

To My Jehovah's Witness friends,

Below is the reference you present (Acts 20:20) pertaining to the issue of Door to Door evangelism as practiced by the Jehovah's Witnesses. If read as you presented it, I can see where it might be construed as evidence of Paul going door to door as he presented the gospel. However, if taken *in* context, I do not believe this is what is actually being conveyed in this passage. There is an inherent danger when a verse is pulled out and used out of context; For example, I can use a passage from Luke's Gospel and we now have a problem i.e. (Luke 10:7.) Is there a contradiction in the bible, or is it possible one verse is misunderstood, **as a result of being out of context?**

Acts 20:20 (KJV)

²⁰ And how I kept back nothing that was profitable *unto you*, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house,

What about this verse?

Luke 10:7 (KJV)

⁷ And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house.

*In Acts 20:20 it is Paul speaking, in Luke. 10:7, Jesus Himself is speaking as He instructs the disciples before sending them out in pairs to spread the gospel. **The New World Translation (NWT) renders this verse as follows: ⁷ So stay in that house, **+** eating and drinking the things they provide, **+** for the worker is worthy of his wages. **+** Do not keep transferring from house to house.** I looked up the Greek rendering in which it reads "Remove not from house to house." Original: μεταβαίνω - Transliteration: Metabaino- Phonetic: met-ab-ah'-ee-no- Definition: 1. to pass over from one place to another, to remove, depart*

In the spirit of being a "Truth Seeker," I also checked 18 other translations and they all say Go not from house to house with some slight syntax variations. I don't know why the NWT translators choose to use the word "transferring" in this case while all the other translations are consistent but it really doesn't affect the meaning of the verse in this case. My reason for pointing this out is to illustrate how easy it is to get confused when things are plucked out of the bible to prove a particular theological stance. In this case, we have the appearance of one passage advocating going from house to house, while another passage has Jesus Himself clearly stating, "Go not from house to house." Keep in mind that Paul is talking about his personal actions in Acts 20:20, and there is no hint whatsoever of him saying this is what we should be doing! Throughout my personal Christian walk, I have been shown many verses out of context as people attempt to justify their beliefs. By doing this, one could make a case for any interpretation. If you keep Acts 20 in context, it is easy to see that Paul in no-way is giving a command to go house to house, nor is he saying that he himself went house to house as taught by the Jehovah's Witnesses! He is merely stating that his message is consistent whether preaching publicly or from house to house in the course of witnessing to the Gentiles and the Jews.

Acts 20:17-21 (KJV)

¹⁷ And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church. ¹⁸ And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, ¹⁹ Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews: ²⁰ And how I kept back nothing that was profitable *unto you*, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, ²¹ Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

In summation, Paul In Acts 20 is simply stating that his ministry is both public and also house to house, he is not giving a command to do so. There is nothing wrong with going door to door preaching the gospel of Christ as you do if you ignore Luke 10:7. However, if you treat Luke 10:7 the same as you do Acts 20:20 there seems to be a problem developing! Again, Paul is merely making a statement about his own actions, but Jesus is without doubt giving His disciples a command! So which passage is descriptive and which one is instructive? If you acknowledge Jesus as "The Son of Jehovah" you have to decide if the command Jesus gave the disciples carries more weight than the statement Paul made in Acts as he was talking about his own ministry. Moreover, when you treat the practice of going door to door as you would it being a commandment, it conveys the message that what Jesus endured on the cross was not enough for the atonement of sin. If a person thinks that God is judging them by their performance it in essence is a Mockery of Jesus and all that He came to do! This goes against the gospel of Christ, which is a Grace message. In the context of the bible the word Grace means, "Gift of God to Humanity," it is a free gift from God as stated in the following:

Ephesians 2:8-9 (KJV)

⁸ For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is the gift of God:* ⁹ Not of works, lest any man should boast.

If we can attain favor with God through works, for what reason did Jesus die and rise on the third day? One cannot mix works with grace. Jesus died for all sin, past present and future, for all of humanity. Good works cannot get you a relationship with God, but a true relationship with God always results in Good Works. Jesus taught His disciples the following relating to people who believe that their works develop a relationship with Him.

Matthew 7:21-23 (KJV)

²¹ Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my **Father**** which is in heaven. ²² Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? ²³ And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

Jesus just as well could have added, "many will say Lord, Lord, I have gone door to door – house to house every day proclaiming the gospel" and it would have fit right in to this passage!

****Just a side note: In verse 21 above the Greek translation of Father in this passage is as follows:**

Original: **μοῦ** - Transliteration: **Mou** - Phonetic: **moo**

- Definition: **1.** I, me, my, of me

So... there it is. You gave me your point of view and I gave you mine!

I look forward to our next exchange

Shalom... Your friend Wayne