

FOOD TIME: (30-45 minutes) – Remember to give some direction for this time.

MEETING TIME: (45 minutes)

Paul is still on his missionary journeys and while he is still spreading the name of Jesus, he is also building up those churches that he has helped establish. This week, we are going to look at Paul speaking with church leaders in Ephesus and how he exhorts them to continue the work that has been set upon their hearts. As you discuss this week, think about how we can try to build others up and help them as they continue their walk with the Lord. Paul is trying to continually build up believers so that they walk confidently in the name of Jesus.

READ Acts 20:28-35

28 Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. **29** For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. **30** Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. **31** Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears. **32** So then now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. **33** I have coveted no one's silver or apparel. **34** Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me. **35** I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

FACILITATE Discussion Questions

1. How has someone exhorted you lately? Is there someone who is always trying to encourage you in your daily life?
2. Paul identifies wolves and those trying to draw others away from God. What can we as believers do to encourage others who are struggling with this?
3. Why does always going back to the scripture provide a confidence in what we do on a daily basis?
4. How does the example of Paul's laboring provide us with a way that we can be to others as well?
5. What can you do to live out the closing words of Jesus in this passage?

PRAY- Take the last 10 minutes to pray about the needs of the group.

APPLICATION- Sometimes, we just need to have that moment in the day where someone encourages us. Paul was constantly trying to do that in his missionary visits with the churches. As you go out this week, the application is to think about how you can be a sense of encouragement and exhortation to others around you. It may be through words of encouragement, through some sort of act of service, or it could simply be through prayer. Whatever it is, try to be intentional about encouraging one another. We can all use that encouragement, and to do it in this manner brings and honor and glory to God that lets others see what the unconditional love of Christ looks like.