



THE LONGEST SERMON

Open it

1. What is one of your favorite things that you have learned during a sermon? It could have been during youth group, a Sunday school class, a retreat, or even during a worship service. What makes it your favorite?

Daily devotions

Day 1

TODAY'S THEME: EXPLORE IT

Read Acts 20:1–16

2. How would you summarize the events that took place in this passage?
3. What did you learn about God from this passage?
4. What do you think the main point of this passage is? Why did God see fit to give it to us? What do you think He wants us to learn?

Day 2

TODAY'S THEME: THE FRUIT OF MINISTRY

Read Acts 20:1–6

At a glance we might miss the profound encouragement in these verses. What seems like a short narrative about the traveling details of a group of men can also serve us as an encouragement to the fruit of Paul's ministry so far throughout the book of Acts.

There is fruit to our labors in many parts of our lives. For example, if you work hard at your school work, there's a better chance you will get good grades. If you work hard, you'll probably keep your job and have cash to do all sorts of fun things. You get it. But there is another type of fruit—a fruit to our ministry. I think back to Matthew 4:19, when Jesus says, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." When we participate in God's work and share the gospel and minister to the needs of other people in the love of Jesus Christ, the fruit of our ministry won't be plaques, banners, or bigger checks. The fruit of our ministry will be people who have come to know and love Jesus. Each of the men listed as Paul's travel companions in these verses are men who are representatives of some of the churches that Paul has planted during his missionary journeys in the book of Acts.

5. How cool would it be to know your "spiritual family tree"? Who was it who led you to faith in Jesus Christ? Send some texts and find out who led that person to Jesus!

6. What things might you need to change in your life if you were to be a fisher of men?

I HAVE A QUESTION! ✍ Write it down so you can ask your leader or your parents!

PRAYER GUIDE ➤ Here is something you could pray for today:

- That God would give you an opportunity to extend the "family tree" and introduce someone new to faith in Jesus Christ

Day 3

TODAY'S THEME: CHURCH ON SUNDAY

Read 2 Acts 20:7

All we have known is having church on Sundays. But in Jewish tradition, Saturday was actually the Sabbath day! So the fact that these Christians have gathered together for worship and instruction on Sunday shows that they have switched things up a little bit. This is one of the first records indicating a change from the Jewish traditions to observing the Sabbath on Sundays!

Church tradition tells us that early Christians quit meeting on Saturdays to observe the Sabbath and began meeting on Sundays to commemorate the resurrection of Jesus, which took place on Sunday. How cool is that! So in some ways, every Sunday kind of serves as a mini-Easter, a day in which we celebrate and remember the resurrection of our Lord!

7. How would your attitude toward church on Sundays change if you looked at it as a celebration of Jesus' resurrection?

8. One of the main things the early Christians did when they gathered together was break bread, or take communion. Why is important for us to take communion together as a church on a regular basis?

I HAVE A QUESTION! ✎ Write it down so you can ask your leader or your parents!

PRAYER GUIDE ➤ Here is something you could pray for today:

- Thank the Lord for sending Jesus to die for your sins and praise Him for raising Him from the dead!

Day 4

TODAY'S THEME: THE SERMON

Read Acts 20:7–12

Sometimes it's just hard to stay awake during a sermon. Maybe you stayed up too late the night before, and you're dead tired, or maybe the preacher is just boring you to sleep. Well, good old Eutychus learned the hard way that sometimes you really don't want to fall asleep during the sermon—he fell out of the window and died! The crazy part is that he was brought back to life after falling to his death and then Paul just went on teaching and discussing the things of God. What are we to learn here?

Luke told the story in such a way that the focus wouldn't be put on Paul raising Eutychus from the dead, but on significance of Paul's preaching and the discussions that followed. As boring as some sermons can be, they are incredibly important for our training and equipping in the ways of God! We would normally be quick to trade our times of learning for the experience of a miracle, but while the experience may be wild, teaching and learning is important for us to grow in our knowledge and understanding of God. So do what you have to do to learn and grow during those sermons every week—we all need them!

9. What sort of things do you need to or want to learn more about concerning God and the Bible?

10. How important is it to you that you are learning more about God? Do your actions and the decisions you make support your answer to that question? What are you doing to make sure you are learning more about God and what it means to follow Him?

I HAVE A QUESTION! ✍ Write it down so you can ask your leader or your parents!

PRAYER GUIDE ➤ Here are some things you could pray for today:

- That God would help you learn and grow through the teachings of the church
- That you will have a desire to learn and grow in your understanding of God's Word

Day 5

TODAY'S THEME: FORWARD THINKING

Read Acts 20:13–16

Lots of times we wait for opportunities to share the gospel until they fall in our lap and we hear the angels of heaven singing and the voice of God saying, “TELL THEM ABOUT JESUS.” Then we will maybe share the gospel message. But Paul was forward thinking. He didn’t wait for opportunities to come to him; he went and looked for them. He would make opportunities. That’s a big reason Paul wanted to get back to Jerusalem before Pentecost, because he knew that tons of Jews would be traveling back to Jerusalem around that time, and that would mean lots of opportunity for him to tell them about Jesus and teach them about the kingdom of God.

11. What events in our lives today would provide an opportunity to share the gospel message?

12. Who is someone you have felt God urging you to share Jesus with?

If you were going to be strategic to make sure you had an opportunity to share Jesus with them, what things would you do?

I HAVE A QUESTION! ✍ Write it down so you can ask your leader or your parents!

PRAYER GUIDE ➤ Here are some things you could pray for today:

- Pray for boldness to share the gospel message.
- Pray for wisdom to plan for opportunities to share the gospel with people.

Note: This study guide was written by Pastors Tim Badal, Mario Arindaeng, and Jeremy Anderson, Village Bible Church. www.villagebible.church