



The Way that Endures

Brent Moody · Acts 20:17–38 · Series: **The Way Forward**

INTRODUCTION

- Now I commend you. That's not the sort of language we typically use, but maybe something like, I commit your care.
- Right now I've been guiding you, I've been helping you, but now I commit your care to God and to the word of his grace.
- I think we can take this and learn a lot from what Paul tells them about what it looks like to be a congregation that endures, a congregation that continues to grow.

1 The Value of Proven Character

Acts 20:18–19; Acts 20:33–35

- You yourselves know how I lived among you the whole time from the first day that I set foot in Asia, serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials.
- It's not that one day I go do something that's really good, but it's a consistent life of doing things that show the kind of person that I am.
- As shepherds, as leaders, as people of a congregation, you're not doing things for your own self-glory.
- When people look at you, what do they see? And not what do they see just today, but what have they seen over an extended period of time?
- Character is extremely valuable in terms of a congregation that's going to endure, that's going to be strong, not taking offense at every little comment and every action that is made, but thinking the best.

2 Church Strength Is Relational, Not Just Structural

Acts 20:28; Acts 20:36–38; Matthew 5:23–24

- Church strength is relational, not just structural. What I mean by that is it takes more than just having a plurality of elders, having deacons, worshiping properly to make a strong church.
- Strength is not just based on having the answers. It's not just about doctrinal accuracy. It is also about the care and the love that we have for each other.
- If there is someone in this congregation that you won't pray with, or that you won't weep with or rejoice with, or that you avoid. That is a recipe for breaking the strength of a congregation.
- Jesus Himself says, leave your gift at the altar and be reconciled. Make it right. Your worship doesn't really mean anything if you aren't reconciled to your brother.
- There's also a testimony being made when people come in and they see the way that we interact with each other and the way we love each other.

3 Stay Rooted in Truth

Acts 20:20–21; Acts 20:27; Acts 20:31

- If a congregation is going to endure and be strong, it must stay rooted in truth.
- I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, verse 20. Verse 27, he says, I did not shrink, declaring to you the whole counsel of God.
- So Paul tells these shepherds it's important we cover it all. It's important we talk about real life stuff that people face.
- I also admonished you with tears. I told you things you needed to hear that were not easy to say.
- The encouragement, being uplifted and being built up and all of that's all wonderful and great, and we definitely need that. But we also need the reproofing and the rebuking sometimes too.

4 Be Alert, Not Naive

Acts 20:29–31; Ephesians 4:14

- And that's what Paul wants them to understand. Be alert, not naive.
- Just because things are good doesn't mean you put your guard down.
- He calls them here fierce wolves. And even worse, he tells these elders, they're gonna rise up from among you. They're not even necessarily gonna come from the outside.
- Also it is to avoid the dangers of human doctrines, of human cunning, of craftiness, of deceitful schemes. All of this is in Ephesians 4 and verse 14.
- Just because some popular person says it doesn't mean it's good or that it's right. We have to stay rooted in truth.

THE CHALLENGE

And you will think, what was all of this for? What will your answer be? What will you say about why you've lived this life and how you've lived this life?

MY NOTES
