

Introduction (Acts 20:1-12)

Last week, I got an email from Perry Floyd, the Pastor at the Vineyard of North Albuquerque, asking if Bill Bice could preach for him on September 11. Perry was asked to fill in on that Sunday for Larry Toledo at the Santa Fe Vineyard. Larry will be in Portland, Oregon that week, officiating the marriage of his son. Bill Bice and I met and reviewed the preaching schedule, and changed the preaching schedule so that he could fill in for Perry that Sunday. Perry wrote me a follow-up email thanking me. He said, *“Bill, thank you so much for adjusting your schedule so that Bill B can preach for us on Sept 11. Feels like we are partners in ministry, which is the way it should be...”*

We take time every year to seek the Lord for direction and guidance for the upcoming year. Presently, we are working on the 2017 preaching schedule. We are asking the Lord for direction and guidance. We know that the Holy Spirit guides us in our planning. Bill and I believe that the Lord is leading us to go through the book of Hebrews, and then John’s letters. At the same time, we know that things come up, and we allow the Holy Spirit to change our plans whenever He wants. Planning is necessary. In fact, God has given us the responsibility to plan. At the same time, He tells us that He is the One who directs our steps. We make the plans and then we allow the Lord to direct and redirect our plans whenever He wants.

(Pr 16:1, 9) “The plans of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the LORD. {9} The mind of man plans his way, But the LORD directs his steps.”

I love the book of Acts. It is one of my favorite books in the Bible. I love seeing how the early church operated. There is a wonderful balance between the work of the Spirit and the work of the apostles. Part of that work included planning. The Apostle Paul planned his ministry trips. He also made plans on how to reach both the Jews and the Gentiles in each city. At the same time, he allowed the Holy Spirit to change the plans and redirect his ministry plans. Paul was clearly led by the Holy Spirit. For example, in Acts 15, Paul made plans for his second apostolic journey. Then, in Acts 16, we saw that Paul had planned to go to Asia, but when he came to Mysia, the Spirit of Jesus did not allow him to go to Bithynia. Instead, the Spirit gave Paul a vision of a man from Macedonia, pleading with him to come to Macedonia, and help them. Paul concluded that God was calling them to preach to the Macedonians. Therefore, he changed his plans and preached the gospel in Philippi. Paul clearly made plans and preparations for that trip, but he also allowed the Holy Spirit to change his plans.

(Acts 16:6-10) “They passed through the Phrygian and Galatian region, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia; {7} and after they came to Mysia, they were trying to go into Bithynia, and the Spirit of Jesus did not permit them; {8} and passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas. {9} A vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man of Macedonia was standing and appealing to him, and saying, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.” {10} When he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.”

Our passage today really begins a couple chapters earlier. We are on Paul’s third apostolic journey. Paul had received guidance from the Holy Spirit about where he was to go and minister. The first part of our message is about Paul following his plan. Second, we will see that he makes some midstream course adjustments. Third, Paul gets back on track and follows the final leg of the plan. Turn to Acts 20, and let’s read our text for today.

Following the Plan

1. Paul Travels to Macedonia and Achaia
2. Paul Changes Routes to Troas
3. Paul Stops in Miletus En Route to Jerusalem

(Acts 20:1-16) “After the uproar had ceased, Paul sent for the disciples, and when he had exhorted them and taken his leave of them, he left to go to Macedonia. {2} When he had gone through those districts and had given them much exhortation, he came to Greece. {3} And there he spent three months, and when a plot was formed against him by the Jews as he was about to set sail for Syria, he decided to return through Macedonia. {4} And he was accompanied by Sopater of Berea, the son of Pyrrhus, and by Aristarchus and Secundus of the Thessalonians, and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy, and Tychicus and Trophimus of Asia. {5} But these had gone on ahead and were waiting for us at Troas. {6} We sailed from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread, and came to them at Troas within five days; and there we stayed seven days. {7} On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul began talking to them, intending to leave the next day, and he prolonged his message until midnight. {8} There were many lamps in the upper room where we were gathered together. {9} And there was a young man named Eutychus sitting on the window sill, sinking into a deep sleep; and as Paul kept on talking, he was overcome by sleep and fell down from the third floor and was picked up dead. {10} But Paul went down and fell upon him, and after embracing him, he said, "Do not be troubled, for his life is in him." {11} When he had gone back up and had broken the bread and eaten, he talked with them a long while until daybreak, and then left. {12} They took away the boy alive, and were greatly comforted. {13} But we, going ahead to the ship, set sail for Assos, intending from there to take Paul on board; for so he had arranged it, intending himself to go by land. {14} And when he met us at Assos, we took him on board and came to Mitylene. {15} Sailing from there, we arrived the following day opposite Chios; and the next day we crossed over to Samos; and the day following we came to Miletus. {16} For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus so that he would not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hurrying to be in Jerusalem, if possible, on the day of Pentecost.”

1. Paul Travels to Macedonia and Achaia

Before I talk about how Paul followed his plan, I want to go back to the origin of the plan. In Acts 18, after Paul had ministered in Athens, he went on to Corinth. At Corinth, he met Aquila and Priscilla, and since they were also tent makers, he stayed with them. Paul stayed in Corinth for a year and a half preaching the gospel and making disciples. Then, Paul left Corinth to go back to Antioch, and he took Priscilla and Aquila with him. But, when he came to Ephesus, he left them there. The Jews in Ephesus asked Paul to stay longer, but he did not consent. But, he promised them that he would return again, if God wills, and he set sail for Syria. So, God willing, he was going to return to Ephesus and spend some time with the Ephesian church. This was in 52 A.D.

(Acts 18:18-21) “Paul, having remained many days longer, took leave of the brethren and put out to sea for Syria, and with him were Priscilla and Aquila. In Cenchrea he had his hair cut, for he was keeping a vow. {19} They came to Ephesus, and he left them there. Now he himself entered the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. {20} When they asked him to stay for a longer time, he did not consent, {21} but taking leave of them and saying, "I will return to you again if God wills," he set sail from Ephesus.”

After Paul arrived in Caesarea, he went down to Antioch, where he had been sent out from. After spending some time there, he left and passed through the Galatian region and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples. Where was Paul ultimately headed for? Ephesus. He had a desire to go there, and he had promised the Ephesians that he would come back, if God wills. On his way to Ephesus, he went through Galatia and Phrygia strengthening the disciples. This was in 53 A.D.

(Acts 18:22-23) “When he had landed at Caesarea, he went up and greeted the church, and went down to Antioch. {23} And having spent some time there, he left and passed successively through the Galatian region and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.”

In Acts 19, after Paul had passed through the upper country, he finally arrived at Ephesus. He rejoined his friends, Aquila and Priscilla. They had stayed in Ephesus, and planted a church in their home. We know that they planted a church because when Paul returned to Ephesus in 53 A.D., he wrote his first letter to the Corinthians. In his closing, he said, “the churches in Asia greet you. Aquila and Prisca greet you heartily in the Lord with the church that is in their house.”

(1 Cor 16:19) “The churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Prisca greet you heartily in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.”

Paul stayed in Ephesus for two years. After reasoning in the synagogue for three months, he took away the disciples and reasoned daily in the school of Tyrannus for two years. As a result of Paul’s ministry in Ephesus, “all who lived in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.”

(Acts 19:8-10) “And he entered the synagogue and continued speaking out boldly for three months....he withdrew from them and took away the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus....This took place for two years, so that all who lived in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.”

Paul must have sensed that his time in Ephesus was coming to an end, and he sought the Lord for his next assignment. He was in a transition period, where one chapter was coming to an end, and another chapter was about to begin. Most of us can identify with that. We have all been in transition times and seasons, waiting on direction from the Lord. I remember the fall of 1995. I was praying and the Lord said to me, “this is the last page of this chapter of your life.” God was leading me out of professional golf and calling me to plant a church. During the next couple of years, He continued to speak to me, and shared with me more specifics about the work he was calling me to do. I was in a transition time. That was where Paul was. He was in a transition time, and the Lord was speaking to him about his next few years of ministry. This was in 57 A.D.

In Acts 19:21-22, **Paul purposed in the Spirit to go back to Macedonia, Achaia, Jerusalem, and then to Rome.** The English Standard Version says that he resolved in the Spirit. The Amplified describes it in the following way, “Now after these events Paul determined in the Holy Spirit that he would travel through Macedonia and Achaia (most of Greece) and go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must visit Rome also.” So, he was going to go to Macedonia, where Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea were located. Then, he was going to go Achaia, where Corinth and Athens were located. Then, he was going to go to Jerusalem, and then on to Rome. He arrived in Rome in 61 A.D. Paul had been given direction from the Lord for his next four years.

(Acts 19:21-22) "Now after these things were finished, Paul purposed in the Spirit to go to Jerusalem after he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, saying, "After I have been there, I must also see Rome." {22} And having sent into Macedonia two of those who ministered to him, Timothy and Erastus, he himself stayed in Asia for a while.

There are some that think that planning and following the Holy Spirit are not compatible. They think that planning prevents being led by the Spirit. They think that being led by the Spirit rules out the need for planning. In this passage, we have a wonderful balance of being led by the Spirit and planning. Paul gets direction from the Holy Spirit about where he is to go. He has the regions that he is to go to, and he has the order that he is to go in. He even has direction for his next trip, after returning home from the current one. The Holy Spirit gives him some long term direction. Once the Holy Spirit had given him direction for his next four years, he purposed in his heart to do exactly what he had been shown to do.

I want to make a couple of comments about planning. The purpose of planning is not to plan. It is not just an activity. **The purpose of planning is to accomplish a goal or objective.** Paul had the goal of reaching both the Jews and the Gentiles. So, he planned to spend three weeks reasoning in the synagogues, and then turn to the Gentiles. This was his plan. The plan was not the important thing. Preaching the gospel and making disciples of both Jews and Gentiles was the important thing. Making strategic plans to reach both groups just helped him meet his objective. Making the plans and following the plans are not the important thing. Seeing people come to Christ in all these cities and regions, and then seeing their lives transformed were the objectives. The plans just helped Paul and his team accomplish their objectives.

We have a responsibility to plan our areas of ministry. Bill and I have the responsibility of feeding the flock. We have a responsibility of searching out future feeding grounds and planning the preaching schedule. We also have the responsibility of planning our services. We plan the announcements, activities, worship, preaching, and ministry times. We ask the Lord each week, "What do you want to do this week? What would you have us do?" We ask for direction from the Holy Spirit. Then, in service, as we are following the plan, we also follow the leading of the Holy Spirit. He can redirect the plans at any time.

Betty has the responsibility of planning worship. Her objective is to lead our congregation in praise and worship. This requires planning, communication, and then following the plan. She must get before the Lord and allow the Holy Spirit to lead her. She also allows the Holy Spirit to redirect plans before or during the service. We must plan our Life Group meetings. The meals need to be planned, both spiritual and physical. The Fellowship Luncheons need to be planned. The Children's Ministry needs to be planned. Every ministry that we have in the church should be planned under the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit.

Karen and I found that the larger the organization, the more planning and structure is required. As a large family, we could not just show up in a town and start looking for non-smoking, connecting, double rooms. Other single golfers could do that, but we had to plan ahead and make reservations. Other people just get in a car and go. We had seat assignments and the children drew lots every week. That way no one got stuck in a seat they did not want. **More planning is required as an organization grows larger.** There is a longer lead time as an organization grows. Plans must be made and schedules must be made in advance.

In our text today, we see Paul following his plan. He was given plans for his next four years. He leaves Ephesus and goes to Macedonia. Then, after going through those districts, he went to Greece. He spent three months there, and was getting ready to set sail for Syria, to go to Jerusalem. We do not know much about what he did there. We are given very little information except that he went to the places that were on his travel itinerary. The text does give one detail that I do not want to pass over. Luke writes that after the uproar, Paul sent for the disciples, and when he had **exhorted** them and taken his leave of them, he left to go to Macedonia. **Paul exhorted the disciples in Ephesus.** Paul was a teacher; that was his primary gifting. But, he exhorted the disciples. The Greek word is *parakaleo*, and it is used 109 times. Some of the more common English words that are used for it are: urge, beseech, encourage, exhort, and comfort. To exhort someone is to prod, urge, or encourage them to do something.

(Acts 20:1-2) “After the uproar had ceased, Paul sent for the disciples, and when he had **exhorted** them and taken his leave of them, he left to go to Macedonia. {2} When he had gone through those districts and had given them much **exhortation**, he came to Greece.”

After Paul exhorted the saints in Ephesus, he went to Macedonia, where he gave them much **exhortation**. It was not enough for Paul to teach people and to give them understanding. He wanted them to be doers of the word. He urged, pleaded, and exhorted them to take what they had learned and apply it in their lives. Paul, when he wrote Timothy, told him to give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to teaching, and to exhortation. The reading of Scripture gives awareness. The teaching of Scripture gives understanding. And, exhortation gives application. Let’s take a quick look at a few of the exhortations that Paul gives. Remember, this word was used 109 times, so I am just going to give you eight examples of things that Paul exhorted the church in.

(1 Tim 4:13) “Until I come, give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching.”

Six Examples of Paul’s exhortations

A. Paul exhorted the church to be unified. He exhorted people to live in harmony with one another. Unity was important to Paul, and it is important to God. He also exhorted them to keep their eye on those who cause dissension, and turn away from them. In Proverbs 6, Solomon wrote that there are six things the Lord hates, seven which are an abomination to him. The seventh one is a brother who stirs up strife. God hates strife, and He wants us to be of the same mind. I urge all of you to work out your disagreements. Husbands and wives, cleave together and be unified. I urge all of you to live in unity.

(1 Cor 1:10) “Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment.”

(Rom 16:17) “Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them.”

(Phil 4:2) “I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to live in harmony in the Lord.”

B. Paul exhorted the church to walk in a worthy manner. We are urged to walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls us. We are urged to walk in a way that pleases God. We are urged to live a life that is above reproach so that the opponent will be put to shame and have nothing bad to say. Church, I urge you to live uprightly at home, in your neighborhood, and at work. You are Christ's ambassador to the people God has put in your life.

(1 Thess 2:11-12) "just as you know how we were exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you as a father would his own children, {12} so that you would walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory."

(1 Thess 4:1) "Finally then, brethren, we request and exhort you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us instruction as to how you ought to walk and please God (just as you actually do walk), that you excel still more."

C. Paul exhorted the church to serve. In Romans 12, Paul urged them to present their bodies as living and holy sacrifices. Then, in the remainder of the chapter, he speaks about the different gifts that we have, and how we are to use them in serving one another. Church, use your gifts and find a place to serve. You will give account to God for your gifts. You are stewards, so I urge you to find your place in the body and serve the Lord.

(Rom 12:1) "Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship."

D. Paul exhorted the church to pray. Church, I have exhorted you to pray. I thank the Lord that you are a praying church. Other pastors have even made comments to me about how our church prays. Thank you for praying. I urge you to pray even more. Be devoted to prayer. Pray without ceasing. Pray at all times. Pray with your mind. Pray with your spirit. Pray.

(1 Tim 2:1) "First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men,"

(Rom 15:30) "Now I urge you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God for me,"

E. Paul exhorted them to excel in their love for one another.

(1 Thess 4:9-10) "Now as to the love of the brethren, you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another; {10} for indeed you do practice it toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, to excel still more,"

F. Paul exhorted them to give bountifully. There has been much abuse in the church, particularly with the pentecostal churches. I believe that we are called to give faithfully, generously, and as each as purposed in their own heart. Therefore, I have not exhorted you or tried to push people about giving. I want people to give because they want to give to the Lord. I want people to give because they want to be faithful stewards. I want people to give because they want to sow generously into God's work. Church, I exhort you to give bountifully to the Lord.

(2 Cor 9:5) “So I thought it necessary to urge the brethren that they would go on ahead to you and arrange beforehand your previously promised bountiful gift, so that the same would be ready as a bountiful gift and not affected by covetousness.”

2. Paul Changes Routes to Troas

Paul was staying with his plan. He went to Macedonia and then on to Greece. Next, he was going to go to Syria. Antioch was in Syria, and that is where he had been sent out from. He considered it his home church. The ship for Syria would leave from Troas, go to Assos, and then over to Caesarea. He had been prevented from speaking in Asia on his previous trip. He had received the vision of the man from Macedonia who asked him to come help them. Now, he has the opportunity to go to Troas. But, there is a problem. Life is full of problems. **We must routinely make course adjustments.** Paul discovered that a plot had been formed against him by the Jews. So, Paul and his team, change their plans. He decides to return through Macedonia. His co-workers, Sopater, Aristarchus, Secundus, Gaius, timothy, Tychicus, and Trophimus, went on ahead and sailed from Greece to Troas. They were waiting for Paul when he arrived.

(Acts 20:3, 5) “And there he spent three months, and when a plot was formed against him by the Jews as he was about to set sail for Syria, he decided to return through Macedonia....{5} But these had gone on ahead and were waiting for us at Troas.”

Luke and Paul “sailed from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread, and came to them at Troas within five days.” Paul and Luke had some time together as they went from Corinth to Philippi. It is a little more than 150 miles, which would have taken them about ten days by foot. Then, they caught a ship from Philippi to Troas, which was another 140 miles. It took them five more days by ship to arrive in Troas. This change to their travel plans cost them an extra week and a half of time.

(Acts 20:6) “We sailed from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread, and came to them at Troas within five days; and there we stayed seven days.”

I want to take just a brief minute to talk about Paul’s team. I actually put together a full sermon this week on this verse, but we do not have time to go in depth this morning on these team members. These men were from different cities and regions that Paul had preached the gospel and planted churches. Everywhere he went he kept his eyes open for the next generation of leaders. He was a talent scout. He looked for faithful men, and poured himself into them. Pastor Bill mentioned a couple of weeks ago in his message how it is important to multiply our ministry. He said that we need to find faithful people and pour ourselves into them. The first application is that **every ministry leader needs to be raising up other people in their ministries**. God wants to raise up more leaders, and we are the vessels that God wants to use to raise up leaders.

(Acts 20:4) “And he was accompanied by Sopater of Berea, the son of Pyrrhus, and by Aristarchus and Secundus of the Thessalonians, and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy, and Tychicus and Trophimus of Asia.”

(2 Tim 2:2) “The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”

The second application from this team is **we must be eager for God's Word**. First, Sopater was from Berea and Aristarchus and Secundus were from Thessalonica. In Thessalonica, they eagerly received the word from Paul for what is really is, the Word of God, not the word of men. In Berea, they were even more noble. They received the Word of God with eagerness and examined or studied the Word of God daily. Luke was also part of Paul's team. He investigated everything carefully and wrote things in consecutive order. He studied the Word of God carefully. May our Leadership Team be people of the Word. May our church members be known as those who receive the Word of God with eagerness and study the Word of God daily. If we are people of the Word, we will be a strong and healthy church.

(Acts 17:11) "Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so."

(1 Thess 2:13) "For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe."

The third application from this team is **we must be known for our love**. In 3 John, John writes to "the beloved Gaius." In Ephesians, Paul said he was sending Tychicus, "our beloved brother and faithful minister." In Colossians, Paul mentions that Luke, the beloved physician, sends his greetings. Luke was also loved by people. All of these men were loved by people. They were full of love, and as a result, others loved them. May our church be known for its love.

(3 John 1:1) "The elder to the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth."

(Eph 6:21) "But that you also may know about my circumstances, how I am doing, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make everything known to you."

(Col 4:14) "Luke, the beloved physician, sends you his greetings, and also Demas."

If we want to reach our community, we must be full of the Father's love. Jesus said, "by this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." Church, we are a loving church. We must grow and excel even more in our love.

(John 13:35) "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

The fourth application from these team members is **we are all called to be faithful servants**. In Colossians, Paul calls Tychicus our beloved brother and faithful servant. He was a servant. In Philippians, Paul calls Aristarchus and Luke his fellow workers. They were not sitting around; they were all working team members. God wants every joint to supply. The kingdom of God is built by faithful servants. May we be a church full of faithful servants.

(Col 4:7) "As to all my affairs, Tychicus, our beloved brother and faithful servant and fellow bond-servant in the Lord, will bring you information."

(Phil 1:24) “as do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, my fellow workers.”

3. Paul Stops in Miletus En Route to Jerusalem

In Paul’s plan, he had purposed in the Spirit to go to Jerusalem after he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia. He went to Macedonia and went through those parts, regions, or districts. Then, he went to Greece or Achaia. He was doing exactly what he had purposed in his spirit. He has two other places on his horizon, Jerusalem and Rome.

(Acts 19:21) “Now after these things were finished, Paul purposed in the Spirit to go to Jerusalem after he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, saying, "After I have been there, I must also see Rome.”

He was about to set sail for Syria, where Antioch is located, his base camp, and they discovered a plot formed against him. Therefore, he sent some of his team on ahead to Troas, and he went back to Philippi. Then, Luke and Paul sailed from Philippi to Troas, which took them about five days at sea. Then, they stayed for seven days in Troas.

(Acts 20:6) “We sailed from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread, and came to them at Troas within five days; and there we stayed seven days.”

Paul was given a four-year plan. He is following that plan. He has made some course adjustments because of threats and other things that came up, but he is still following the plan. Paul is now in Troas, which was a town of about 100,000 people. It was founded about 300 B.C. by Alexander Troas. It was a leading seaport, and Constantine had considered making Troas the capital of the Roman empire. Troas was located on a site that had just under 1,000 acres (990 acres), so it was very densely populated. Paul stays there for only seven days. He is on a schedule, and he wants to be in Jerusalem before Pentecost. But, what happens in his next two stops, Troas and Miletus, are really significant, which is why Luke includes them in this account.

On the first day of the week, they gathered to break bread. The first day of the week is Sunday. There are some who say that we must meet on Saturdays, and it is a sin to meet on Sundays. One man told me a few years ago that I was teaching people to sin by having our services on Sundays. The church in Troas met on Sundays. Historical documents reveal that the early church met on the 1st day of the week. There are some historical things that happened on Sunday. First, Jesus rose from the dead on the third day after Passover, which was Sunday. The Holy Spirit was poured out at Pentecost, which is seven Sabbaths and one day or fifty days after the Passover, which was on Sunday. When the Holy Spirit was poured out at Pentecost, the church was birthed. **The church at Troas gathered on the first day of the week to break bread.**

(Acts 20:7-8) “On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul began talking to them, intending to leave the next day, and he prolonged his message until midnight. {8} There were many lamps in the upper room where we were gathered together.”

Paul began talking to them. Luke says that he intended to leave the next day. This tells us that this is Paul’s final message to them. If there was anything that needed to be said, this was Paul’s last opportunity. In Bill’s message next week, Paul tells the Ephesian elders that they would no longer

see him, and they wept. Paul knows that this is the last time that the believers in Troas will see him. And, Paul prolonged his message until midnight. He was going to take full advantage of this last opportunity. Luke said that there were many lamps in the upper room. That tells us that it was a large room, and that there were a lot of people in the room. The believers in Troas were hungry to hear the word, and many of them had gathered together. We do not know what Paul preached about, but Luke does give us an account of something very significant that took place that night. As Paul kept prolonging his message until midnight, a young man named Eutychus, who was sitting on the window sill, sunk into a deep sleep and fell down. They were meeting on the third floor and so it was a big fall. They immediately went downstairs and picked him up, but he was dead. Paul also went down and fell upon him, and after embracing him, he said, "Do not be troubled, for his life is in him." **Paul raised Eutychus from the dead.**

(Acts 20:9-10) "And there was a young man named Eutychus sitting on the window sill, sinking into a deep sleep; and as Paul kept on talking, he was overcome by sleep and fell down from the third floor and was picked up dead. {10} But Paul went down and fell upon him, and after embracing him, he said, 'Do not be troubled, for his life is in him.'"

In the Old Testament, Elijah stretched himself out on the widow's son, prayed three times, and the Lord brought the boy back from the dead.

(1 Kings 17:21-22) "Then he stretched himself upon the child three times, and called to the LORD and said, "O LORD my God, I pray You, let this child's life return to him." {22} The LORD heard the voice of Elijah, and the life of the child returned to him and he revived."

In the New Testament, we have a couple of other examples. Jesus brought back Lazarus from the dead. He had been dead four days, and Jesus called to him, "Lazarus, come forth." And, Lazarus came forth. Then, Jesus told them to unbind him and let him go.

(John 11:43-44) "When He had said these things, He cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth." {44} The man who had died came forth, bound hand and foot with wrappings, and his face was wrapped around with a cloth. Jesus *said to them, 'Unbind him, and let him go.'"

In Acts 9, when Peter went to Joppa, a woman named Dorcas fell sick and died. The disciples knew that Peter was in town and sent word to him to come immediately. Peter knelt down and prayed, and then he turned to Dorcas' body and said, 'Tabitha, arise.' And, Peter took her hand, raised her up and presented her to them alive.

(Acts 9:37-41) "And it happened at that time that she fell sick and died; and when they had washed her body, they laid it in an upper room.... {40} But Peter sent them all out and knelt down and prayed, and turning to the body, he said, "Tabitha, arise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter, she sat up. {41} And he gave her his hand and raised her up; and calling the saints and widows, he presented her alive."

We have seen both Old and New Testament examples of people being brought back from the dead. These are supernatural miracles, but they are just as possible today as back then. In May 2015, Robbie Dawkins was ministering at a church in England. Robbie was a Vineyard pastor from Illinois. He is an evangelist and goes around equipping the church in power evangelism. While there, a man

named Matt Catlow died and was pronounced dead by a physician. Robbie rebuked the spirit of death and said that you can't have him. Matt came back to life.¹ **God still does these acts today.**

After everyone had gone back up and had broken bread and eaten, Paul continued talking with them until daybreak. They went on like nothing had happened. A young boy had just been brought back from the dead, and they went on like nothing had happened. Luke does give us a glimpse of how they felt. He said that they took the boy alive and were greatly comforted. Obviously, they had experienced great shock and grief when this happened. God is not just concerned about sowing into us spiritually; He is also concerned about the condition of your soul. God comforted these believers.

(Acts 20:11-12) "When he had gone back up and had broken the bread and eaten, he talked with them a long while until daybreak, and then left. {12} They took away the boy alive, and were greatly comforted."

After Troas, Paul's next stop is Jerusalem. The ship would stop at a few ports along the way. The first stop would be Assos, which is just over twenty miles south of Troas. Paul's team boarded the ship to Assos, but Paul had decided to go by land. I presume that he walked. Why would Paul separate himself from the team and go by land? The most probable reason is that he wanted some personal time with the Lord. He wanted to spend some time praying, meditating on his upcoming messages with the Ephesian elders. There is another possible reason. In 2 Corinthians 11, Paul is defending his apostleship. He mentions that he has been shipwrecked three times. He wrote that letter to the Corinthians in 57 A.D. The upcoming shipwreck in Acts 27, which will be his fourth shipwreck, has not happened yet. That would take place in 61 A.D. Paul has had some less than desirable experiences on ships, which may have led to his decision to go by land whenever possible.

(Acts 20:13) "But we, going ahead to the ship, set sail for Assos, intending from there to take Paul on board; for so he had arranged it, intending himself to go by land."

(2 Cor 11:25) "Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep."

Paul met them in Assos, and went on board. They went to Mitylene, Chios, Samos, and finally arrived in Miletus. Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus so that he would not have to spend time in Asia. He wanted to get to Jerusalem before Pentecost so he was scheduling his time carefully. He wanted to meet with the Ephesian elders, but he wanted to meet with them in Miletus, which is 63 miles from Ephesus.

(Acts 20:14-16) "And when he met us at Assos, we took him on board and came to Mitylene. {15} Sailing from there, we arrived the following day opposite Chios; and the next day we crossed over to Samos; and the day following we came to Miletus. {16} For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus so that he would not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hurrying to be in Jerusalem, if possible, on the day of Pentecost."

Conclusion

<http://www.charismanews.com/opinion/watchman-on-the-wall/49708-report-robbey-dawkins-raise-s-a-man-from-the-dead-in-england>

This morning we saw that Paul, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, made plans. Then, as he followed those plans, he made course adjustments when necessary. Plans were not made for the sake of making plans. Plans were made for the sake of accomplishing objectives. Our objectives are similar to Paul's objectives. In Colossians 1:28-29 he said that he proclaimed Him, admonishing and teaching every man with all wisdom so that he could present every man complete in Christ. It was for this purpose that Paul labored, striving according to His power. Church, Pastor Bill has taken time to develop a corporate plan of evangelism. He is working on a corporate plan of discipleship. The plan is not the important thing. The lives of the people we touch are the important thing. If you have not signed up to participate, there is a box on the table with additional sign-up sheets. I exhort you to get involved. Be a team member.

(Col 1:28-29) "We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ. {29} For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me."

If you are leading an area of ministry, I exhort you to get before the Lord and plan your ministry. We are exhorted to lead with diligence. Diligently lead your ministry. Be flexible and allow the Holy Spirit to redirect when necessary, but make plans and follow your plans.

As we dismiss this morning, if you would like to have prayer for healing, we would welcome you to come forward. If you have been coming to this church, and you believe that this is where God wants you to join and be a part of, please come forward. If you have any other need for prayer, we have leaders who will be happy to pray for you.

Let's pray.

Introduction (Acts 20:1-16, Pr 16:1, 9, Acts 16:6-10)**1. Paul Travels to Macedonia and Achaia** (Acts 18:18-23, 19:8-10, 1 Cor 16:19)

- Paul _____ in the Spirit to go back to Macedonia, Achais, Jerusalem, and then to Rome. (Acts 19:21-22)
- The purpose of planning is to _____ a goal or objective. We have a _____ to plan our areas of ministry. (Pr 16:1,3,9) More planning is required as an organization grows _____.
- Paul _____ the disciples in Ephesus. (Acts 20:1-2, 1 Tim 4:13)

Six Examples of Paul's exhortations

- A. Paul exhorted the church to be _____. (1 Cor 1:10, Rom 16:17, Phil 4:2)
- B. Paul exhorted the church to _____ in a worthy manner. (1 Thess 2:11-12, 4:1)
- C. Paul exhorted the church to _____. (Rom 12:1)
- D. Paul exhorted the church to _____. (1 Tim 2:1, Rom 15:30)
- E. Paul exhorted the church to excel in their _____ for one another. (1 Thess 4:9-10)
- F. Paul exhorted them to _____ bountifully. (2 Cor 9:5)

2. Paul Changes Routes to Troas

- We must routinely make course _____. (Acts 20:3, 5-6)
- Every ministry leader needs to be _____ up other people in their ministries. (Acts 20:4, 2 Tim 2:2)
- We must be eager for God's _____. (Acts 17:11, 1 Thess 2:13)
- We must be known for our _____. (3 John 1:1, Eph 6:21, Col 4:14, John 13:35)
- We are all called to be faithful _____. (Col 4:7, Phil 1:24)

3. Paul Stops in Miletus En Route to Jerusalem (Acts 19:21, 20:6, 11-16, 2 Cor 11:25)

- The church at Troas gathered on the _____ day of the week. to break bread. (Acts 20:7-8)
- Paul raised Eutychus from the _____. (Acts 20:9-10, 1 Kings 17:21-22, John 11:43-44, Acts 9:37-41)
- God still _____ these acts today.

Applications for my life: (Col 1:28-29)**Introduction** (Acts 20:1-16, Pr 16:1, 9, Acts 16:6-10)**1. Paul Travels to Macedonia and Achaia** (Acts 18:18-23, 19:8-10, 1 Cor 16:19)

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