

spread the
WORD
The Book of Acts

A Fond Farewell

Acts 20:17-38

Dr. Bradley S. Belcher

Senior Pastor

A Fond Farewell

A Fond Farewell

Acts 20:17-38 Now from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called the elders of the church to come to him. 18 And when they came to him, he said to them: “You yourselves know how I lived among you the whole time from the first day that I set foot in Asia, 19 serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials that happened to me through the plots of the Jews; 20 how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you in public and from house to house, -

A Fond Farewell

21 testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. 22 And now, behold, I am going to Jerusalem, constrained by the Spirit, not knowing what will happen to me there, 23 except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me. 24 But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God. -

A Fond Farewell

25 And now, behold, I know that none of you among whom I have gone about proclaiming the kingdom will see my face again. 26 Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all, 27 for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God. 28 Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. 29 I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; -

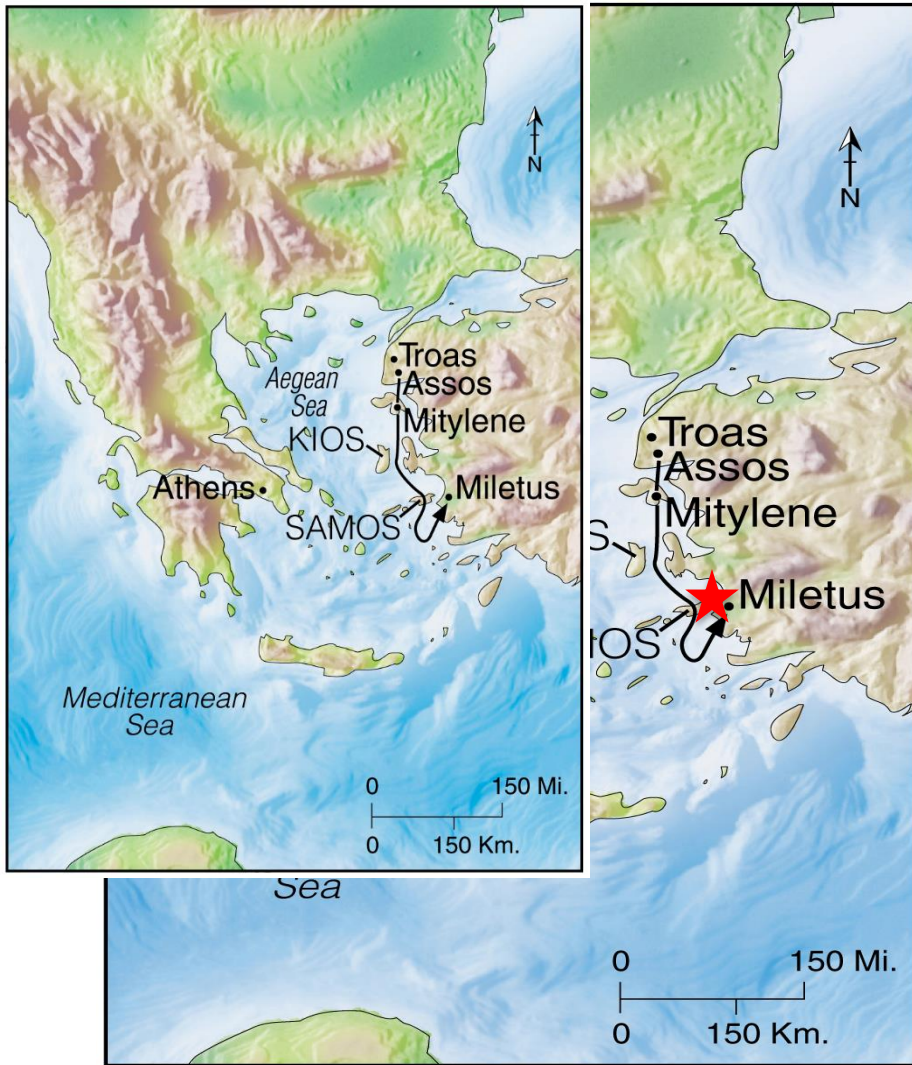
A Fond Farewell

30 and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. 31 Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears. 32 And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified. 33 I coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. 34 You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my necessities and to those who were with me. -

A Fond Farewell

35 In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’” 36 And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. 37 And there was much weeping on the part of all; they embraced Paul and kissed him, 38 being sorrowful most of all because of the word he had spoken, that they would not see his face again. And they accompanied him to the ship.
(ESV)

A Fond Farewell



Acts 20:13-16 tells us that from Troas, Paul traveled overland to Assos, then boarded a ship to Mitylene and Samos on its way to Miletus. There he summoned the elders of the Ephesian church to say farewell to them, because he knew he would probably not see them again.

A Fond Farewell

17 Now from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called the elders of the church to come to him.

A Fond Farewell

A Fond Farewell

I. Don't shrink back from the gospel.

A. Live your life with people.

18 And when they came to him, he said to them: "You yourselves know how I lived among you the whole time from the first day that I set foot in Asia,

A Fond Farewell

I. Don't shrink back from the gospel.

B. Faithfully serve with humility, compassion, and difficulty.

19 serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials that happened to me through the plots of the Jews;

A Fond Farewell

- I. Don't shrink back from the gospel.
- B. Faithfully serve with humility, compassion, and difficulty.
 - *Ephesians 4: 1-3 I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, 3 eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*
 - *James 4:10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.*

A Fond Farewell

- I. Don't shrink back from the gospel.
- B. Faithfully serve with humility, compassion, and difficulty.
 - *2 Corinthians 2:4 For I wrote to you out of much affliction and anguish of heart and with many tears, not to cause you pain but to let you know the abundant love that I have for you.*

A Fond Farewell

- I. Don't shrink back from the gospel.
- B. Faithfully serve with humility, compassion, and difficulty.
 - *James 1:2-4 Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, 3 for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. 4 And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.*

A Fond Farewell

I. Don't shrink back from the gospel.

C. Graciously proclaim and teach what is good and right.

20 how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you in public and from house to house,

- *Ephesians 4:29 Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.*

A Fond Farewell

I. Don't shrink back from the gospel.

D. Encourage people to repent and believe.

21 testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

- *Mark 1:14-15 ...Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, 15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."*

A Fond Farewell

I. Don't shrink back from the gospel.

D. Encourage people to repent and believe.

- *Romans 10:9-10 because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.*

A Fond Farewell

II. Don't shrink back from your calling.

A. Even when the future is uncertain.

22 And now, behold, I am going to Jerusalem, constrained by the Spirit, not knowing what will happen to me there, 23 except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me.

A Fond Farewell

II. Don't shrink back from your calling.

B. Be willing to lay down your life for others.

24 But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself,

- Philippians 2:3-4 Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. 4 Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.*

A Fond Farewell

II. Don't shrink back from your calling.

B. Be willing to lay down your life for others.

- *John 15:13 Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.*

A Fond Farewell

II. Don't shrink back from your calling.

C. Fulfill your ministry.

if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

- *2 Timothy 4:2-6 preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. -*

A Fond Farewell

II. Don't shrink back from your calling.

C. Fulfill your ministry.

- *3 For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, 4 and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. 5 As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.*

A Fond Farewell

III. Don't shrink back from God's Word.

A. Faithfully minister with no regrets.

25 And now, behold, I know that none of you among whom I have gone about proclaiming the kingdom will see my face again. 26 Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all,

A Fond Farewell

III. Don't shrink back from God's Word.

A. Faithfully minister with no regrets.

- *1 Timothy 6:12 Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.*

A Fond Farewell

III. Don't shrink back from God's Word.

A. Faithfully minister with no regrets.

- *2 Timothy 4:7-8 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 8 Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.*

A Fond Farewell

III. Don't shrink back from God's Word.

B. Thoroughly proclaim everything God has to say.

27 for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God.

- *Galatians 1:10 For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.*

A Fond Farewell

III. Don't shrink back from God's Word.

B. Thoroughly proclaim everything God has to say.

- *1 Thessalonians 2:4 but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not to please man, but to please God who tests our hearts.*

A Fond Farewell

III. Don't shrink back from God's Word.

C. Live a life that is above reproach.

28 Pay careful attention to yourselves...

A Fond Farewell

III. Don't shrink back from God's Word.

D. Cherish the body of Christ.

and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.

A Fond Farewell

III. Don't shrink back from God's Word.

D. Cherish the body of Christ.

- *Galatians 6:1-2 Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. 2 Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.*

A Fond Farewell

III. Don't shrink back from God's Word.

E. Vigilantly protect the flock from false teachers.

29 I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; 30 and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them.

A Fond Farewell

III. Don't shrink back from God's Word.

E. Vigilantly protect the flock from false teachers.

- *Matthew 7:15-16* “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. 16 You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles?”
- *Matthew 10:16* “Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.

A Fond Farewell

III. Don't shrink back from God's Word.

F. Passionately point everyone to Christ.

31 Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears.

A Fond Farewell

III. Don't shrink back from God's Word.

F. Passionately point everyone to Christ.

- *Colossians 1:27-29 To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. 28 Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. 29 For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.*

A Fond Farewell

IV. Don't shrink back from working hard.

A. Trust in God to make the difference.

32 And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

A Fond Farewell

IV. Don't shrink back from working hard.

B. Don't seek your own personal gain.

33 I coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. 34 You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my necessities and to those who were with me.

A Fond Farewell

IV. Don't shrink back from working hard.

C. Sacrificially help anyone and everyone.

35 In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

A Fond Farewell

A Fond Farewell

36 And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. 37 And there was much weeping on the part of all; they embraced Paul and kissed him, 38 being sorrowful most of all because of the word he had spoken, that they would not see his face again. And they accompanied him to the ship.

A Fond Farewell

A Fond Farewell

Don't shrink back from the Gospel.

Don't shrink back from your calling.

Don't shrink back from God's Word.

Don't shrink back from working hard.

A Fond Farewell

spread the
WORD
The Book of Acts

A Fond Farewell

spread the
WORD
The Book of Acts