

- b. ^{NAS} **Colossians 2:6** As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, ⁷ having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude. **We could put the components of that passage in this order: ✦receive Christ, ✦be firmly rooted in Christ, ✦be built up in Christ, and ✦live for Christ!**

Conclusion: Now, sorry for our sins and righteous in God's sight through our faith in Jesus, let us by God's power:

- RESPOND to the *full truth* of God's Word!
- TRUST IN GOD to work *through His Word* to keep us and grow us in Christ!

And all God's people said: *Amen!*

This Week's Memory Verse: Please choose ONE of the six extra references noted in this sermon. *God will bless you through His Word!*

Scripture Memory Tips:

1. Read the *context*.
2. Rightly understand the verse.
3. Learn the *reference* and the *first phrase*.
4. Add a *phrase*, repeat all you have learned.
5. Say the verse *out loud* as you memorize it.
6. Say the *reference*; the *verse*; the *reference*.
7. Pray about the verse.
8. Apply the verse to your *daily life*.
9. Share the verse with *others*.

This and other sermons are available on Bethlehem's website: www.blc7500.com
Please share them with your family, friends, neighbors, and coworkers!
Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Rd., Parma, Ohio 44134, 440-845-2230

From Paul to Pastors to Parishioners!

Based on Key Parts of Acts 20:17-32 NIV

4th Sunday of Easter – 2010

April 25 → 8:15 & 10:45

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: Today's first reading contains *three very important points!* As the apostle Paul communicates with pastors; then me *as your pastor* with you *as parishioners*, please listen, understand, and benefit!

1. **Repentance and Faith:** ¹⁷ From Miletus, Paul sent to Ephesus for the elders [*pastors*] of the church. ¹⁸ When they arrived, he said to them: "You know how I lived the whole time I was with you, from the first day I came into the province of Asia. ¹⁹ I served the Lord with great humility and with tears, although I was severely tested by the plots of the Jews. ²⁰ You know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you publicly and from house to house. ²¹ **I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus.**" *Let's talk about repentance and faith:*
 - a. **Repentance** → ^{NIV} **2 Corinthians 7:10** Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death. Godly sorrow → is over sin; worldly sorrow → is only over the consequences of sin.

b. **Faith** → ^{NIV} **Romans 3:21** But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. ²² This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. **We all need God's righteousness!**

c. **Are repentance and faith more than words?** *Yes!*
When Mohammed Ali said: **"I am the greatest,"** that meant nothing until his accomplishments testified to that fact.¹ In a similar way, *when repentance and faith are real*, they will show in our lives!

2. **It's on You, Not Me:** ²² "And now, compelled by the Spirit, I am going to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there. ²³ I only know that in every city the Holy Spirit warns me that prison and hardships are facing me. ²⁴ However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me--the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace. ²⁵ Now I know that none of you among whom I have gone about preaching the kingdom will ever see me again. ²⁶ Therefore, I declare to you today that **I am innocent of the blood of all men.** ²⁷ **For I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God.**"
Holding back *some truth* can make *some sense*; but whenever a pastor does so, *everyone loses!*

a. ^{NAS} **Ezekiel 3:17** [The Lord to Ezekiel:] *...whenever you hear a word from My mouth, warn them from Me.* ¹⁸ *When I say to the wicked, "You shall surely die"; and you do not warn him or speak out to warn the wicked from his wicked way that he may live, that*

wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand [***pastor and parishioner are both losers***]. ¹⁹ Yet if you have warned the wicked, and he does not turn from his wickedness or from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered yourself. **May God always help me to speak the truth (John 8:32) for your benefit and mine!**

b. ^{NIV} **Hebrews 13:17** Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account [**1 Thess. 2:4**]. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you. **As we both faithfully deal with the truth, God will enable us to win IN CHRIST both now and forevermore!**

3. **God and the Word are Able:** ²⁸ "Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. ²⁹ I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. ³⁰ Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. ³¹ So be on your guard! Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears. ³² **Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.**"
God and the Word are a *powerful team* to ✦ build us up and ✦ give us an eternal inheritance!

a. ^{NIV} **Philippians 1:6** ... [**God**] who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. **Began → Baptism; carry on → Word!**

¹ Brian Stoffregen, Exegetical Notes