

# A Profile of Paul

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In Acts 20 we read the record of Paul's journey to Jerusalem, concluding his third evangelistic tour among the Gentiles. While stopped at Miletus he visited with the elders from nearby Ephesus. In his eloquent discourse to these men, we receive some remarkable insights:

**Paul was consistent.** From the first day and all the time thereafter, his manner of life was the same (v.18). His consistency was manifest in his relations with others (v. 21), his morals (1 Cor. 9:27), and his doctrine (1 Cor. 4:17). Inconsistency in our lives is a blight on the church everywhere. Let us keep both our doctrine and our lives pure. Steadfastness, dependability, and faithfulness all flow from consistently serving the Lord as did Paul.

**Paul was humble** (v. 19). He had a record of service about which smaller men would have boasted. Even when it was necessary to mention this record to answer the lies of enemies none could call it boasting. Perhaps his meekness explains one reason why he attracted so many to Christ and also why we fail to. We must remember that we are **servants**.

**Paul was sincere.** He served the Lord with tears and trials night and day (vv. 19, 31). Men will weep and suffer only for those matters that genuinely concern them. Let us ask ourselves when we last shed a tear over a lost soul or when we last were willing to suffer for Christ's sake.

**Paul was bold, courageous.** He declared everything that was profitable, the whole counsel of God (vv. 20, 27). This is not only the task of Gospel preachers, but of all Christians. It will likely not cause us to win popularity contests and it may bring us trials, ridicule, and abuse, but it must be done if the Truth is advanced. Let us never confuse boldness with an ugly spirit, but neither let us confuse humility with timidity.

**Paul was unselfish.** He coveted no man's possessions (vv. 31-35). Like him, we must consider material things only a means to the end of serving Christ and our fellow man. He had a right to say, "Imitate me" (1 Cor. 11:1).

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