

### **Recap of 6/5/22 message by Joe Ricchuiti – Acts 20:1-12**

1. Discouragement and infighting hindered the Word of God. (2 Corinthians 2:12-13)
2. Because believers believe and live out a message which is counter-cultural, they need to be strengthened, encouraged, to be immersed in the Word of God, prepared for persecution, and need fellowship.
3. Paul's ministry was that of encouraging the believers "with many words", teaching them the Word of God:
  - reinforcing the importance of sound doctrine
  - enabling them to answer false, heretical doctrine
  - exhorting them to remain true to the true faith
  - encouraging them in the face of persecution, difficult circumstances, etc.
2. The early church: met on Sunday; ate together and partook of the Lord's Supper; met at night; met in homes; and "the length of the meeting was not regulated by the clock" (Richards).
3. Along with encouraging the churches on this trip, he also challenged them to complete the collection for the impoverished believers at Jerusalem. It would be a symbol of oneness and fellowship in the church, Jew and gentile comprising one Body, a symbol of the vitality of the Gentile churches. Paul gave instruction on the stewardship of money in 1 Corinthians 16:1-4. Giving was to be regular, systematic, and proportionate to income, encompassing each one of them.
4. The church of Acts is not always pushing out, on the move, opening its doors, appealing to unbelievers. The church also gathers for worship and fellowship. Without the sustenance received at its Sunday gatherings, the church might lose itself in mere busyness, might forget who it is and whose it is, might lose heart amidst the myriad of demands and assaults upon it by the surrounding world.
  - in the midst of death there is life
  - in the midst of darkness there is light
  - in the midst of confusion there is clarity (Willimon)
5. What counts when Christians gather is to meet God, remember Jesus, yield to the Spirit, build relationships, and leave better equipped to live the life and share the story." (Richards)