

Audio Transcript of Sermon
January 30, 2021
Acts-Paul Reminds the Elders of Ephesus

Hello. Thank you for joining us today. My name is Tom Laign with Sabbath Bible Study. Last week we saw that Paul continued his journeys coming to Corinth. After departing from there, Apollos traveled from Alexandria where he had only heard of the baptism of John. It would take Aquila and Priscilla to explain the baptism of repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. While traveling through the coasts near Ephesus, Paul came across a group of about twelve who believed, yet had not received the Holy Spirit because they had not even heard of the Holy Spirit, proving it is hard to believe something that of which you have no knowledge. Probing for understanding, Paul soon found out that all they knew was the baptism of John, not the baptism of repentance. Paul had to explain they needed to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. It was after they were baptized in the name of Jesus that they received the Holy Spirit. Acts chapter nineteen verse one.

Acts 19:1-41

- 1. And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples,**
- 2. He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.**
- 3. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism.**
- 4. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.**
- 5. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.**
- 6. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.**
- 7. And all the men were about twelve.**

While at Ephesus, as was his custom, Paul went to the synagogue and taught boldly for three months. At this synagogue, the audience was not receptive and Paul withdrew from them when they began to speak evil of the faith. Paul then

taught at the school of Tyrannus for two years. Tyrannus means sovereign, and he was a teacher of philosophy and rhetoric. It's thought that Tyrannus was Greek and that the school functioned as a private synagogue. The school itself has been lost to history, with the location never being uncovered. Paul's efforts at the school of Tyrannus helped to spread the faith throughout Asia minor, what today would be Turkey, and reached both Jews and Greeks. Verse eight.

8. And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God.

9. But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus.

10. And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

Through miracles, God showed his commitment to Paul. It was while at Ephesus that Paul was able to anoint handkerchiefs and aprons to be sent to people who were sick, and even this caused their illnesses to be healed. Verse eleven.

11. And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul:

12. So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.

It was at this time that traveling Jews who practiced exorcism approached people who were possessed. Seven of these were the sons of Sceva, who led this exorcism movement. In their attempt to exorcise the demon in the name of Jesus, the demon responded that it knew Jesus and Paul but did not recognize them. The demon attacked so severely that they fled the house having had their clothes ripped off them while being wounded. Verse thirteen.

13. Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth.

14. And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so.

15. And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?

16. And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

The encounter with the demons gives us insight into the demonic world which influences the evil we see in the world today. First we can understand there is a recognition for the role of Jesus and people who have the Holy Spirit, like Paul, who these traveling Jews referenced. It's unlikely that these Jews had the Holy Spirit. Since they were traveling from city to city, exorcism was how they made their money. They probably had heard of Jesus through the preaching of Paul and used this awareness to market themselves to people needing help.

This encounter also highlights the tendency of people to seek help from other people in spiritual matters rather than God. People may be the instruments of God's mercy and healing, but it is through God that mercy and healing are delivered for purposes that fit the will of God. This encounter should also provide a cautionary tale for us reminding us that people will make claims regarding God for personal financial gain.

Word of what happened to the seven sons of Sceva became common knowledge and because the demon showed respect towards Jesus and Paul while showing no respect to the sons of Sceva, the name of Jesus was magnified and this situation brought many people to the faith, including people who had previously practiced mysticism. These people came together and burned their books, so many books that collectively these were valued at fifty thousand pieces of silver. The word of God grew and prevailed in Ephesus, showing that God can even use a religious scam to bring people to the faith. Verse seventeen.

17. And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.

18. And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds.

19. Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.

20. So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

After the excitement died down a bit, Paul felt a spiritual calling to return to Jerusalem after first stopping in what today would be Greece and knew once he was finished in Jerusalem, that he needed to travel to Rome. He sent for Timothy and Erastus while waiting for them in the area. We know from Romans sixteen verse twenty-three Erastus was a high-ranking city official, most likely a treasurer, what today might be called a chief financial officer. From his second letter to Timothy, we know from chapter four verse twenty that Erastus lived in Corinth. Verse twenty-one.

21. After these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome.

22. So he sent into Macedonia two of them that ministered unto him, Timotheus and Erastus; but he himself stayed in Asia for a season.

In Ephesus there was a temple to Artemis, who was known to the Romans as Diana, which is why Acts records the name as Diana. Artemis was the Greek goddess of hunting, wild nature, and chastity. She was the daughter of Zeus and sister of Apollo and considered the patron goddess of girls and young women providing protection during childbirth. The temple to Artemis at Ephesus was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Many people would be coming to Ephesus to pay homage to Artemis and with the influx of visitors would be business people who would seek to profit. Demetrius, a silversmith, assembled a group of silversmiths who made shrines to the goddess. They discussed how they made a living through the goddess and how Paul with the teaching of Jesus was threatening their ability to continue to earn money. Paul's teaching had impacted not only the local population in Ephesus but throughout what today would be Turkey. They concluded that Paul was a threat to their livelihood and to the temple of Artemis that was in Ephesus. They realized without taking action, the natural course of events could wipe them out financially and destroy a tourist attraction, the temple, and remove the awe from their goddess Artemis, known to the Romans as Diana.

The prospect of losing their source of income, a valuable tourist attraction, and a goddess who previously had been worshipped in the region was too much for these silversmiths. They became angry and started a riot where two of Paul's traveling companions, Gaius and Aristarchus were detained in a theater by the

mob. We know from first Corinthians one verse fourteen that in Corinth, a Greek city, Gaius was one of two people who were baptized by Paul, and in the next chapter of Acts we will see a person named Gaius from Derbe, a city in what today is Turkey. We can't tell for sure if these are the same or different people. There are some who believe that Aristarchus was the son of a governor. Verse twenty-three.

23. And the same time there arose no small stir about that way.

24. For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought no small gain unto the craftsmen;

25. Whom he called together with the workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth.

26. Moreover ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands:

27. So that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth.

28. And when they heard these sayings, they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians.

29. And the whole city was filled with confusion: and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theatre.

Paul was ready to enter the theater to intervene on behalf of his companions and was persuaded by disciples not to. They probably understood how angry the mob was and wanted no harm to come to Paul. The mob itself was angry and not totally sure of why they were protesting. Alexander was put before the mob by the Jews who was prepared to explain to the people and was shouted down by the mob who were so loud all that could be heard were their cries for Diana. Verse thirty.

30. And when Paul would have entered in unto the people, the disciples suffered him not.

31. And certain of the chief of Asia, which were his friends, sent unto him, desiring him that he would not adventure himself into the theatre.

32. Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was confused; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together.

33. And they drew Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And Alexander beckoned with the hand, and would have made his defence unto the people.

34. But when they knew that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians.

It would take the town clerk to calm the mob down explaining that everyone knew that Ephesus was the city that worshipped Diana, known locally as Artemis. They were told not to do anything rashly to these men who had committed no crime and who had not blasphemed the goddess. It was explained to the mob who was not fully understanding why they were there angry, that Demetrius and other artisans who made shrines to Diana had concerns over potential loss of income. They were told that the proper way to handle the concern was not through an act of mob violence but civilly in court. If Demetrius had a financial claim, this was best handled in civil court. The town clerk explained the mob action bordered on an illegal action for which the mob could face criminal action, because there was no basis for the uproar, and the mob was dismissed. Verse thirty-five.

35. And when the townclerk had appeased the people, he said, Ye men of Ephesus, what man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana, and of the image which fell down from Jupiter?

36. Seeing then that these things cannot be spoken against, ye ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rashly.

37. For ye have brought hither these men, which are neither robbers of churches, nor yet blasphemers of your goddess.

38. Wherefore if Demetrius, and the craftsmen which are with him, have a matter against any man, the law is open, and there are deputies: let them implead one another.

39. But if ye enquire any thing concerning other matters, it shall be determined in a lawful assembly.

40. For we are in danger to be called in question for this day's uproar, there being no cause whereby we may give an account of this concourse.

41. And when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly.

After the uproar subsided, Paul met with the disciples in Ephesus and left for what today would be Greece. He first traveled through Macedonia, today part of which is in Greece. While in Greece he preached for three months. While preparing to sail to Syria, he found out Jews were waiting at the port for him. Instead of facing danger, Paul returned through Macedonia. From this action that Paul took we can understand that being a person of faith does not require us to move forward with our plans when these present a danger to us and there is no change in our status with God. Instead of concluding that as a person of faith he needed to go through the port and face the Jews, Paul instead decided to go another way. He went the other way because going the other way didn't change anything between him and God. Acts twenty verse one.

Acts 20:1-12

- 1. And after the uproar was ceased, Paul called unto him the disciples, and embraced them, and departed for to go into Macedonia.**
- 2. And when he had gone over those parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece,**
- 3. And there abode three months. And when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria, he purposed to return through Macedonia.**

Traveling with Paul out of Greece were Sopater of Berea, Aristarchus, Secundus, Gaius, and Timothy. Waiting for the group at Troas was Tychicus and Trophimus. Before arriving in Troas, Paul and his group sailed from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread. Philippi was a Greek city and because there is no evidence of a synagogue in the city, the reference to the days of unleavened bread would show the early church observed the days of unleavened bread. We believe the early church observed the Holy Days as listed in the Bible and that this requirement continues to this day. Verse four.

- 4. And there accompanied him into Asia Sopater of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus.**
- 5. These going before tarried for us at Troas.**
- 6. And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days.**

It was on the first day of the week that the disciples came together to break bread. Some read verse seven to show that the early church observed Sunday. The Greek shows that on the first of the week the disciples came together to break bread. Back then, the first of the week would not have been what we refer to today as Sunday, but Saturday night, which is why some churches in addition to having Sunday services also have Saturday night services. Verse seven also shows that Paul preached to the disciples. The Greek word translated as preached is *dialegomaia* and means a thorough discussion. Paul spoke until midnight and this was possible because there were many lights in the upper room where they met. During Paul's speech, a young man, Eutychus fell asleep near a window and fell out of the window. From the third floor, it looked like Eutychus was dead, and Paul came to him and assured everyone that Eutychus was very much alive which comforted everyone. Paul stayed with them a bit longer eating food and left at sunrise. Verse seven.

7. And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.

8. And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together.

9. And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep: and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead.

10. And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing him said, Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him.

11. When he therefore was come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed.

12. And they brought the young man alive, and were not a little comforted.

It's obvious the early church observed the Sabbath and Holy Days and today modern Christianity for the most part has abandoned these favoring Sunday and holidays. One of the earliest records of Christians observing Sunday is recorded in the Epistle of Barnabas, and is not included in the Bible because it is seen as a disputed book. This book is generally thought to have been written in and around Alexandria, a philosophical and education center of Egypt. The Epistle of Barnabas explains in the introduction its purpose is to help disciples have perfect knowledge. Later it explains its purpose is to provide another knowledge about

the will of God. The book itself was probably not written by the Barnabas of the New Testament and was written by a resident of Alexandria. In the fifteenth chapter of the epistle after first extolling the virtue of the Sabbath, the writer adds the Sabbath that is most important to God is the Sabbath of Rest that will lead to a new world on the eighth day, after referencing earlier that one day is like a thousand years. The author writes that Jesus was resurrected on a Sunday. It was for these two reasons that they observed Sunday. The Epistle of Barnabas fits nicely into the faith of Sunday-keeping Christians, and yet the conclusions reached by Barnabas are not supported by the Bible. The book itself was likely written between AD 70 and AD 132 because of historical events linked to the temple in Jerusalem, well after the death of Paul.

The writer of the Epistle of Barnabas borrowed from and extended what is written in Hebrews chapter four. In Hebrews we are shown that our work today is to labor so that we might enter that future rest, the Kingdom of God and eternal life, and it is after we are become spirit with eternal life as children of God that we no longer have to work to be saved. Hebrews four verse one.

Hebrews 4:-1-11

- 1. Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.**
- 2. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.**
- 3. For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.**
- 4. For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works.**
- 5. And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest.**
- 6. Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief:**
- 7. Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.**
- 8. For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.**
- 9. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.**

10. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.

11. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

While Alexandria was the philosophical and educational center of Egypt, it was part of the Roman Empire and all roads in the empire led to Rome, and Rome itself was big on Sunday. In AD 150, Justin Martyr wrote how the church then was assembling on Sunday and disavowed anything to do with Jews. In a world that is waking up to the evils of discrimination, those who look to Justin Martyr as an example of Sunday keeping should keep in mind that most of what is observed as Christianity today is rooted in antisemitism. By this time, there was such a hatred of Judaism that Judaism and the Books of the Old Testament, the only scriptures known by the first-century church were seen in very low esteem, with Jewish people seen as accursed. Those who worship on Sunday and keep Christmas and Easter unknowingly are continuing a millennia long tradition of discrimination and need to examine if their religious faith is really rooted in faith or in discrimination. To complete his argument, Justin Martyr linked Sunday observance to creation and the resurrection of Jesus. In his first apology, chapter 67, he wrote the following;

But Sunday is the day on which we all hold our common assembly, because it is the first day on which God, having wrought a change in the darkness and matter, made the world; and Jesus Christ our Savior on the same day rose from the dead.

Justin Martyr links the observance of Sunday to the beginning of creation, whereas the Sabbath was a weekly reminder of God's rest from creation and foreshadowed the rest to come in the Kingdom of God. We'll see the reason given for the resurrection of Jesus was linked to Roman gods. Let's read what Justin Martyr wrote next.

For He was crucified on the day before that of Saturn and on the day after that of Saturn, which is the day of the Sun, having appeared to His apostles and disciples, He taught them these things, which we have submitted to you also for your consideration.

Justin Martyr, like many church leaders at the time were quick to isolate the teachings of the Old Testament while linking church practices to Roman gods. The sun, the god for which Sunday is named, was a popular form of worship competing with Christianity. In the Roman empire many of the emperors were sun worshippers. Nero would have his statue crafted to feature sun-god characteristics. About a century after Justin Martyr, Sol Invictus, the unconquerable sun, became a state religion under Aurelian. And when did the sun always prove it was unconquerable? After it began to ascend from its lowest path on the horizon, the winter solstice. For all who observe Christmas don't confuse the story of the birth of Jesus in the Bible with the observance of Christmas. The story of the birth of Jesus in the Bible provides details of the birth of Jesus, including some which would indicate a time of birth at a different time of year. Why do many observe Christmas in December using symbols associated with the Roman pagan festival of Saturnalia? It was the most popular holiday on the calendar that included gift-giving. Work and businesses closed. Schools and government offices closed. They decorated their homes with greenery and wreaths and wore festive colorful clothes. Gatherings featured food and alcoholic beverages. The seven day festival ended on December 24th. With the eighth day concept that was used to justify the observance of Sunday, it fits that Christmas would be observed on December 25th.

Many who observe Christmas and Sunday today might say these days were Christianized, and I ask was your faith paganized? We need to examine ourselves to determine if our faith is of the Bible, Jesus Christ, and God, or if our faith is the most well-adopted form of discrimination. From what I have said, the listener should be able to understand that I believe those who observe the weekly Sabbath on Saturday, sunset Friday to sunset Saturday, the Holy Days of the Bible have the faith of the Bible, Jesus Christ, and God, and those who observe Sunday, Easter and Christmas have a faith built on the discrimination of antisemitism, to avoid anything to do with the Jews, and deception, because why most people believe what they believe is hidden from them.

For any who are listening who believe Christianity is just a sham and your only knowledge of Christianity is Sunday, Easter, and Christmas, you owe it to yourself to verify your suspicions and to look into the historical reasons why Christianity today is the way it is. For any who are listening who find it troubling that I would say that the Christianity of Sunday, Easter, and Christmas originated in the

discrimination of antisemitism, you owe it to yourself to study for yourself the how and why of these days.

Deceit and being deceived is a normal part of the human condition. People will lie to you for their own gain and for that you must be prepared. When it comes to the Bible, I recommend that you prove all things for yourself. The most insidious type of deceit is when we deceive ourselves, and the Bible speaks of this. First John one verse eight.

1 John 1:8-10

8. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

9. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

10. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

The biggest deceit we can have is when we believe we are without sin. In the modern era many of what is listed as sin in the Bible is excused and rationalized by modern Christianity. It makes absolutely no difference what that sin is. The smallest acts of sin through the largest acts of sin are all considered sin implementing a need for forgiveness of sin. Why would modern Christianity allow for deceit to abound within its congregants by excusing and rationalizing sin? When modern Christianity excuses and rationalizes sin it denies the need for Jesus as Savior, because where there is no sin, there is no need for forgiveness of sin. When modern Christianity excuses and rationalizes sin, it affirms through these verses from first John one that it does not have the truth. If you believe modern Christianity is a sham, you need to look into this more. Christianity is never in a position to condemn sin either. It makes no difference how big or small the sin is. Paul wrote that when we judge others we condemn ourselves. What's important to know about the Greek word for judge used by Paul in Romans, *krino*, is that it implies the act of condemning. Romans two verse one.

Romans 2:1-2

1. Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.

2. But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.

Even Jesus taught that we are not to condemn, and the Greek word used to record this teaching of Jesus is the very same Greek word used by Paul in Romans. Jesus taught as we condemn others we will be condemned. He taught the standards by which we evaluate others will be used to evaluate us. Before considering the sins of others, we need to first take care of our own sins. Matthew seven verse one.

Matthew 7:1-5

- 1. Judge not, that ye be not judged.**
- 2. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.**
- 3. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?**
- 4. Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye?**
- 5. Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.**

We are not to deny sin, nor are we to condemn sin. Paul shows in his first letter to the Corinthians that separating ourselves from people who deny their own sins is a good course of action to take. When people deny their own sins, and others around them also deny the same sins, these people have ascribed righteousness to themselves. Self-righteousness is rooted in the denial of sins. In the letter to the Corinthians, a sexual sin is given. Any sin that is denied could bring similar action, because denial of sin negates the need for forgiveness of sin, and denies the need for Jesus Christ as Savior. First Corinthians five verse one.

1 Corinthians 5:1-5

- 1. It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife.**
- 2. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you.**

- 3. For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed,**
- 4. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,**
- 5. To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.**

During creation week, when God created man, God said in Genesis one verse twenty-six, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." God never intended for man to make God after man's image and likeness. When our religious practice is inconsistent with what is in the Bible, when we blend pagan practices with what is written in the Bible are we being formed in the likeness and image of God or are we allowing ourselves to form God after the image and likeness of man?

On March 7, AD 321, Emperor Constantine made Sunday a required day of rest. He showed favor to the church giving it a great deal of wealth. A few years later, he would embark on building New Rome, Byzantium, which today is part of Istanbul. Those who had not converted to the Christian church of Constantine had to pay an additional tax to help build the city, and this tax led to the loss of revenue for traditional, non-Christian temples.

Constantine did all of this while not even baptized. He wouldn't be baptized until just before his death, because he was concerned about his soul getting polluted and not getting into heaven. While unbaptized, he settled doctrinal disputes. It didn't take long for Constantine to realize there were different views on Christianity throughout the empire, and he rejected the findings of the first council of Nicaea, essentially believing that Jesus was begotten of God as a son, and believed there was a time when Jesus Christ did not exist and was not co-eternal with God the Father.

Going back to Acts, after Paul's talk on Saturday night, he traveled to Assos by foot and others sailed by ship. From there, the group went to Mitylene, on a Greek island. From there they sailed to Chios, one of the larger islands. They next hopped over to Samos, another island and stayed at Trogyllium, on the coast of what today would be the coast of Turkey, very close to the island of Samos. Nearby was Miletus, and instead of going to Ephesus, Paul sent for the church

elders because he was hoping to be in Jerusalem for the day of Pentecost. Earlier in Acts we read how the Holy Spirit was first given on the day of Pentecost, and while many Christians are aware of this, many are not aware that Pentecost is a Holy Day from the Old Testament that Paul was going to observe, just like how earlier we read about the Days of Unleavened Bread. Once again the Bible shows the importance of the Biblical Holy Days and Sabbath to Paul and the early church. Acts twenty verse thirteen.

Acts 20:13-38

13. And we went before to ship, and sailed unto Assos, there intending to take in Paul: for so had he appointed, minding himself to go afoot.

14. And when he met with us at Assos, we took him in, and came to Mitylene.

15. And we sailed thence, and came the next day over against Chios; and the next day we arrived at Samos, and tarried at Trogyllium; and the next day we came to Miletus.

16. For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia: for he hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost.

When the elders from Ephesus arrived he reminded them of the amount of time that he had previously spent with the church there. He reviewed with them the good and bad of his visits with them and how he often had to fend off attacks by the Jews, and how even with those attacks he was willing to teach both Jews and Greeks about repentance toward God and faith toward Jesus Christ. Verse seventeen.

17. And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church.

18. And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons,

19. Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews:

20. And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house,

21. Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

He explained he would be soon returning to Jerusalem and did not know what would happen to him and knew the Holy Spirit would be with him even in trying circumstances. He shared with them that his belief was these people with whom he had spent so much time would no longer see his face. Paul wanted them to know that he was confident in the calling, that he had held nothing back from them. He encouraged them to feed the flock and was concerned in his absence spiritual wolves would prey on the church. He reminded them that he spent more than three years with them at Ephesus.

He told them people would arise who would abandon elements of the faith to draw away followers through their teaching. What is widely practiced as Christianity today is not the Christianity of Paul's time. It is important for all of us to know if the faith we have, is a faith that Paul if he were here on earth today could recognize as the true faith or based on perverse things by those seeking to draw away people after themselves. Paul was often attacked by the Jews and they sought him much harm. We have no record of Paul abandoning elements of the faith because of any hatred and discrimination towards Jews. Verse twenty-two.

22. And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there:

23. Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me.

24. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

25. And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more.

26. Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men.

27. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.

28. Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

29. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.

30. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

31. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.

Paul knew the brethren would be in God's hands and the words of grace which can bring us to perfection so that all who are among God's people, the sanctified, the saints, may be saved and inherit eternal life. Verse thirty-two.

32. And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

He reminded them how he didn't seek money from the brethren to support him and used his hands to support himself as a tentmaker. He taught them to help those less fortunate than they were, and this would include providing support to less fortunate both spiritually and physically. Verse thirty-three.

33. I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel.

34. Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me.

35. I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

Paul concluded the meeting with a group prayer and afterwards they embraced with the finality of Paul's visit sinking in. They walked with Paul to the ship. Verse thirty-six.

36. And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all.

37. And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him,

38. Sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more. And they accompanied him unto the ship.

Paul would continue on to Jerusalem and next time we will look at his visit there. Thank you for joining us today. God-willing we'll get together next time on the Sabbath. Until then, thank you for joining us today.