

**Woodland Baptist Church**  
**February 20, 2013 - Wednesday Night in the Word**  
**Acts 20:1-16 - Traveling Mission Teams**

**1) OPENING REMARKS**

- a) A major portion of the “Ephesian section” of Acts is dominated by a journey motif.
  - i) Paul concluded his ministry in the churches of Asia, Macedonia, and Achaia (20:1–6). He set out on his final trip to Jerusalem.
  - ii) Awaiting ship at Troas, he restored a youth to life after a fall from an upper-level window (20:7–12).
  - iii) He traveled by sea to Miletus (20:13–16) and sent for the elders of the Ephesian church, to whom he delivered a major farewell address (20:17–38).
  - iv) Resuming his voyage, the last leg of his trip was marked by strong forebodings from Christians along the way of the dangers that awaited him in Jerusalem (21:1–16) [Polhill]
- b) John Stott - Similarities between Paul and Jesus’ ministries
  - i) The correspondence between Jesus and Paul’s ministries is too close to be a coincidence:
    - (1) Like Jesus, Paul travelled to Jerusalem with a group of his disciples (20:4)
    - (2) Like Jesus, he was opposed by hostile Jews who plotted against his life (20:3, 19).
    - (3) Like Jesus, he made or received three successive predictions of his passion or sufferings (20:22-23, 21:4, 11) including being handed over to the Gentiles (21:11).
    - (4) Like Jesus he declared his readiness to lay down his life (20:24, 21:13).
    - (5) Like Jesus he was determined to complete his ministry and not be deflected from it (20:24, 21:13).
    - (6) Like Jesus, he expressed his abandonment to the will of God (21:14).

**2) SUMMARY OF MOVEMENTS**

- a) **1-5** Paul leaves for Macedonia, encourages the disciples there and then arrives in Greece, most likely Corinth and stays for three months. He finds out about a plot by the Jews to kill him, so he returns to Macedonia. He has a missionary team, most likely church representatives that travel with him. His team went on ahead,

then later, after celebrating the festival of unleavened bread, Paul sailed from Philippi (Macedonia) to meet up with them at Troas.

- b) **7-12** While at Troas, Paul worships with a group at a house church (breaking bread), speaking until late into the night. A young man falls asleep during the assembly time and falls to his death from the third floor of the home. Paul raises him from the dead, went back and ate with the church, spoke until daybreak and left.
- c) **13-16** Paul's companions went ahead of him and sailed for Assos, as Paul came behind them on foot. At Assos, Paul joined them on the boat and sailed to Mitylene, Chios, Samos and finally Miletus. Paul avoided Ephesus, as he was in a hurry to get to Jerusalem by the day of Pentecost.

### 3) READ ACTS 20:1-16

4) Verses 1 Sometimes God \_\_\_\_\_ leaders we \_\_\_\_\_.

- a) **1 After the uproar ceased, Paul sent for the disciples, and after encouraging them, he said farewell and departed for Macedonia.**
  - i) He intended to catch up with Timothy and Erastus, whom he had sent ahead of him (19:22).
  - ii) **2 Corinthians 2:12-17** - 12 Now when I went to Troas to preach the gospel of Christ and found that the Lord had opened a door for me, 13 I still had no peace of mind, because I did not find my brother Titus there. So I said goodbye to them and went on to Macedonia. 14 But thanks be to God, who always leads us as captives in Christ's triumphal procession and uses us to spread the aroma of the knowledge of him everywhere. 15 For we are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. 16 To the one we are an aroma that brings death; to the other, an aroma that brings life. And who is equal to such a task? 17 Unlike so many, we do not peddle the word of God for profit. On the contrary, in Christ we speak before God with sincerity, as those sent from God.
  - iii) **2 Corinthians 7:5-7** - 5 For when we came into Macedonia, we had no rest, but we were harassed at every turn—conflicts on the outside, fears within. 6 But God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus, 7 and not only by his coming but also by the comfort you had given him. He told us about your longing for me, your deep sorrow, your ardent concern for me, so that my joy was greater than ever.

b) Evidently soon after the riot Paul left Ephesus to pursue his plan to return to Jerusalem through Macedonia and Achaia (19:21). [Constable]

- i) He travelled up to Troas where he could have ministered for some time because "a door was opened" for him there (2 Cor. 2:12). Nevertheless he was uneasy about the trouble in the Corinthian church.
- ii) He had sent Titus to Corinth, evidently from Ephesus, with a severe letter to the church. He was eager to hear what the reaction to it had been (2 Cor. 2:3-4; 7:8-12; 12:18). So rather than staying in Troas, Paul moved west into Macedonia where he met Titus who was returning from Corinth (2 Cor. 7:5-8).
- iii) After receiving Titus' favorable report of affairs in Corinth, Paul wrote 2 Corinthians from somewhere in Macedonia, probably in the fall of A.D. 56 (cf. 2 Cor. 12:14; 13:1-2).

5) Verses 2-6 We will always be more \_\_\_\_\_ as a \_\_\_\_\_

a) **2 When he had gone through those regions and had given them much encouragement, he came to Greece. 3 There he spent three months, and when a plot was made against him by the Jews as he was about to set sail for Syria, he decided to return through Macedonia. 4 Sopater the Berean, son of Pyrrhus, accompanied him; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy; and the Asians, Tychicus and Trophimus. 5 These went on ahead and were waiting for us at Troas, 6 but we sailed away from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread, and in five days we came to them at Troas, where we stayed for seven days.**

i) **2 When he had gone through those regions and had given them much encouragement, he came to Greece.**

(1) He would have revisited the churches he planted on his 2nd journey: Philippi, Thessalonica and Berea.

(2) Given them much encouragement - Paul had given them encouragement through the Word of God - assurance and teaching - testimony.

ii) **Arrived in Greece** - Corinth - much had happened since his first visit to Corinth (Acts 18); he had written them 4 letters, and even paid them an interim visit (painful visit of 2 Cor 2:1). We also know he finalized arrangements for the Corinthian's share in the collection for the Judean churches.

- (1) **1 Corinthians 16:1-4** - Now about the collection for the Lord's people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. 2 On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made. 3 Then, when I arrive, I will give letters of introduction to the men you approve and send them with your gift to Jerusalem. 4 If it seems advisable for me to go also, they will accompany me.
- iii) It was also during this time that he most likely wrote his letter to the Romans, as in Romans 15 he explained that he had now "fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ."
- b) **3 There he spent three months, and when a plot was made against him by the Jews as he was about to set sail for Syria, he decided to return through Macedonia.**
- i) How easy would it have been to plant some angry Jews secretly on the ship for Syria and then attacked Paul, killed him and thrown him overboard. Learning of the Jews' plot...he turned back to Macedonia. [Ramsay]
- c) Paul's travel companion/church delegates - **4 Sopater the Berean, son of Pyrrhus, accompanied him; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy; and the Asians, Tychicus and Trophimus.**
- i) Jewish/Gentile Church delegates - Total of 7 church representatives, plus Luke and Paul
- (1) Berea - Sopater the Berean, son of Pyrrus [Macedonia]
- (a) **Romans 16:21** - Timothy, my co-worker, sends his greetings to you, as do Lucius, Jason and **Sosipater**, my fellow Jews.
- (2) Thessalonica - Aristarchus & Secundus
- (3) Derbe/Gaius and Lystra/Timothy [Galatia]
- (4) Asian/Tychicus and Ephesus/Trophimus
- ii) It is worthy to note that Paul preferred to travel with a team.
- (1) First Missionary Journey - Barnabas and John Mark
- (2) Second Missionary Journey - Silas, Timothy then Luke

(3) Third Missionary Journey - Luke, plus the 7

d) John Stott - three fold witness that these leaders bear.

- i) Growth, unity and catholicity of the church - already Christians from inland and coastal Asia Minor, from both sides of the Aegean, and from the northern and southern halves of Greece, know that they belong to the same church and co-operate in the same cause.
- ii) Fruitfulness of Paul's missionary expeditions - Derbe and Lystra were evangelized **first**, Berea and Thessalonica **second** and Ephesus, **third**.
- iii) Missionary-mindedness of young Christian communities - these new churches are already willing to give up some of their best local leadership to the wider work and witness of Christ's church.

e) **5 These went on ahead and were waiting for us at Troas, 6 but we sailed away from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread, and in five days we came to them at Troas, where we stayed for seven days.**

6) Verses 7-9 Sleeping during the \_\_\_\_\_ of the gospel can be \_\_\_\_\_.

a) **On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul talked with them, intending to depart on the next day, and he prolonged his speech until midnight. 8 There were many lamps in the upper room where we were gathered. 9 And a young man named Eutychus, sitting at the window, sank into a deep sleep as Paul talked still longer. And being overcome by sleep, he fell down from the third story and was taken up dead.**

- i) This is the only incident during this week in Troas, namely the dramatic sleep, fall, death and resuscitation of a young man called Eutychus. [Stott]
- ii) Luke's reference to the many lamps (Gr. lampades hikani, lit. many torches) suggests that it was the combination of a long message and lack of oxygen that caused Eutychus to fall asleep. The Greek word translated "young man" (meanias) elsewhere describes a boy of eight to 14 years old. However, his name suggests that he may have been a slave, in which case he could have been in his thirties.<sup>912</sup> Doctor Luke pronounced Eutychus (lit. fortunate) dead. [Constable]

(1) "The length of Paul's preaching may incline us to sympathize with sleepy Eutychus. The well-developed synoptic theme of wakefulness puts a different perspective on the matter. Falling asleep is a serious failure with potentially grave consequences. Paul's dedicated preaching makes

demands on his audience. They must be dedicated listeners who hear the word and 'bear fruit with perseverance (en upomone)' (Luke 8:15).

Eutychus failed and fell." [Constable]

- (2) "I confess that Paul's experience has always been a comfort to me. When I look out at the congregation and see some brother or sister out there sound asleep, I say to myself, 'It's all right. Just let them sleep. Paul put them to sleep, too.'" [Constable]

7) Verses 10-12 God is merciful on those that \_\_\_\_\_ his word and \_\_\_\_\_

- a) **10 But Paul went down and bent over him, and taking him in his arms, said, "Do not be alarmed, for his life is in him." 11 And when Paul had gone up and had broken bread and eaten, he conversed with them a long while, until daybreak, and so departed. 12 And they took the youth away alive, and were not a little comforted.**

- i) This seems to be a definite instance of Paul raising a dead person back to life similar to what Elijah, Elisha, and Jesus had done (cf. 1 Kings 17:21- 22; 2 Kings 4:34-35; Matt. 9:23-25; Mark 5:39). If so, the incident shows the miraculous power of Jesus Christ working through His apostle at this time (1:1-2). (If you are a preacher and have the gift of gab, you may also need the gift of healing!) However many competent exegetes have concluded that Eutichus simply swooned and Paul revived him. [Constable]

(1) **1 Kings 17:21-22 & 2 Kings 4**

8) Verses 13-16 We will always be \_\_\_\_\_ traveling as a \_\_\_\_\_

- i) **13 But going ahead to the ship, we set sail for Assos, intending to take Paul aboard there, for so he had arranged, intending himself to go by land. 14 And when he met us at Assos, we took him on board and went to Mitylene. 15 And sailing from there we came the following day opposite Chios; the next day we touched at Samos; and the day after that we went to Miletus. 16 For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he might not have to spend time in Asia, for he was hastening to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on the day of Pentecost.**