



Sermon, Sunday January 16, 2022

“Apostle Paul who follows the footsteps of Jesus Christ”

SCRIPTURE: Acts 20:1-12 ¹After the uproar had ceased, Paul sent for the disciples; and after encouraging them and saying farewell, he left for Macedonia. ²When he had gone through those regions and had given the believers^[a] much encouragement, he came to Greece, ³where he stayed for three months. He was about to set sail for Syria when a plot was made against him by the Jews, and so he decided to return through Macedonia. ⁴He was accompanied by Sopater son of Pyrrhus from Beroea, by Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica, by Gaius from Derbe, and by Timothy, as well as by Tychicus and Trophimus from Asia. ⁵They went ahead and were waiting for us in Troas; ⁶but we sailed from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread, and in five days we joined them in Troas, where we stayed for seven days. ⁷On the first day of the week, when we met to break bread, Paul was holding a discussion with them; since he intended to leave the next day, he continued speaking until midnight. ⁸There were many lamps in the room upstairs where we were meeting. ⁹A young man named Eutychus, who was sitting in the window, began to sink off into a deep sleep while Paul talked still longer. Overcome by sleep, he fell to the ground three floors below and was picked up dead. ¹⁰But Paul went down, and bending over him took him in his arms, and said, “Do not be alarmed, for his life is in him.” ¹¹Then Paul went upstairs, and after he had broken bread and eaten, he continued to converse with them until dawn; then he left. ¹²Meanwhile they had taken the boy away alive and were not a little comforted.

Introduction: The Holy Spirit Helps Those Who Follow in the Footsteps of Jesus

In the messages of the past two weeks, I preached to live as a Christian who follows the life of Jesus. Let's pray like Jesus, take up our cross, and listen carefully to the Lord's words and put them into practice. When we do this, the Holy Spirit transforms us and produces fruit.

Much of the New Testament that is passed down to us today was written by the Apostle Paul. We can see through the New Testament that the Apostle Paul's ministry was accomplished through the guidance and work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit fully worked in the activities of the early church, and is still working through the church. The Holy Spirit is with those who want to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, helps them, and produces amazing fruit. The Apostle Paul's ministry described in the New Testament makes it clear what the work of the Holy Spirit is for those who want to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. We pray that we will experience life filled with the Holy Spirit and receive help from the Holy Spirit in 2022.

Body: Apostle Paul who follows the footsteps of Jesus

Today's text describes the scene where the Apostle Paul left Ephesus and headed for Jerusalem. This is the beginning of the Apostle Paul's third missionary journey. The Apostle Paul imitated the life of Jesus and put it into practice. **James 1:25 says: “But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it--he will be blessed in what he does.”** It is our duty to imitate and practice the Christian life in this way.

So how did the Apostle Paul handle the tasks that were given to him?



1. The Apostle Paul does not waste the time given.

The Apostle Paul does not waste time on his third missionary journey to return to Jerusalem. He preached the gospel whenever he had the opportunity and took care of the church where he had preached the gospel. **Let's look at Acts 20:2. "When he had gone through these parts (Macedonia) and had given them much encouragement, he came to Greece."**

Macedonia is where Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea are located. This is where the churches founded by the Apostle Paul on his second missionary journey are located. The Apostle Paul visits these churches and examines them throughout. And the Apostle Paul went to Greece, now known as Corinth, where he stayed for three months. And the Apostle Paul wrote the book of Romans in Corinth. **Let's see Acts 20:2-3: "When he had gone through these parts and had given them much encouragement, he came to Greece. 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 determined to return through Macedonia."**

The Apostle Paul sought out, met, and exhorted people whenever he had the opportunity to preach the Gospel. The Apostle Paul overcame persecution when it came, overcame the wounds of the past, and devoted his time to preaching the gospel. How could the Apostle Paul handle this work?

The Apostle Paul says in Ephesians 5:16. "Making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil" Time is not given to us indefinitely. We should be able to use the time given to us usefully.

What we should not overlook is that even if the time allotted to us is not long, we can use that time to pray to the Lord and meditate on the words of the Bible.

The Lord loves those who follow Him with this attitude. In 2022, I hope that the time given to us will be more cherished and appreciated for useful things. What was the other way that the Apostle Paul was able to handle the tasks assigned to him?

2. The Apostle Paul worked in solidarity and unity.

The Apostle Paul performed the Lord's work in solidarity and unity. However, solidarity and unity are not easily achieved. They are accomplished from the heart of understanding, from caring, and helping each other's situation.

In today's text Acts 20:4, the names of many people with whom the Apostle Paul was in unity and solidarity appear. **"He was accompanied by Sopater son of Pyrrhus from Berea, Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica, Gaius from Derbe, Timothy also, and Tychicus and Trophimus from the province of Asia."**

There are several people who accompanied the Apostle Paul in this verse. They were Bereans, Thessalonians, Derbeans, and Ephesians. These are people who go to the Jerusalem church with offerings of the Gentile churches to help the Jerusalem church. It is possible for the Gentile church to help the Jerusalem church materially because of the solidarity and unity of the church. It is because of the spirit of unity and solidarity that we donated our Christmas Eve worship offering for the victims of tornadoes.

The Apostle Paul tells us why it is important to be in solidarity with each church. **Let's look at 2 Corinthians 8:14. "At the present time your plenty will supply what they need, so that in turn their plenty will supply what you need. Then there will be equality."**

At the time of the early church, the European church had more money than the Jerusalem church. But the church in Jerusalem was richer in tradition and history than the Gentile churches in Europe. In this way, the church fills in what is lacking by sharing what is plentiful with each other while it grows together. Such solidarity and unity are achieved when we understand and care for each other. We also hope that in 2022 more solidarity and unity among the churches will be possible. Finally, let's look at how Paul was able to handle the tasks he was given.



3. The Apostle Paul focuses on important work.

Apostle Paul's ministry in today's text shows us about concentration. **Let's look at today's text Acts 20:6. "But we sailed from Philippi after the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and five days later joined the others at Troas, where we stayed seven days."** The Apostle Paul's company crosses over from Philippi to Troas. Troas is a region of present-day Turkey. They were transferred from Greece to Turkey. And the Apostle Paul preaches to us intensively there.

Let's look at Acts 20:7. "On the first day of the week we came together to break bread. Paul spoke to the people and, because he intended to leave the next day, kept on talking until midnight." By the way, an accident occurred. During the preaching of the Word, a young man named Eutychus falls asleep and falls from a window and dies. The place of joy in hearing the word of the Lord was changed into a place of sorrow.

However, the Apostle Paul turns this tragic event into an event that shows what the work of the Holy Spirit is. The Apostle Paul holds dead Eutychus and prays for him. As a result, surprisingly, Eutychus arises from dead and this became a great joy for everyone present.

Through the event of Eutychus, we can think of a place where we can experience the work of the Holy Spirit. Christians need a place to focus on the Word, listen to the Word, and meditate on the Word deeply. It is the place of worship. Worship is a powerful proclamation of God's Word, and there is comfort and restoration. I pray that in 2022, we can all experience the fullness of the Holy Spirit through worship.

Conclusion: As we follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, there are changes and fruits in our lives.

Now let's summarize today's sermon. The Apostle Paul did not waste time and did his best to spread the Gospel. This was possible because the Apostle Paul always meditated and prayed on the word of the Lord. Second, Apostle Paul achieved solidarity and unity through understanding and consideration for others. Lastly, Apostle Paul concentrated on worship in order to properly carry out his ministry.

As we saw in the ministry of the Apostle Paul, following the footsteps of Jesus Christ brings change and fruit. Also, the Holy Spirit helps and guides those who want to live such a life. We pray that we may gain wisdom through the life of Paul, who lived in the footsteps of Jesus, so that we too bear abundant fruit.

