The Book of Acts Lesson 36

“The Superintendent Wears No Cape”

Acts 19:21 - 20:38

# The Christian life must be directed by the Holy Spirit.

1. In this passage Paul’s desire and commitment to follow God is very prevalent.
2. v.21 He “purposed in the spirit”, submitting to the will of God for his life.
3. This is in contrast to purposing “according to the flesh”, 2Cor. 1:17 *“…or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh…”*
4. What determines your decisions?
   1. The flesh
   2. The spirit
   3. There are only two options.
5. There are only two paradigms that influence your decisions.
6. The flesh
7. The spirit
8. Paul followed God all over the world to accomplish His purposes.
9. Living a spirit filled life is not something that happens because of one decision, rather moment by moment choosing to deny the flesh.
10. How did you get to where you are today?
11. Was it your job?
12. Was it your spouse?
13. What role do you allow God to play in the decisions you make.
14. “The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way.” Psalm 37:23

# This decision has never been and will never be popular or easy.

* + 1. Paul saw the whole city of Ephesus morph into a confused angry mob because of his preaching.

1. Greed drives men to reject God.
2. Sometimes people, not understanding what they reject, do so because they want to fit in with those around them. Acts 19:32
3. “The only thing heathenism can do against Paul is yell itself hoarse.” –Haenchen
   * 1. There is also pain when God moves us, away from loved ones comfort.
        1. Paul left many times left his friends in tears.
   1. Acts 20:37
   2. 2 Corinthians 2:4 “*… I wrote unto you with many tears:…”*
   3. 2 Timothy 1:4 “*Greatly desiring to see thee ,being mindful of thy tears,…”*
4. Following Christ sometimes requires us to leave beloved things:
   1. Family
   2. Friends
   3. Modern conveniences.
   4. A familiar culture and climate
   5. Security
5. Following His leadership is simple, but it requires faith.
   * 1. We don’t see Paul agonizing over every decision he had to make.
6. There were times when Paul saw a need and headed that way. “I must see Rome.” -Acts19:21
7. There were times when he received specific directions from the Holy Spirit, who is the Superintendent of God’s work on earth. Acts 20:22
   * 1. We must learn to wait on God to give us peace about the decisions we will make.
8. This does not mean that you do nothing until God gives you a flashing neon sign.
9. It means that you should do what you know until you know what to do.
10. I Kings 19:12 “*And after the earthquake a fire: but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.”*

# You must be committed to following God in spite of what consequences it might bring. Acts 20:22

1. Paul’s made many friends and touched many lives eternally as a result of that commitment.
2. We ought to endure hardness for Him even as His mercy endures for us.
3. This will be worth it when we see people make Christ the Lord of their lives.
   * + 1. *“And of some have compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire;..”* Jude 1:22-23
4. This will be worth it when we see our Lord and He is pleased. Acts 20:24
5. Don’t take for granted that Christ will not come back today, or that you will live to see tomorrow.
6. This is worth it because of the peace and satisfaction it brings to our lives.
7. Disobedience will give you what you want at the moment, at the expense of what God wants to give you most.
8. Obedience brings countless blessings with it.

Conclusion: It is amazing to look back on the life of Paul. Millions today strive to pattern their lives after him. They try to do the work of God the way he did, with the same zeal and conviction that he possessed. The reality is that there are no great men of God, merely frail and sinful men who submit to the Almighty and allow Him to do great things through them. D.L. Moody said, “The world has yet to see what God can do with a man fully consecrated to him.” We will be effective and enjoy the life that God has designed for each of us to the degree that we stay surrendered to the Spirit’s leadership in our lives. Many times we think that nobody sees the situation like we see it, but God is ever aware of where you came from and where you are going. He also knows every thought behind your words and actions. When He leads you to love Him and others in unexpected or uncomfortable ways simply obey. In this simple word “obedience” you will find more joy and blessings than you can imagine.