

Small Groups @ TBC

Sermon Discussion Notes

Date of Sermon: Sep 24th 2017

Speaker: David Lawrence

Title: Tears on the Beach

Introduction: Chapter 20 contains an account of Paul's latest travels (1-6); the story of a meeting with the Christians at Troas (7-12); a lengthy account of his final meeting the the leaders of the church at Ephesus (13-36).

Review: Invite one or more who have heard the talk to give their own brief review.

Read: Acts 20:1-7

Reflect:

- Paul travels and encourages the fledgling church communities (2).
 - Why might they need encouragement?
 - Why might we need encouragement today?
 - What are the things that encourage you to stay faithful and grow in Jesus?
 - Do these verses give us any clues about encouragement? (1 Thessalonians 5:11; Romans 1:12; Philemon 1:7; Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 14:31; Titus 1:9) *(NB Leader: you could ask different people to look up and think about each verse then explain what their thoughts to the whole group).*

Read: Acts 20:7-12

Reflect:

- In the talk David suggested that this passage gives an early insight into the ways that the earliest Christians organized their gatherings. What can you see in the passage that indicates how they were beginning to organise their life? What things were important to them?
 - What can we learn from this today?

Read: Acts 20:13-38

Reflect:

- There are several mention to 'tears' or weeping in this passage. What causes Paul and the Ephesian leaders to be so moved (19; 31; 37).
 - How do the group react to Paul's passion for the Gospel and the church's passionate love for him?

Leaders: feel free to be selective and creative with your use of these notes.

Don't feel you have to use all of the material, but
do try to keep the shape of Review – Read – Reflect – Respond
and **DO make room for the 'And Finally' questions!**

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- Could Christians today be accused of being passionately concerned for the spread of the Gospel? Why / why not? Is this a good or bad thing? What can be done about it?
- In the talk David picked out three pieces of advice from Paul's advice to the church leaders at Ephesus. Can you remember what they were? (see v28a; v28b; v29).
 - Watch over yourselves
 - Why is this good advice for leaders (whether leading in church, or in a family or in a workplace)?
 - What does it mean to 'watch over yourself'?
 - What practical steps could you take to 'watch over yourself'?
 - Watch over your flock
 - What does a good shepherd want for his flock? How does this relate to leaders overseeing their church, their family or their workplace?
 - What three golden rules might your group create to help leaders develop the lives of others?
 - Watch out for wolves
 - Think of our church vision to 'Love God, love one another and love God's world'.
 - In what ways might 'wolves' threaten the maintenance and development of our individual love for God?
 - What can we do to fend off these wolves?
 - In what ways might 'wolves' threaten the maintenance and development of our individual love for one another in the church and/or in our families?
 - What can we do to fend off these wolves?
 - In what ways might 'wolves' threaten the maintenance and development of our love for God's world?
 - What can we do to fend off these wolves?

And finally:

As you conclude, ask each person:

- What is the main thing you are taking away as an action point?
- How can we pray for you?
- Is there anything we can check on next time we meet?

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