Paul's Parting Words to the Ephesian Elders
Acts 20:17-38

Introduction:
- A. Paul's work at Ephesus.
    1. Found small group - about 12 men (vv. 1, 7)
    2. Corrected their baptism (vv. 3-5)
    3. Stayed there over 2 years (v. 8-10).
    4. Converted many (vv. 18-20).
    5. Stirred up controversy – silversmith's riot.
    6. Church grew enough to have elders.
- B. Paul's journey from Ephesus.
    1. Goes to Macedonia.
    2. Spends 3 months in Greece
    3. Sails from for Syria from Philippi.
    4. Calls for Elders to come Melitus.
- C. Paul's words to the Ephesian touches on three great needs of the Lord's church.

Discussion:
- **I.   The Need for *Sacrifice*.**
    - A. Paul's example of sacrifice.
        1. His safety (vv. 19, 22-24).
        2. His right to support (vv. 33-34; cf. 1 Cor. 9:6-14)
        3. His money (vv. 34-35).
    - B. Christians must have a spirit of sacrifice.
        1. Time, money, relationships, even our lives. (cf. Luke 14:26-27, 33).
        2. Seeking the kingdom first requires sacrifice (cf. Things people give up to attend, give, etc.)
- **II.   The Need for *Vigilance*.**
    - A. Vigilance in feeding the church (v. 28)
        1. A wholesome diet (v. 32)
        2. A balanced diet – positive and negative – milk and meat – encouragement and rebuke.
        3. Vigilance in being fed (cf. 1 Pet. 2:2)
    - B. Vigilance in guarding the church (vv. 29-31)
        1. External error (v. 29).
        2. Internal error (v. 30).
- **III.   The Need for *Thoroughness*.**
    - A. The thoroughness of Paul's preaching (vv. 20, 26).
        1. "The truth, the whole truth, nothing but the truth."
        2. Not enough to just preach the truth.
            a. The whole truth.
            b. The needed truth.
    - B. The thoroughness of our desire for truth.
        1. Cornelius wanted all truth(cf. Acts 10:33).
        2. Church must endure (accept and support) thorough teaching (cf. 2 Tim 4:2-4)

Conclusion
- A. Sacrifice - vigilance - thoroughness: What about us?
- B. If you are not a Christian, what could be more profitable than becoming a Christian?
- C. If you are a backslider, what could be more profitable than being restored?

Another Sermon by **Edward O. Bragwell, Sr**