

## **20:7 *Gathered Together to Break Bread***

### **A Memorable Gathering.**

Chrysostom: “When we were gathered together,” it says, “to break bread.” At the opportune time, when they showed they were hungry (and this not untimely), his speech began and was prolonged. So it was not primarily to hear his teaching that they came together but to break bread; however, once [Paul] began speaking, he prolonged the teaching. See how at Paul’s table all partook. It seems to me that even while seated at the table he was speaking, thus teaching us to consider all the rest secondary. Picture to yourself, please, that house with the lights, with the crowd, with Paul in the middle, speaking, with even the windows occupied by many people, and to hear that trumpet, to behold that gracious countenance!... But why did he speak at night? Because [Paul] was about to depart and never see them again. This he does not tell them, since they are too weak, but he did tell the others. At the same time, the miracle that took place made them remember that evening forever. Great was the pleasure experienced by his audience; though interrupted, it was further extended. So the fall took place to the benefit of the teacher. Besides, all who were indifferent were about to be censured by that young man who underwent death to hear Paul. Homilies on the Acts of the Apostles 43.2

## **20:9 *Eutychus Sitting in the Window***

### **The Fervor of Paul’s Audience.**

Chrysostom: Observe, if you please, how crowded the audience was—for the disciples, it says, had gathered together, and what sort of miracle it was. For it was in the window, it says, that [Eutychus] sat, and this at the dead of night. So great was his desire to listen! Let us be ashamed, we who would not do this even during the day. But it was Paul who spoke then, you say. What do you mean? Paul speaks now as well, or rather, it was not Paul either then or now, but Christ, and no one listens. There is no window now, and neither hunger nor sleep troubles us, and still we do not listen. No crowding in a tight place or any other similar discomforts. And the wonderful thing is this: though a young man, he was not indifferent, and though he was being overtaken by sleep, he did not leave, nor was he afraid of the danger of falling. Do not be amazed that [Eutychus] nodded off and fell. For it was not out of indifference that he fell asleep

but from necessity of nature. But notice, if you please, that so fervent was their zeal that they were even on the third floor. For not yet did they have a church. Homilies on the Acts of the Apostles 43.7

### **20:10 *His Life Is in Him***

### **20:11 *Paul Conversed a Long Time***

#### **Celebrating the Eucharist on the Lord's Day.**

Augustine: Far be it from us to accept this as affirming that the apostles were accustomed to fast habitually on the Lord's Day. For the day now known as the Lord's day was then called the first day of the week, as is more plainly seen in the Gospels; for the day of the Lord's resurrection is called by Matthew "first day of the week" <sup>14</sup> and by the other three Evangelists "the first day of the week," <sup>15</sup> and it is well ascertained that the same is the day which is now called the Lord's day. Either, therefore, it was after the close of the seventh day that they had assembled—namely, in the beginning of the night that followed and that belonged to the Lord's day or the first day of the week—and in this case the apostle, before proceeding to break bread with them, as is done in the sacrament of the body of Christ, continued his discourse until midnight, and also, after celebrating the sacrament, continued still speaking again to those who were assembled, being much pressed for time in order that he might set out at dawn upon the Lord's day. Or if it was on the first day of the week, at an hour before sunset on the Lord's day, that they had assembled, the words of the text, "Paul preached to them, ready to depart the next day," themselves expressly state the reason for his prolonging his discourse—namely, that he was about to leave them and wished to give them ample instruction. The passage does not therefore prove that they habitually fasted on the Lord's day but only that it did not seem proper to the apostle to interrupt, for the sake of taking refreshment, an important discourse that was listened to with the ardor of most lively interest by persons whom he was about to leave, and whom, on account of his many other journeys, he visited but seldom, and perhaps on no other occasion than this, especially because, as subsequent events prove, he was then leaving them without expectation of seeing them again in this life. Letter 36.12.28.<sup>16</sup>