

## WORSHIP

### SUGGESTED WORSHIP SONGS:

We Praise Your Name, Great Things, Yet Not I But Through Christ In Me, O Praise the Name (Anastasis)

## WELCOME

Who among your family members or relatives do you see living (or has lived) a life of meaning and purpose? What kind of impact do they have (or had), on the lives of people around them?

## WORD

### ACTS 20:18-21, 28

<sup>18</sup> And when they had come to him, he said to them,

*“You yourselves know, from the first day that I set foot in Asia, how I was with you the whole time, <sup>19</sup> serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials which came upon me through the plots of the Jews; <sup>20</sup> how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly and from house to house, <sup>21</sup> solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.*

<sup>28</sup> Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood” ...

Continue reading the rest of **Acts 20**.

We have heard it many times in our Sunday services: life is about choices, and small choices can lead to big consequences. The choices we make either lead us to the purpose that GOD has intended for us or lead us to a path where we are much further away from His will. So, a key question to ask ourselves is, are our choices and actions aligned with our God-given purpose?

There is a great need today for us to live lives of intentionality. What this means is that we don't live carelessly or without a clear plan or purpose. You see, good results don't happen by chance. They are by-products of INTENTIONALITY. You bear fruit as you pursue intentions that are purposeful and beneficial to you and to others. We see this in the life of Paul his ministry as recorded in **Acts 20**.

### 1. SERVE GOD AND OTHERS

In **Acts 20:17** Paul, called for the church leaders in Ephesus. In what was to be Paul's final discourse to them, the apostle reminded them of how he served God and the people for three years, in the face of severe opposition. Notice, he modelled serving GOD with humility and with tears. Serving the Lord may not always be comfortable, but every tear shed is worth it, for we know the greater promises that we can hold on to.

There is much to learn from Paul's example of selfless service. Today our culture is all about SELF and consumerism has infiltrated even our churches. If we are not careful, we will end up being like those who primarily seek to fulfill their own interests in and through the church rather than look for ways to fulfill God's purpose for the church in and through them.

### 2. SHARE GOD'S TRUTH

In **Acts 20:21-22**, we also see Paul teach God's truth with intentionality, both in large gatherings and from house-to-house. As he spoke about the truth, it wasn't always pleasant to his listener's ears, but he made sure it was shared in love. Part of God's truth is the fact that we have to repent of our sins and turn away from them. There must be a daily denial of our own sinful desires in order to live a life pleasing to Him.

### 3. SEEK GOD'S AGENDA

As we continue to read further along the chapter, we see that Paul speaks of himself as “enslaved”, “bound”, and “imprisoned” by the Holy Spirit (vv.22-23). What this means is that he was doing all of these things out of CONVICTION. Instead of focusing on his own welfare and convenience, he went out of his way to make sure God's agenda was met. Paul was not a “shallow” believer. He knew, as we all should, that there will be challenges along the journey of following Jesus. It is important to seek God's will and agenda because He wants what is best for us. We can entrust everything to Him and believe that He will achieve His purpose in everything (**Romans 8:28**), including the difficulties we encounter as we live out His purpose.

Also, notice what Paul said in v24 — how he lived his life was just as important as finishing his course. Like a marathon runner on a race track with one thing on his mind, “I will finish my course...”, this is intentionally living out God's purpose for him. To do this we must “walk by the Spirit at all times” (**Galatians 5:16**) and consider that God's will is more important than our own dreams and plans, (**Philippians 1:21**).

# WORD (cont'd)

## 4. STRENGTHEN FUTURE LEADERS

Paul knew that he won't be around forever. He was aware of his mortality -- how could he not? He life was always threatened by both Jews and Gentiles alike! To live intentionally with purpose, Paul saw the value of building up the future leaders by encouraging them and making sure they were deeply rooted in God (v27). He then emphasized the importance of guarding themselves (the leaders) and the flock of God.

Purposeful living means that we know our strengths and weaknesses as there are dangerous traps set by the Enemy for our spiritual walk, things that can lead to us making poor choices. Paul commanded the leaders to hold fast to their integrity first, and then instructed them to guard the flock. It is important to ask ourselves, "are we living double lives?".

V29-30 remind us to guard the flock as well from false teachers who attack Jesus' sufficiency (2 Peter 2:1).

Anybody that teaches you and draws you away from Jesus is dangerous. We must also teach holiness brought about by Jesus reigning in our lives. We need to emphasize to those we shepherd how are we forgiven, by GRACE, because Jesus paid for all our sins, and because of that we should not continue living a sinful lifestyle. But should you sin, you should come to Christ and confess to Him (1 John 1:9) **claiming his promise of forgiveness and cleansing from all unrighteousness.** Guarding the flock also means guiding the flock in all truth (v31-32) – the safeguard being GOD and His Word (the Bible).

As he ended his time with the Ephesian elders, Paul knelt down and prayed for them intentionally. The great apostle knew that the secret of living an intentional life– the pursuit of God and his purpose—is complete dependence on God to fulfill His purpose for us and through us. Brothers and sisters, by His grace and power, let us live each moment intentionally for God and His purpose!

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

*(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)*

1. Reflect on your own life. Are you living your life intentionally, pursuing God's purpose for at home, school, or the office? Share some of the ways you are intentionally living out God's purpose for your life in these areas of influence.
2. Recall instances when you might have missed out on being intentional as salt and light to other people. Maybe you were distracted by less important pursuits or may have been living in sin. Take time now to confess to one another and pray for each other that we may help each other live life with purpose.
3. How will you put this lesson into practice? Do you need to commit to serve others more? Maybe you need to share the gospel to family members and friends? Do you have to refocus your life to pursue God's purpose and not your own? Share ideas on how you can live intentionally this week.

# WORKS

## PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for wisdom for how you can live life with purpose regarding "the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace". Care for others by serving people more at home, at church or in the office. Share the gospel, just as Paul declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus".

## WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

### I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

### II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of Public Servants
- A God-centered Philippines
- Repentance and Salvation

### III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples
- Elders, Pastors, Leaders, and Families
- Ministries and Churches worldwide

### IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

### V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living
- Salvation of family and friends