

# WHICH IS ABLE TO BUILD YOU UP

## ACTS 20:28-32

Text: Acts 20:32

### **Acts 20:32**

<sup>32</sup> And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

### Introduction:

Whether we realize it or not, our churches are under attack this evening. You see, the devil and the world hate what is happening here and they will stop at nothing to destroy this place of worship.

How many times have we heard of some church or the other that was going through some time of great crisis?

A few years back, there was a church in Canton, NC in which a fistfight broke out over someone sitting in another person's pew.

I heard of one church in the mountains that literally split over the color of the song books. The side who lost the vote took chainsaws and sawed the little one room church in two and carried their side away. What a testimony to the glory of God!

While I want you to know that trouble is always a possibility, it does not have to happen, ever! While it is always possible that problems will come, there is nothing written in stone that says they have to. In fact, they won't unless we, the members who make up the church, allow them to.

Notice:

## **1. THE VALUE OF THE CHURCH (vs. 28)**

### **Acts 20:28**

<sup>28</sup> Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

#### **A. Its Inception**

The Lord began the church with His disciples.

#### **B. Its Impact**

Since the day of Pentecost, when the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit in the upper room, the church has been used of the Lord to change individuals, families and whole societies. The true church has always stood for righteousness, holy living and godliness. The church has always been an instrument for change in the world. Because of the church, people's lives have been changed, families and

communities have been strengthened and the message of Jesus Christ has been given feet in the world.

### C. Its Importance

The church of Jesus Christ is THE only organism in existence that God has designed, called and blessed to be the vehicle through which He will work in this world.

## **2. THE VIOLENCE AGAINST THE CHURCH (vs. 29-20)**

### **Acts 20:29-30**

<sup>29</sup> For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. <sup>30</sup> Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

While the church is so absolutely vital to our world, there are forces about that would love nothing better than to see the church defeated and destroyed. Most of those forces are external, but some, sad to say, are internal. Notice the 2 main areas where attacks upon the church originate.

### A. There Are Enemies Around Us (vs. 29)

The analogy of the wolf is fitting, because like wolves, those who prey on the church:

- Run in Packs – They rarely work alone, but feel safer, and can do far more damage when operating in numbers.
- Typically Operate in the Dark – These beasts are terribly afraid of the light as it exposes their deeds and ways.
- They Attack the Young, Weak and the Sickly – The wolves typically go after those who cannot easily defend themselves against their attacks.
- Most of the Time They Attack From Behind – When you let your guard down, that is the moment when the enemies of the church will attack.

#### B. There Are Enemies Among Us (vs. 30)

Paul warned the Ephesians that there would arise people from within their own number who would try to destroy the Lord's church.

Things haven't changed! When Satan finds that he cannot mount an attack from the outside, he will look for someone on the inside through which he can devastate and destroy the church.

### **3. THE VICTORY OF THE CHURCH (VS. 31-32)**

#### **Acts 20:31-32**

<sup>31</sup>Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. <sup>32</sup>And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

I thank the Lord that we can enjoy the victory. We don't have to become a grim statistic.

These verses teach us exactly where the victory lies. We will find our victory in 2 main areas.

#### **A. Dependence Upon God**

Remember His promise in Matt. 16:18? The church is His responsibility, not ours! If we will walk in love, practice forgiveness, obey Him in all things and glorify Him in the church, then He will see to that this church survives the battles and remains a blessing in the world.

#### **B. In a Deepening Relationship With God**

##### **1. Prayer**

Our prayer lives must be rich and regular.

## 2. In the Word of God

The Bible is our source of strength in the day of battle. There are many who have been lead into error and into sin and false doctrine simply because they are not grounded in the Word of God.

Close:

The church is far too vital and important for us to allow anything to destroy the Lord's work here.