**15 – Determination of Paul**

*Acts 20:17-24; 1 Corinthians 2:2*

*The overall determination of Paul was to live his life in such a way that brought glory to God. This included the carrying out of his ministry, and finishing the race which required glorifying God in his life and ministry.*

**Points in the text:**

* Sailed past Ephesus **(v. 16)** – He was pressed for time. If he went into Ephesus he likely wouldn’t have made it to Jerusalem on time because of brethren who wished to see him, and his opposition that would likely give him trouble.
  + **The ship stayed in port at Miletus. Miletus was about 30 miles from Ephesus by road which allowed enough time for him to send for the Ephesian elders and speak with them.**
* ***“You know”*** – The apostles conduct was evident. There wasn’t a question about his character from those he spent time with.
  + His manner of living:
    - Serving God with humility – it was not his aim to become famous. (**cf. 2 Corinthians 11:16-21** – Paul boasted reluctantly. He was making a point to those who were boasting in pride. He showed what they were boasting in was foolish.)
      * With tears – Paul had great concern for the brethren and God’s will. He was also persecuted (Note: his tears were not on behalf of him being mistreated – **v. 24** – but because this impeded the gospel).
      * Trials – He was mistreated by Jews while in Ephesus.
    - Kept back nothing – If it was beneficial to them, i.e. if it was the gospel truth, he taught it to them **(v. 27).**
    - Testifying to both Jews and Greeks – He was impartial with the gospel. Preaching salvation to all men.
* Now **(v. 22-23)**:
  + Bound in the spirit – could reference personal disposition, or Holy Spirit.
    - If disposition he is drawn to preach the word in Jerusalem. He felt it his duty.
    - If HS he could have received explicit instruction to go to Jerusalem.
  + Not knowing things that will happen to him.
    - He did not know specifics.
    - He knew the general revelation to him from the HS about the persecution he would have to endure everywhere.
      * He would later receive some specifics through prophecy **(21:7-11)**.

The remaining verse in the given text show Paul’s determination **(v. 24)**:

* The awaiting persecutions do not alter Paul’s resolve to fulfill his duties.
  + He did not allow threat to his life to overcome his love for others and God **(cf. Luke 9:23-26).**
  + He was completely selfless. He cared for others greatly **(cf. Philippians 1:21-26; Romans 9:3)**.
* His determination was twofold, yet interrelated:
  + Finish his race.
  + Finish his ministry which he received from the Lord.

**Finish his race.**

* He had to give up many things (**cf. Philippians 3:3-8**).
* The ministry was given him and thus his responsibility, but he still had to obey it himself and live his own life, running his own race **(cf. 1 Corinthians 9:16, 27)**.

**Finish his ministry.**

* This was his purpose given by God of which he took very seriously. He accomplished much. (**cf. 1 Corinthians 15:9-11**).
* This led him down rough roads (**cf. 2 Corinthians 11:23-28**).
* He was determined to continue this no matter what would continue, and increase with regard to hardships (**Acts 21:12-13**).

*His determination to do both were subsets of bringing glory to God. This is emphasized in* ***1 Corinthians 1, 2, 3.***

* **2:2** – His determination to preach the pure gospel was necessary to finish his race, and continue until finishing his ministry.
* **This took great humility, and resolve to please only God *(cf. Acts 20:19 – “serving the Lord with all humility.”)***.
  + **1:14-17** – He did not appreciate the special attention he was getting. That was not his purpose.
  + **1:18-19** – The gospel was not a philosophy credited to man, but wisdom given from God.
  + **1:26-31** – This is why glory should only be in the Lord and given to the Lord.
  + This is why he determined to only know the message of the cross when he went to them.
    - He was seeking no glory from man, but wanted glory to go to God.
    - He was looking to finish his race and winning the crown, not receiving temporary fame.
  + **2:5** – He wanted their faith to be in God. There conviction shouldn’t be with Paul’s ability, but in the content of his message, which is from God (following context about the wisdom he preached).
  + **3:5-7** – He wanted to emphasize the power as being from God.
  + **4:1-5** – He was merely a servant of Christ, fulfilling his duty of ministering the gospel, running his race as an individual responsible to fulfill his designed purpose – ***“fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man’s all” (Ecclesiastes 12:13)***.