

Acts 20 – 27 September 2020

“Cultivating Christian Leaders”

Introduction

*We’ve been learning much from Paul’s missionary trips around the world

*This is the return leg of the 3rd & final trip

*Knowing he may never get to do this again; he’s dedicated to only those things that matter the most

*Paul’s concerned about what we leave behind when we’re gone. Are you?

Simple people – live to gain for themselves

Regular people – live to gain & give things of earthly value

Godly people – live to cultivate God’s life in other people

Acts 20 presents Paul’s life’s goal of growing others

In that regard, this is a lot like parenting!

Today, 4 keys to cultivating new Christian leaders

1st Key to Cultivating Christian Leaders is to spend long hours ministering to people (Chap 20:1-16)

Read Vs 1-6 – *Traveling to Greece & back*

1. So Paul left Ephesus (chap 19) & came into Greece to give them “much exhortation”.
2. He spent 3 months there, then comes back into Asia Minor w/ lots of friends.
 - a. Even knowing the Jews were after him, he spent 3 months there w/ those he already knew
 - b. Paul not just interested in making converts, but also in growing disciples. (Takes time)
3. Paul wasn’t going to places...he was going to people.
 - a. Paul knew Israel, as Hosea said, were “destroyed for a lack of knowledge”, & he didn’t want that to happen to these new friends
 - b. There’s no substitute for spending time teaching and guiding people.

Vs 7-12 – *Preaching in Troas & Eutychus falls*

Read Vs 7

1. 1st day of week was their 1 day/week off work.
2. “Preached” = better reasoned with them
 - a. He’s always taking ‘em deeper in the Word
 - b. Taught til midnight...& that’s not the end!

Read Vs 8-12

1. Now this is Dr. Luke reporting in vs 9 that “he was taken up dead”, so that’s what happened
 - a. I believe God did a miracle thru Paul
 - b. How does Eutychus’ story relate to what’s happening here?
2. Notice they go back to the teaching of the Word after the incident with Eutychus.
 - a. Paul teaches until the break of day.
 - b. You’ve heard it said, “The mind can absorb no more than the seat can endure.” – Morton Blackwell

- c. I say to you, “The seat can only endure to the extent that the subject is valued & pure”
- d. The Word of God was so valuable to them, nothing was going to stop them.

Read Vs 13-16 – *From Troas to Miletus*

1. Paul has a schedule he’s on...he wants to get to Jerusalem by Pentecost.
 - a. But every time he has a chance to be with people, he takes it.
 - b. Paul’s friends got the ship at Troas, but Paul walked from Troas to Assos, for people.
2. Do we involve people every chance we get, or do we avoid people?
3. Christians need to breed a culture that gets involved with each other.
 - a. Ask the hard questions of each other.
 - b. Talk about God’s Word w/ each other.

2nd Key to Cultivating Christian Leaders is to be an example of living on purpose for God (Chap 20:17-24)

Read Vs 17-19

1. The leaders of this major church in Ephesus come down to the coastal town of Miletus for this great farewell to Paul.
2. Paul says, you know I worked hard to serve the Lord thru much opposition.
 - a. It cost Paul pain to serve the Lord

Read Vs 20-21

1. Notice how Paul conveyed his service to them.
 - a. He “showed them” – thru his life & work
 - b. He “taught them” – thru his words
2. What did he convey to them?
 - a. Repent – change your life to be like God
 - b. Faith – Believe all that Jesus said
 - c. Paul kept back nothing – Gave them ALL
 - d. He was intentional about giving to them

Read Vs 22-24

1. All else fell to a lower priority behind one thing: To finish his life testifying of Jesus' work
2. Even not knowing if it will be hard or easy didn't matter.
3. Nothing moved him or could change his mind
 - a. That's an example of knowing the mission God has given you and never quitting.
 - b. **BECAUSE JESUS IS WORTH IT TO HIM**

3rd Key to Cultivating Christian Leaders is to teach them to duplicate all of God's Word in others (Chap 20:25-31)

Read Vs 25-27

1. Vs 25 – My time with you is complete
2. Vs 26 – I've completed my job therefore, I'm guilty free. How can he know that?
3. Vs 27 – B/c he's given them ALL the Bible!

- a. Vs 20 – Paul “kept back nothing”.
 - b. This was Jesus’ commission to us (Read Matt 28:20)
 - c. Rom 15:19 – Paul said, “I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ”.
 - d. This is even what Jesus did in His ministry on earth (Read John 15:15)
4. B/c Paul’s never to see them again, he reminds them his goal was to give them the whole Bible

Read Vs 28-31

1. Paul’s saying the most important thing is to continue passing down God’s Word
2. This will protect the flock or the people
3. There are people outside & inside the church that will oppose the teaching of all of God’s Word
4. The only protection against falling for counterfeit teachings (lies), is to know that truth.
5. This is the ultimate tradition that needs passed down from person to person.

4th Key to Cultivating Christian Leaders is to release them to God (Chap 20:32-38)

Read Vs 32-35

1. Vs 32 – Paul now presents them to God & His ability to directly give them what they need.
2. Paul trusts that God has what they need and that they're mature enough to receive it!
3. Notice vs 33-35 – Paul was never in it to gain money or fame from them.
 - a. This releasing them back to God proves it!
 - b. And it's a challenge to them to walk with God and be themselves givers to others.

Read Vs 36-38

1. How do you gain friends like this?
 - a. Give things of value from yourself to others
 - b. Paul gave them God's valuable truth
 - c. Paul gave them love and attention
2. Paul has created independent Christians
 - a. Babies need parents help, adults don't.

Conclusion

Paul's goal has never been to cultivate people that are dependance on Him.

Paul's been cultivating people who trust God and His Word.

How can we do that?

1. **Spend long hours ministering to people**
 - a. Paul wasn't one visit & done, he stayed and answered the hard questions.
2. **Be an example of living of purpose for God**
 - a. Both teach and show the full way to others
3. **Teach them to duplicate all of God's Word in others**
 - a. Follow Jesus example: Jesus gave us all the Father gave Him, we should give others all that Jesus gave us, and so on....
4. **Release them to God**
 - a. Be sure others understand, you don't need me...you need Jesus Christ!