



# Principles For Finishing Well With Joy

**“For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia: for he hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost” (Acts 20:16).**

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**“But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.” (Acts 20:20).**


“And we went before to ship, and sailed unto Assos, there intending to take in Paul: for so had he appointed, minding himself to go afoot. 14 And when he met with us at Assos, we took him in, and came to Mitylene. 15 And we sailed thence, and came the next day over against Chios; and the next day we arrived at Samos, and tarried at Trogyllium; and the next day we came to Miletus. 16 For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia: for he hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost. 17 And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church. 18 And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, 19 Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews: 20 And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, 21 Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. 22 And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: 23 Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. 24 But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear un-

to myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. 25 And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more. 26 Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. 27 For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.” (Acts 20:13-27).

Paul manifested several principles that enabled him to accomplish his ministry with joy, including:

**1. Commitment and Dedication demonstrated in his extensive travels** - "And we went before to ship, and sailed unto Assos, there intending to take in Paul: for so had he appointed, minding himself to go afoot." (Acts 20:13). His life was a demonstration of Jesus's statement - "And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." (Luke 9:62)

**2. Servanthood manifested in his humility in service** - "Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me



by the lying in wait of the Jews." (Acts 20:19). His life exemplified Jesus' message - "But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant." (Matthew 23:11)

**3. Boldness in Preaching manifested in Paul's Courage to Declare The Whole Counsel of God's** - "And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house." (Acts 20:20). Elsewhere, he noted - "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." (Romans 1:16)

**4. Dedication To Teaching and Warning** - "Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." (Acts 20:31). Writing to his protegee, he admonished - "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." (2 Timothy 4:2)

**5. Personal Sacrifice As Demonstrated in His Willingness to Face Suffering** - "Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. **But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.**" (Acts 20:23-24). Many would look for every reason to avoid every form of hardship, discomfort, suffering, etc., but Paul faced these head-on, in line with Jesus's words - "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it."

(Matthew 16:25)

**6. Focus on Mission Irrespective of Uncertainties About What Lies Ahead** - "And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there." (Acts 20:22). He clearly demonstrated adherence to Jesus's command - "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matthew 6:33)

**7. Sense of Accountability** -

"Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." (Acts 20:26-27). He lived his life in recognition of the fact that everyone will give account before God on the last day - "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." (Romans 14:12)

Applying these principles in contemporary Christian Service will enable anyone to accomplish his / her mission with joy and at the end receive a crown of glory along with a "Well Done!" from God.

The race may be tough, but God is tougher, and His grace is more than sufficient for any eventuality. Satan will generate many obstacles to hinder and discourage us, but we must never give up. Let us continue with determination, faith and encourage in the race till the finish line; keeping in view Jesus word that the person that lays his hands on the plough and looks back simply disqualifies himself from making heaven. Like Jesus, keep your focus on the end game and the promised eternal reward.