

# GROWTH + GROUPS

NAVIGATE LIFE TOGETHER

## Maranatha Chapel Sermon Based Study Guide SB 08.01.2021

### PASTOR PAUL – Acts 20:13-21

#### Receiving the Message and Relating to the Study

What insights, principles, or observations stood out to you from this week's message? Discuss with your group.

Paul honored the Biblical calendar (Acts 20:17). There are seven holidays on the Biblical calendar that God instituted. These dates were intended to be times for the Israelites to meet with God. The LORD spoke to Moses saying, "These are my appointed feasts, the appointed feasts of the LORD, which you are to proclaim sacred assemblies" (LEV 23:1-2). Leviticus 23 is sometimes referred to as "God's calendar of redeeming grace" or the "calendar of divine redemption". These 44 verses basically tell God's redemptive plan for the world He created. The holidays were a "shadow of things to come" (COL 2:16-17). The first three spring holidays are Passover, Unleavened Bread, and First Fruits, and illustrate the redemption accomplished by Jesus's first coming. The fourth, Pentecost, speaks of the Holy Spirit descending on the newfound church. In the fall, at the seventh month (SEPT) of the biblical year, we observe Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and Booths. These focus our attention on the period of time yet to come, the finishing of God's redemptive program. Let's get into our study...

1. What is your favorite Holiday? Why?
2. The next Biblical Holiday is September 6-7, the Feast of Trumpets. This holiday is often synonymous with the rapture of the church (1 COR. 15:52, 1 THES. 4:16,17). Rapture literally means to be "caught up". Are you ready for the rapture? Why or why not?
3. What stood out to you during this week's study?

#### Digging Deeper in God's Word: Life Lessons

##### HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ACTS 20:13-16

Paul must have sensed by the Holy Spirit that difficult days lay ahead of him, and he was able to adapt to his situation. He chose to walk from Troas to Assos. This plan enabled him to stay longer with the saints in Troas, while he sent Luke and the party ahead (Acts 20:13). Since it would take the ship at least a day to sail from Troas to Assos, Paul could probably walk it in ten hours or less. There were fifty days between Passover and Pentecost, and Paul's trip from Philippi to Troas had already consumed 12 of the them (Acts 20:6). Additionally, it took another four days to get to Miletus. Paul then decided not to go to Ephesus because he did not want to lose any more valuable time. Instead, he invited the leaders of the Ephesian church to travel about thirty miles and meet him in Miletus. Paul was not one to waste time or to lose opportunities.

1. Have you ever been on a trip where you had to adapt to plan B? Was it a positive or negative experience? Explain.
2. Our Plan B is God's Plan A. Why?
3. Read Romans 8:28. With the COVID Epidemic and all bad things happening in the world, how might this verse encourage you?
4. Paul was doing all he could to make it to Jerusalem by Pentecost. What is the significance of Pentecost to the church today? (Acts 1:8. 2:1-4)
5. Paul was not one to waste time or to lose opportunities. How might we apply this concept in our lives?

##### HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ACTS 20:17-21

## **Visitation/Restoration in 2021**

The Apostle Paul was a great leader by any standards, but especially by God's standards. By looking at a snapshot of Paul's life in Acts Chapter 20, we can discern nine traits that make Christian leaders great. Leaders: Have a heart for ministry (20:1-2), Have a spirit of tenacity (3-6), Are filled with energy (7-13), Live lives of Integrity (16), Are marked by humility (18-20), Speak honestly (26-31), Are under authority (31,32), Are given to generosity (33-35), and are followed passionately (36-38). One of Paul's greatest traits was his humility (20:18-20). So often people who have been used of God get an exalted attitude where they begin to have a sense of self-importance. Sometimes this happens because others have a tendency to exalt that person, and pretty soon they begin to expect special treatment. But not Paul. He is a tremendous example of serving the Lord with all humility.

6. Name some great leaders? Why do you think they were considered great?
7. According to Bill Lawrence, president of Leader Formation International, at Bible.org, "Leadership is the act of influencing/serving others out of Christ's interests in their lives so they accomplish God's purposes for and through them". Why is it important Christians exhibit leadership traits?
8. Describe how humility is a leadership strength. (Exodus 18:21, Matt. 20:26-28, James 4:10)
9. Our motive for ministry should simply be to serve the Lord (18-19). What are some examples of "simply serving the Lord"?
10. What is self-exaltation? Exodus 20:3-7; Psalm 83:18; 86:10; Isaiah 43:9-13; I Corinthians 10:12.
11. What penalties do we pay for the sin of self-exaltation? Obadiah 3-4; Proverbs 17:19; 25:6-7, 27; Ezekiel 31:10-14.
12. What is the opposite of self-exaltation? Whom does God commend? Proverbs 15:33; 16:18-19; Luke 14:7-11; II Corinthians 10:3-6; Philippians 2:5-11.

### **Applying God's Word**

**What did you learn from this study and how does this personally speak to you? Discuss with your group.**

Paul held back nothing from the Ephesians that would be for their spiritual welfare. He took every opportunity to encourage growth among the believers. Without prejudice, he preached the necessity of repentance toward God and faith to our Lord Jesus Christ. These are the two fundamental elements of the gospel justifying us before our Holy God. In Romans 5, Paul asks this question, "What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may increase?" (Romans 6:1). And again (with greater force this time), "What then? Shall we sin even once?" (Romans 6:15 - Literal). The answer in both cases is a resounding 'No'. We should seek not to sin even once. Paul says, "Stop sinning" (1 Corinthians 15:34).

1. God cleanses us from the guilt of sin. But we are commanded to "cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Corinthians 7:1). We are not "sinless", but we should "sin" "less". Are there areas in your life where you need to "Stop sinning"?
2. At the Feast of Pentecost, the gift of the Holy Spirit was received by the church. The Holy Spirit subsequently lives within those who have repented and have faith in Jesus (John 14:15-17). How might you listen to the Holy Spirit who lives with you to stop sinning?

### **PRAYER**

Lord, we worship Your holy name. Thank You that all things that happens to us is working for our good. In this chaotic world, help us to be leaders, who are able to influence and serve others according to Your purpose. Humble us so we might strong to bring You glory. And Lord, thank You for the Holy Spirit, who guides us to the truth of who we are in Jesus. Amen.

*"However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come" (John 16:13)*