

August 1 Sermon Notes

How We Engage Each Other in the Church: the Example of Paul
Acts 20:16–38

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Introduction: Does it amaze you that the Apostle Paul could write commands like, “Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ” (1 Corinthians 11:1) and, “Brothers, join in imitating me” (Philippians 3:17). Do you feel good enough about your walk with the Lord that you, like Paul, would feel comfortable commanding Christians you know to imitate your pattern of life as a believer? I raise these questions because in the speech of Paul that we study together this morning is at its heart a call to follow the apostle’s example as a follower of Jesus Christ. And since Paul is speaking to the leaders of the church in Ephesus, he means for his hearers to follow his example so that they in turn can exhort others to imitate them.

Summary of the Sermon: Paul meant for his speech to the Ephesian elders to challenge not just local church leaders but all Christians to follow his example in Christian living.

1. The heart of Paul’s counsel to the Ephesian elders is: “Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock” (v. 28).
 2. Paul offers two reasons in vv. 28-31 why local church leaders must pay careful attention to themselves and the flock.
 - a. It is a flock bought with the blood of God!
 - b. It is a flock that wolves are seeking to harm! See 1 Timothy 1:3-4; 2 Timothy 1:15; Revelation 2:2).
3. Paul wants us to see that watching over ourselves and our fellow Christians involves following his example when he was leading the church in Ephesus. Paul asserts that he has left behind the following examples.
 - a. the example of serving the Lord with humility (v. 19)
 - b. the example of serving the Lord through trials, even persecution (vv. 19, 22-24)
 - c. the example of not shrinking back from declaring the “whole counsel of God” (vv. 26-27)
 - d. the example of resting in the word of the grace of God (v. 32)
 - e. the example of seeking deliverance from covetousness (vv. 33-34)
 - f. the example of giving to others lavishly (v. 35)

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