

THE HIGH VALUE OF THE CHURCH!

TEXT: Acts 20:17-38 (v. 28)

INTRO:

A. Before us we have the touching last words of the Apostle Paul to the elders of the church at Ephesus.

1. His remembrance of past times, admonishing for the present time, warnings about the future, and sad good by.

B. Notice his words of warning concerning the minister's personal lives - "Take heed therefore unto yourselves" (v. 28)

1. The first duty of a pastor is to see to his own personal spiritual maintenance.

C. Notice his words of warning concerning the "flock" - "the church of God" (v.28)

1. The Lord church is a "flock" and its pastor is given as a shepherd.
 - a. This work is given to pastors by the Holy Ghost - "made"
2. The work of a shepherd is two fold.
 - a. To watch over the flock with diligence - "overseer" (watchman) (v.28; Heb. 13:17)!
 - b. To feed the flock the pure word of the God.
3. The diligence in watching and feeding the flock must not be "partial", but is to "all" the flock.
 - a. The sheep & lambs, the weak & the well, those easily led & those hard to lead ...

D. Notice the high value placed on the church - "which he hath purchased with his own blood".

1. The church of Jesus Christ is the most valued institution on earth!
 - a. God the son purchased the church with his own blood!
2. This FACT is should be very motivating as we deal with the church.
 - a. It should move pastors to oversee with great care - The sheep are not ours - they are the Lords!
 - b. It should move the sheep to consider the great cost that was borne to make them what they are.
 - c. It should move us all to see the great value of the church of God!

E. The great value of the church!

1. This text teaches us that the "Lord himself" placed a great value on the church.
 - a. The value he placed on it was HIS OWN BLOOD!
2. A look at the great value of the church!

I. THE CHURCH HAS GREAT VALUE BECAUSE OF THE PRICE THAT WAS PAID FOR IT.

A. The value of thing is often determined by the price that one has paid or is willing to pay for it.

1. What would you be willing to pay for a loaf of bread (Nehemiah 5:3; II Kings 6:24-30)?

B. God paid the greatest price that could be paid for his church - He "purchased" it with his "own" blood.

1. The church's "worth" is not in itself! It is MADE valuable by that which bought it!
2. God gave His best when he paid for his church!
 - a. He gave "own" blood! (Acts 20:28)
 - b. He gave HIMSELF (Eph. 5:25)!
3. There is nothing on earth more valuable than the church of Jesus Christ (I Peter 1:18-19)!
 - a. You will never find an institution on earth of greater value than the church.

II. THE CHURCH HAS GREAT VALUE BECAUSE OF WHO IT BELONGS TO.

A. The value of a thing often depends "merely" on "who" owns it or owned it

1. An article of clothing or piece of furniture owned by someone famous.
 - a. Ex. President Lincoln, Princess Dianna ...

B. The church is owned by God - "Church of God"

1. It was "purchased" with his "own" blood (Acts 20:28).
2. It was built with his own hands (Matt. 16:18).

III. THE CHURCH HAS GREAT VALUE BECAUSE OF WHAT IT HAS BEEN AND IS BEING MADE INTO.

A. What a thing "is made into" often determines its value.

1. A 1000 Pounds of iron is not "worth" much in and of itself - few cents a hundred pounds!
2. But if the "iron" is molded into "useful things" it has great value.
 - a. Tractor, Automobile parts, Skillets ...

B. The church has great value because of what the Lord HAS made her!

1. He has made her his House (I Timothy 3:15).
2. He has made her THE PLACE of spiritual higher learning (I Tim. 3:15; Matt. 28:18-20).
3. He has made her his message-bearing agent in the earth (Mark 16:15; Matt. 28:18-20).
4. He has made her the trusty of HIS authority (Matt. 28:18-20).

C. The church has great value because of what the Lord WILL make her one day.

1. She will be his bride SOME DAY (Eph. 5:25-27).
 - a. The church's "value" is SEEN more and more as time moves on.
 - b. Now she has "flaws" but his is working on them (Eph. 5:26).
 - c. The Lord will make something out of his purchased possession!

CON:

A. The Lord has placed a high value on His church!

1. No greater institution on earth!

B. What value do you place on it?

1. Are you a member of the Lord's church?
 - a. Repentance, faith, baptism, & church membership!
2. Are you FAITHFUL to the Lord's Church?
 - a. Prayer, attendance, financial giving, visiting, mutual care ...