especially during trials, we could see his tears. Therefore his humility is demonstrated during his trials.

Think lowly of himself, lower himself, trials help us to be humble.

Paul served the church of Ephesus with tears and all his heart for 3 yrs.

An testimony from Asbury student, how he fighter cancer. Trials are part of our life in this world, we shouldn't be bitter, but be humble and continue serving Him with tears

20:33-35, covet no one's silver or gold or apparel, Paul considered "it is more blessed to give than to receive"

So humility is always connected with serving others

In Acts 19:25-27 people worshipped other gods, they apposed Paul because they gained wealth through the business of Artemis worship.

So their devotion to their God was linked with their profits, the expansion of their own desires.

Paul emphasized he worked with his two hands to supply his own needs.

Powerful person can also be a servant

Paul reminded us if more people worked with their own hands, church would be blessed
2. Paul's leadership

Acts 20:28 for overseers of all flocks, Paul emphasized that Holy Spirit made the overseers, so to pay careful attention to the guidance of HS

Give room/place for HS to work

Listen to HS all the time

The guidance of HS functions differently from the business of the world. Church functions different from other business in that we admit we are sinners, we need salvation.

Pastor's experience working as a gardener in seminary, someone stole firewood
Seminary or church is not "heaven", either "hell", more like a hospital, lots of patients gather there.

Remember that church is bought back with the precious blood of Jesus. We can be renewed through the power of HS and the blood of Jesus.

God's word of grace is available to equip us. We attract others by the grace of Jesus, not by mission strategy.

In reality, the society is continually influenced the church.

This pandemic challenges us—have to worship through internet.

Like Paul, we need to pay close attention to the guidance of HS