



**Be Shepherds of the Church of God
Paul's Farewell to the Ephesian Elders
(Acts 20: 13-38)**

Sermon Notes: Oct. 22/17

Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which He bought with His own blood. - Acts 20:28

A pastor who feels competent in himself to produce eternal fruit knows neither God nor himself. A pastor who does not know the rhythm of desperation and deliverance must have his sights only on what man can achieve... the proper goals of the life of a pastor are unquestionably beyond our reach. - John Piper, Brothers, We are not Professionals

To insure the greatest efficiency in the dart, the harpooners of this world must start to their feet from out of idleness, and not from out of toil. - Herman Melville, Moby Dick

Introduction: In Acts 20 we have an account of the last visit Paul had with the elders of the church at Ephesus. His words have become a template for pastoral ministry, and a beacon for those of us entrusted with the care of souls and the shepherding of God's Church. Who is equal to such a task?

1. Pastor Defined: Words, Metaphors and their Meaning

2. Pastor Paul: How he lived among the Ephesians (20:17 - 27)

3. Pastoral Priorities: Keeping watch over yourselves, and all the flock (20:18 - 38)

Self watch - *What we do when no one is watching*

Shepherding - *Keeping watch over the flock by night*

4. Pastoral Purpose: The Equipping of a Congregation for Service (Eph. 4:11 - 13)

Questions for Discussion and Reflection:

What words of Paul in Acts 20 stand out for you? How has your experience of pastors in churches been? What are some of the dangers that come with pastoral leadership?

How are congregations and pastors meant to function together? What models of pastor-people relationship are destructive? What models are constructive?



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Study and Discussion Questions

Acts 20:13-38

Explore It

1. What did Paul say in review of his ministry in Ephesus? ([20:18-21](#))
2. How did Paul describe his life and mission? ([20:24](#))
3. What made Paul "innocent of the blood of all men"? ([20:26-27](#))
4. What were the future responsibilities of the Ephesian elders? ([20:28-35](#))

Get It

5. What kind of send-off does your church give someone on his or her way to the mission field?
6. When your church loses a member, how do people tend to grieve over the loss?
7. How does Paul's life and work challenge you?
8. How does the Holy Spirit lead and guide us?
9. Why do mature Christians need to "be on guard" and "watch over" younger believers in their congregation?

Apply It

10. How can you draw guidance and comfort from the Holy Spirit today?
11. Who is one other believer for whom you can be a "shepherd" or guide this week? How?



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