

The Bible's Vision of a Proper Ministry for Christ

(A Message to Ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ)

(Preached on Saturday Evening, July 25, 2020)

“And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, **and called the elders of the church.**”

(Acts 20:17)

Introduction

“And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church. And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye know, **from the first day** that I came into Asia, after **what manner** I have been with you **at all seasons.**” (Acts 20:17-18)

I. A vision of service to our Lord Jesus!

“Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews: and how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, testifying

both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Acts 20:19-21)

A. Serving humility!

“Serving the Lord with **all humility of mind**, and with **many tears**, and **temptations**, which befell me by the lying **in wait of the Jews** [the Catholics who lay in wait for the Protestants and Jews, the Protestants who lay in wait for the Anabaptists; and today, the denominational/traditional church attenders who lay in wait for those who seek to freely and sincerely serve their Lord with all of their heart, instead of with insincere guilt-abating religiosity a.k.a. hypocrisy]:” (Acts 20:19)

- “And when they were gone aside, they talked between themselves, saying, This man doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds.” (Acts 26:31)

B. Serving everything!

“And how **I kept back nothing** that was profitable unto you, but have **shewed** you, and have **taught** you **publicly, and from house to house**,” (Acts 20:20)

C. Serving repentance!

“Testifying both to the **Jews, and also to the **Greeks**, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.”**

(Acts 20:21)

II. A vision of surrender to our Lord Jesus!

“And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.” (Acts 20:22-24)

A. Surrendering our freedom!

“And now, behold, I go **bound in the spirit** unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that **bonds and afflictions abide me.**” (Acts 20:22-23)

- “Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.” (Matthew 11:29)

B. Surrendering our fear!

“But **none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself**, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.” (Acts 20:24)

C. Surrendering our future!

“And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, **shall see my face no more.**” (Acts 20:25)

III. A vision of success for our Lord Jesus!

“Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.” (Acts 20:26-28)

A. Successfully freed!

“Wherefore I take you to **record** this day, that I am **pure from the blood** of all men.” (Acts 20:26)

- “When I say unto **the wicked**, Thou shalt surely die; and **thou givest him not warning**, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but **his blood will I require at thine hand.**” (Ezekiel 3:18)
- “Again, When **a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness**, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumbling-block before him, he shall die: because **thou hast not given him warning**, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but **his blood will I require at thine hand.**” (Ezekiel 3:20)

B. Successfully plead!

“For I have not shunned to **declare** unto you **all the counsel of God.**” (Acts 20:27)

- “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow,

and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” (Hebrews 4:12)

C. Successfully feed!

“Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all **the flock**, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to **feed** the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.” (Acts 20:28)

- “So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.” (John 21:15)

IV. A vision of soldiers for our Lord Jesus!

“For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.” (Acts 20:29-31)

A. Soldiers who will survive!

“For I know this, that after my departing shall **grievous wolves** enter in among you, **not sparing the flock.**” (Acts 20:29)

- “And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.” (Matthew 10:22)

B. Soldiers who are strong!

“Also of your own selves shall men arise, **speaking perverse things, to draw away** disciples after them.” (Acts 20:30)

- “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.” (Ephesians 6:10)

C. Soldiers who succeed!

“Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I **ceased not to warn** every one **night and day** with tears.” (Acts 20:31)

- “And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.” (Revelation 12:11)

V. A vision of sacrifice to the Lord Jesus!

“And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.” (Acts 20:32)

A. Sacrificing money!

“I have **coveted no man's** silver, or gold, or apparel.” (Acts 20:33)

- “But Peter said unto him, **Thy money perish with thee**, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money.” (Acts 8:20)

B. Sacrificing time!

“And how **I kept back nothing** that was profitable unto you, but have **shewed you**, and have **taught you** publicly, and from house to house,” (Acts 20:34)

- “And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.” (John 11:44)

C. Sacrificing possessions!

“I have shewed you all things, how that so **labouring ye ought to support the weak**, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is **more blessed to give** than to receive.” (Acts 20:35)

- “Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, **One thing thou lackest**: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: **for he had great possessions.**” (Mark 10:21-22)
 - 6 million in the major city of the area we live in, here
 - 9 million in the county
 - 8,000 people being released from prison *this week!*
 - We have the largest concentration of homelessness *in the nation!*
 - Children are neglected in families struggling to survive the moral and financial pressures resulting from an equality of hypocrites and an over100 year old conclusion (really... confusion) of evolution that some of us evolved from better monkeys than others. - *Ridiculous!*

- "Sell whatsoever thou hast!"
- "Give to the poor!"
- "Have treasure in Heaven!"
- "Take up the cross!"
- "Follow Jesus!"
- Stop "going away sad, unfulfilled, unblessed, incomplete, and living a ministry that... while you *know* it is not a fulfilment of the Biblical dictates of what you should have, do, and enjoy; **it is most certainly filled with the manifold rewards that await the minister who *will* fulfill**

The Bible's Vision of a Proper Ministry for Christ!

Conclusion

"And when he had thus spoken, he **kneeled down, and prayed with them all.**" (Acts 20:36)

→ Let us follow their example now. Let us kneel, and let us pray!

OUTLINE:

The Bible's Vision of a Proper Ministry for Christ

“He ... called the elders of the church. And ... he said unto them.” (Acts 20:17-18)

- I. A Vision of Service to the Lord Jesus!
- II. A Vision of Surrender to the Lord Jesus!
- III. A Vision of Success for the Lord Jesus!
- IV. A Vision of Soldiers for the Lord Jesus!
- V. A Vision of Sacrifice for the Lord Jesus!

“And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all.” (Acts 20:36)

WORSHIP:

[It Is Well with My Soul \(Opening Interlude\)](#)

[Work, for the Night Is Coming \(506\)](#)

[To the Work! \(0\)](#)

[When the Roll Is Called Up Yonder \(552\)](#)

[Rock of Ages/Just As I Am \(ending medley\)](#)

[Send the Light! \(356\)](#)

[The Call for Reapers \(358\)](#)

[His Way with Thee \(biopic & song\)](#)

[His Way with Thee \(313\)](#)

[Soldiers of Christ, Arise \(449: post-message\)](#)