

Looking Back to Move Forward, Acts 20:17-38

Small Group Discussion Guide—5/5/2019

Reflect back on your time at TVC. Who are some of the people, and what are some of the memories, that have had the greatest impact on your life?

Read Acts 20:17-27

- Paul reflects back on his time with the Ephesians. What point is he trying to make by doing so?
- What does Paul say is his primary purpose – the ministry he received from Jesus?
- What do you glean from Paul's example of how he lived his life among these people? Is sharing Jesus reserved just for pastors, missionaries, etc?
- What would it look like for you to live like Paul at your job, in your school, among your neighbors, etc?

Read Acts 20:28-38

- Summarize Paul's charge for the Ephesians – what is he calling them to do once he leaves?
- What does it mean to you when Paul reminds the Ephesians that those in their care were “bought with God's blood”?
- Have you ever met someone who was maybe initially difficult to love – maybe they had different opinions than you, or you didn't understand why they did certain things, etc – but in the end maybe you saw them differently? Does remembering that Jesus would have died for even “*that*” person change your attitude towards them?
- Have you ever felt like “*that*” person, but someone didn't give up on sharing Jesus' love with you? If so, what did that make you feel like?
- Sheep can be dirty, dim-witted, and deft. When Paul warns us we can be like sheep he reminds us we are susceptible to savage wolves.
 - Have there been any “distortions of the truth” that have been problematic for you in the past?
 - What is the antidote to this danger (Paul actually mentions two in the passage)?
 - Can you think of a time the Word of God kept you on track/kept you from drifting?
 - What tricks, reminders, etc do you use to keep God's Word on your mind?
 - How do you feel about having “shepherds,” or church leaders, responsible to help guard your spiritual well-being?
 - What would Paul say to you today? Is there a “flock” that God is asking you to tend in your sphere?
- What does Paul mean when he says, in v. 32, “I “Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified”?
 - How does the “word of his grace” build us up? Think of this question from an individual and a church perspective.
- Going forward, what do you hope the next 60, or 10, or even 1, year(s) at TVC looks like? How do you hope to fit in to what God is doing in and through our church?

Pray as a group and for one another. Let's all thank God for the privilege of being part of the TVC family, and for the people who have helped shape it to what it is today!