

Chapter 20 describes the ministry of the disciples in Troas (vv1-12) and Miletus (vv13-38). In you recall, we are in the middle of Paul's third missionary journey which approximately took place between the years AD 53-57.

### I. Their Arrival at Troas (vv1-6)

#### II. Their Worship at Troas (v7)

### III. Their Miracle at Troas (vv8-12)

#### I. Their Arrival at Troas (vv1-6)

1. Chapter 20 leaves off where chapter 19 finished and that was in Ephesus where there was a city-wise uproar.
2. V1—"After the uproar had ceased, Paul called the disciples to himself, embraced them, and departed to go to Macedonia."
3. If you remember, Ephesus is a city in Asia Minor and Macedonia was a region about a week away by ship.
4. Having reached the region of Macedonia he went further into Greece "and stayed there three months" (v3).
5. After he intended to sail back down to Syria (that is Antioch), he changed rout as he heard about a plot of the Jews.
6. Seemingly, knowledge of this plot led him to change his travel plans and return through Macedonia (v3), and eventually sailed from Philippi to Troas (v6).
7. According to v4, seven men were his companions, who (v5)—"went ahead of us and waited at Troas."
8. Troas was a city in Asia Minor a few days north of Ephesus, where Paul and Luke eventually arrived (I say, 'Paul and Luke' because beginning at v5, Luke resumes the use of plural pronouns 'us' and 'we').
9. According to v6, this group of at least nine men, extended their stay at Troas for seven days (which covers vv7-12).
10. Thus, from vv1-6 we learn: (1) Paul retraced his steps from previous missionary journeys to encourage the brethren (v2); (2) Paul gathered to himself many men from the places he previously ministered to (v4); (3) The Jews continued to plot against Paul, and so the disciples were constantly seeking to protect him (v6).

#### II. Their Worship at Troas (v7)

1. V7—"Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight."
2. (1) When they gathered—"Now on the first day of the week"—that is, on Sunday, or what's called the Lord's Day.
3. I mentioned last week in considering the fourth commandment, that the phrase "first day of the week" is unique to the Lord's Day.
4. Never do we read in the NT of the second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, or seventh day of the week (but eight times we read about 'the first day of the week').
5. The reason being, the first day of the week, what we call Sunday, is given a unique and/or special priority.

6. This is because it was the day our Savior rose from the dead, and thus it's called the Lord's Day (Rev.1:10).
7. It's His day in a way the others are not—it's a special and holy day that exclusively belongs to Christ.
8. It's for this reason, Christ met with His people on that first Lord's Day and then met with them again the following week.
9. Jn.20:19—"Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, where the disciples were assembled, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, 'Peace be with you.'"
10. Jn.20:26—"And a week later His disciples were again inside. Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said, 'Peace to you!'"
11. Thus, it's not surprising that Paul exhorted the Corinthians, 1Cor.16:1-2—"As I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside."
12. That is, as you gather together on the first day of the week to worship, bring your tithes and offerings (and this wasn't merely for the church at Corinth but also the churches of Galatia).
13. And so, it shouldn't surprise us that Paul gathered with the Christians at Troas on the first day of the week.
14. Melancthon Jacobus—"Christ slept in the grave during the Jewish Sabbath and buried it there with Him; but He rose again and rested from His finished work, and thus made a new Sabbath – the Lord's Day."
15. (2) Why they gathered—"Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread."
16. The phrase "come together to break bread" is an early way to describe the Lord's Supper or Communion.
17. They came together in one place as one church for the purpose of partaking of the elements of bread and wine.
18. Now, it's true that the phrase "to break bread" can merely refer to eating food as we find it in v11—"Now when he had come up had broken bread and eaten."
19. But when the phrase "to break bread" is connected with the phrase "come together" it refers to the Lord's Supper.
20. They came together for the purpose of breaking bread or partaking of the body and the blood of Jesus Christ.
21. 1Cor.11:17-22—"Now in giving these instructions I do not praise *you*, since you come together not for the better but for the worse. For first of all, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it. For there must also be factions among you, that those who are approved may be recognized among you. Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper. For in eating, each one takes his own supper ahead of *others*; and one is hungry and another is drunk. What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise *you*."
22. Notice the repeated phrase "when you come together" which refers to them coming together to worship.
23. Thus, Paul speaks of them as "coming together as a church" (v18)which "come together in one place (v20)."

24. To come together as a church means you come together to do the things a church is to do on the first day.
25. When Christians gather for any other reason they do not come together as a church or a gathered assembly.
26. No, these Corinthians gathered together as a church in order to partake of a sacred meal called the Lord's Supper.
27. The problem was, they failed to separate or distinguish the Lord's Supper from a common or regular meal (v29).

### III. Their Miracle at Troas (vv8-12)

1. V8—"There were many lamps in the upper room where they were gathered together. And in a window sat a certain young man named Eutychus, who was sinking into a deep sleep."
2. Luke refers to Eutychus as a "young man" (v9) and literally "a young boy" (v12), which refers to someone between the age of 8 to 14.
3. We learned from v7 that Paul "spoke to them and continued his message until midnight" which was why there were many lamps.
4. The combination of these things: Eutychus' age, the length of the sermon, and the fact that it was nearly midnight, resulted in him "sinking into a deep sleep" (v9).
5. V9—"He was overcome by sleep; and as Paul continued speaking, he fell down from the third story and was taken up dead."
6. It's likely he was sitting in the window in order to get some fresh air which would hopefully keep him awake.
7. But instead of staying awake, he actually falls three stories to his death—"he was taken up dead (picked up dead)."
8. V10—"But Paul went down, fell on him, and embracing him said, 'Do not trouble yourselves, for his life is in him'"—that is, it has returned to him.
9. Verse 11 refers to the events that happened after Paul healed the boy and then returned to the upper room.
10. V11—Now when he had come up, had broken bread and eaten, and talked a long while, even till daybreak, he departed."
11. This refers to a common or regular meal that Paul enjoyed with the brethren after his formal teaching.
12. Thus, when Luke says "and talked a long while" he's merely referring to Paul's informal discussion while he ate.
13. V12—"And they brought the young man in alive, and they were not a little comforted"—this likely happened at the same time Paul had come up.
14. Or else, it's possible he was taken elsewhere until morning, at which time he was brought back upstairs.
15. And so Luke tells us that Paul departed on Monday morning, ending up eventually at Miletus (as we shall see in v13ff).

### IV. Observations

1. I want to spend the remaining time by returning to v7 and the importance of word and sacrament in the Christian life.

2. The phrase "word and sacrament" is a common phrase often used by our Protestant and Reformed forefathers.
3. It's used as a summary of the primary means used of God to strengthen and edify His beloved people.
4. Thus, all of worship is summarized by the phrase "word and sacrament" (the word preached and partaken of).
5. Acts 20 and v7 is a classic text that underscores the absolute necessity and importance of the word and sacrament.
6. But before I go any further, I want to say a few things on this word "Reformed"—what does this term mean?
7. Well as you know, it's merely short for Reformation (which of course refers to the Protestant Reformation).
8. Our church is a Reformed church in that it holds to the basic beliefs and practices of the Protestant Reformation.
9. These basic beliefs and practices are summarized in the Reformational and Post-reformational confessions.
10. This is what being Reformed means—it means you formally hold to one or more of these confessions.
11. But what if someone says—I don't like to be called by any title other than a Bible-believing Christian.
12. Well, I would ask you—what do you believe the Bible teaches, because everyone claims to believe the Bible.
13. And so, if you said—I believe the Bible teaches this and that, well, dear friend that would be your creed (every Christian has a creed or confession).
14. The question is never—Do you have a creed or confession—but actually—Do you have a good creed or confession?
15. Furthermore, even if a peculiar church says—the Bible is our confession—it will still have a doctrinal statement (which summarizes what they believe the Bible teaches).
16. Thus, Reformed Christians hold to these confessions not because they believe they are equal to Scripture, but because they are an accurate summary of Scripture.
17. Now, I remind you of all this because the concept of word and sacrament is essential to Reformed and/or Confessional theology (as I hope to show you here in a few minutes).
18. (1) Their meaning—here I want to begin with a brief definition of what is meant by the phrase—word and sacrament.
19. By "word" is meant the word of God and especially the preaching of that word by qualified and gifted men.
20. By "sacrament" is meant the ordinances of Christ, baptism and the Supper, which are to be practiced in His church.
21. The word "sacrament" simply refers "to something sacred or used for sacred purposes"—again, the NT provides two sacraments.
22. Thus, while by word and sacrament we mean both baptism and communion we especially refer to the latter.
23. Why? Because by definition baptism is the sacrament of entrance and communion the sacrament of nourishment.

24. This means, while we enter the NC through baptism (which happens once) we are nourished by the Supper weekly.
25. Thus, by the word and sacrament is meant, the preaching of the word and partaking of the Lord's Supper (this is why Luther often referred to the Supper as 'the sacrament').
26. (2) Their importance—here I want to underscore the absolute necessity of these for true spiritual health.
27. Older Christians often summarized the public means of grace by these two words—the word and sacraments.
28. John Calvin (*Institutes*)—"Along with the preaching of the gospel, we have another help to our faith in the sacraments."
29. John Calvin (*Summary of Doctrine Concerning the Word and Sacraments*)—"The end of the whole Gospel ministry is that God communicate Christ to us. To effect this union, the Holy Spirit uses a double instrument, the preaching of the Word and the administration of the sacraments."
30. John Calvin (*Catechism*)—"Each one of us ought to study the word of God, and above all, frequently attend sermons in which this Word is expounded in the Assembly of the Christians. And, to the preaching of His Word God has conjoined the Sacraments."
31. Belgic Confession (1561)—"Along to the Word, God has ordained sacraments for us to seal His promises in us, to pledge good will and grace toward us, and to nourish and sustain our faith."
32. Heidelberg Catechism (1563)—"Q.65. You confess that by faith alone you share in Christ and all His blessings: Where does that faith come from? A. The Holy Spirit produces it in our hearts by the preaching of the holy gospel and confirms it through our use of the holy sacraments."
33. Brethren, I could multiply these quotations over again, as it's at the heart and core of Reformed theology.
34. Yet, here's the problem—over the past 50-75 years many (if not most) Christians have lost sight of these things.
35. Many have lost confidence in the word and sacraments as the primary means whereby God grows His people.
36. And so they've replaced these with other things such as small groups, Bible studies, and various programs.
37. Everyone says they want to grow, and yet, few people give themselves diligently to the means ordained for growth.
38. Acts 2:42—"And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers."
39. I sometimes hear people say—I wish I could find a church that practiced what the early church practiced.
40. Well, you can—find one that gives itself diligently to the word and sacrament (though I fear most professing Christians would despise it).
41. (3) Their efficiency—here I need to clarify that neither the word nor sacraments benefit us automatically.
42. Don't misunderstand what I'm saying—you can hear the word and partake of the sacraments with no or little benefit.
43. The reasons being—neither the word nor the sacraments communicate grace or blessing from themselves.
44. All of the grace and strength derived from the word and sacrament comes from Christ through them.

45. These are but channels through which grace which is found in Christ is communicated to His beloved people.
46. Thus, neither the word nor the sacrament will ever be a means of grace apart from the Spirit's blessing.
47. Shorter Catechism—"The sacraments become effectual means of salvation, not from any virtue in them, or in him that does administer them; but only by the blessing of Christ, and the working of His Spirit in them that by faith receive them."
48. John Calvin—"If the Spirit be lacking, the sacraments can accomplish nothing more in our minds than the splendor of the sun shining upon blind eyes, or a voice sounding in deaf ears."
49. (4) Their relationship—by this I mean, how does the word and sacrament relate or connect to each other?
50. Well, the word and sacrament provide the same grace that's found in the one Mediator between God and men.
51. The word tells us about Christ and the sacraments show us Christ—but they both tell proclaim the same Christ.
52. G.H. Kersten—"The sacraments together with the Word of God are the means of grace. Thus we have two means, one of which, the Word works upon the hearing, and the other, the sacraments, works upon the sight, and together they work upon the soul."
53. (5) Their frequency—here I want to briefly answer the question—how often do we need the word and sacraments?
54. Well, let me suggest we need both weekly, which is why God has regulated worship to a weekly experience.
55. I sometimes here professing Christians say they wished churches would imitate the first-century church.
56. But actually most people don't, and the reason being, the first-century church as well as the second-century church continued steadfastly in the word and sacrament.
57. Didache (early second century)—"On the Lord's Day, gather yourselves together and break bread, giving thanks."
58. You see my friend, if you read the church fathers, with virtually no exception, they stressed the word and sacrament.
59. Now let me simply say in closing, that these (the word and sacrament) are the ordinances of Christ Himself.
60. These are the means whereby Christ communicates grace and strength to His needy and beloved people.
61. Now let me close with this question—How weak and needy are you? Are you a little weak and needy, or are you very weak and needy?
62. Well, my dear brethren, if you are very weak and needy, then why don't you diligently and believingly give yourselves (as did the early church) to the apostles' doctrine and the breaking of bread).
63. This is what the church did in the first century, the second century, the third century and the fourth century.
64. Belgic Confession (1561)—"We believe that our God, mindful of our crudeness and weakness, has ordained sacraments for us to seal His promises in us, to pledge good will and grace toward us, and also to nourish and sustain our faith. God has added these to the Word of the gospel to represent better to our external senses both what God enables us to understand by the Word and what He does inwardly in our hearts, confirming in us the salvation He imparts to us."