



All Citizens Christian Church

Bible Study: Thursday, October 20, 2016.

Topic: Acts 18

Acts 18 New King James Version (NKJV)

INTRODUCTION: After Paul departed from Athens, he went just about 50 miles away from Athens to the city of Corinth which is the capital of Achaia. Corinth was a frightening city in terms of the gospel. If the ministry was difficult in Macedonia and Athens, Corinth promised to be a worse place than the two. It is a city that was given to profligacy and sexual vices. They even worshiped a goddess of love called Aphrodite. However, typical with Paul, he found an opportunity to preach the gospel by teaming with a husband and wife (Priscilla and Aquila) who were in the same trade of tent making like himself.

Silas and Timothy that he left in Macedonia eventually came to meet him in Corinth apparently with sufficient funds to enable him focus on the work of the ministry. At Corinth, Paul was again resisted by the Jews and it was here Paul finally gave up chasing after the Jews and decided he will settle for the gentiles. He then moved into the house of a gentile named Crispus. At this point God spoke to Paul to encourage him in the work He has sent him.

The Jews did not give up their effort to get rid of Paul despite what God had told him. He was accused by the Jews and reported to the Proconsul named Gallio who dismissed all their accusations. When this did not go down well with the Jews, they beat up the Sosthenes who was in charge of the synagogue.

For one and a half years Paul ministered in Corinth which is perhaps the second longest he ever stayed anywhere. From here he went to Ephesus through Cenchrea. After leaving Priscilla and Aquila at Ephesus he went to Jerusalem to fulfill a vow which he had taken and eventually returned to his base which was Antioch. Dr. Luke did not end the chapter without talking briefly about Paul's third missionary journey which was basically to go round his previous locations and strengthen the people.

The Chapter ended with Luke narrating the encounter between Priscila, Aquila and Apollos. was a Jew who knew only about God via the Baptism of John. While Apollos demonstrated so much zeal about the gospel, he still needed to know about the Lord Jesus Chsrit. This, Priscila and Aquila explained to him. Thereafter he left and moved to Achia. The influence of Apollos on the gospel was so much that Paul had to refer to him in I Cor 3:6.

DISCUSSION:

Ministering at Corinth

After these things Paul departed from Athens and went to Corinth.²And he found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla (because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome); and he came to them.³So, because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and worked; for by occupation they were tentmakers.

Paul stayed behind and worked:

1. What are the advantages and disadvantages of a working minister?

I Cor 9:11-14, 15-18.

⁴And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded both Jews and Greeks.

2. What is the advantage of reasoning together as believers: Heb 10:25, Matthew 18:20, I Thess 5:11

⁵When Silas and Timothy had come from Macedonia, Paul was compelled by the Spirit, and testified to the Jews *that* Jesus *is* the Christ.⁶But when they opposed him and blasphemed, he shook his garments and said to them, "Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean. From now on I will go to the Gentiles.

3. At some point on this trip Paul had stopped working. How was he surviving? Acts 18:5, II Cor 11:8-9, Phil 4:15.
4. When do you think it is ok to give up in the strife to preach the gospel? When do you think a directional change is necessary in the same pursuit of the ministration of the word of God?

5. Let us examine Paul's training strategy: He left Silas and Timothy in Thessalonica- Macedonia to continue the work. Acts 18:18-19
6. A good work force is very necessary at every part in the ministry. II Tim 2:2, Titus 1:5, Ezra 7:25. Jesus did the same thing. Mark 6:7. Num 11:16
7. Why do some ministers burn out in the ministry? Ex 18:14-16

(**Burnout** is a state of emotional, mental, and physical exhaustion caused by excessive and prolonged stress. It occurs when you feel overwhelmed and unable to meet constant demands. As the stress continues, you begin to lose the interest or motivation that led you to take on a certain role in the first place.)

8. How do you prevent a burn out?

"⁷And he departed from there and entered the house of a certain *man* named Justus, *one* who worshiped God, whose house was next door to the synagogue. ⁸Then Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his household. And many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized.

9. What kinds of people do you think first embraced the gospel in Corinth? I Cor 1:26

⁹Now the Lord spoke to Paul in the night by a vision, "Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent; ¹⁰for I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city."

10. The constant attack of the enemy eventually sends some fear into anyone as we can see in the case of Apostle Paul. Isaiah 41:10, Luke 22:43. Isaiah 40:29-31
11. Do a critical examination of God's words to Paul. Break down each sentence.
12. If God were to call you and tell you these words directly, how will you feel? And why do you think it became necessary for God to speak to Paul like this? Examine the history and culture of Corinth as you answer this question.

¹¹And he continued *there* a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

13. See the effect of God's word on your daily activities. Psalm 37:17, Psalm:145:14

¹²When Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews with one accord rose up against Paul and brought him to the judgment seat, ¹³saying, "This fellow persuades men to worship God contrary to the law."

14. What was the significance of reporting Paul to the proconsul of Achia?

¹⁴And when Paul was about to open *his* mouth, Gallio said to the Jews, "If it were a matter of wrongdoing or wicked crimes, O Jews, there would be reason why I should bear with you. ¹⁵But if it is a question of words and names and your own law, look *to it* yourselves; for I do not want to be a judge of such *matters*." ¹⁶And he drove them from the judgment seat. ¹⁷Then all the Greeks^[b] took Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and beat *him* before the judgment seat. But Gallio took no notice of these things.

15. In spite of what God said, did the devil give up? Luke 4:13, I Peter 5:8.

16. When God stands as your defence all accusers are useless. (You will notice that Paul did not even defend himself before the proconsul dismissed the case) Jer 1:19, Rom 8:31, I John 4:4

Paul Returns to Antioch

¹⁸So Paul still remained a good while. Then he took leave of the brethren and sailed for Syria, and Priscilla and Aquila *were* with him. He had *his* hair cut off at Cenchrea, for he had taken a vow.

16. Can you think of the kind of vow Paul must have taken and why? Psalm 76:11

¹⁹And he came to Ephesus, and left them there; but he himself entered the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews.

17. After Paul was previously resisted by the Holy Spirit in Acts 16:6, now he is finally Ephesus. Why now? Rom 8:28, Ecc 3:11

²⁰When they asked *him* to stay a longer time with them, he did not consent, ²¹but took leave of them, saying, "I must by all means keep this coming

feast in Jerusalem;^[c] but I will return again to you, God willing.” And he sailed from Ephesus.

²²And when he had landed at Caesarea, and gone up and greeted the church, he went down to Antioch. ²³After he had spent some time *there*, he departed and went over the region of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples.

Ministry of Apollos

²⁴Now a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man *and* mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus. ²⁵This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord, though he knew only the baptism of John.

18. How could a man have thought eloquently about Jesus and all he knew was the baptism of John. John 5:39, II Tim 3:15, Matthew 22:29.

²⁶So he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.

19. Did you notice the words they took him aside? How will some people approach this same challenge? I Cor 9:20.

20. Imagine the disaster that the zeal of Apollos would have caused if he did not meet Priscilla and Aquila. Acts 19:1-3.

²⁷And when he desired to cross to Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him; and when he arrived, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace; ²⁸for he vigorously refuted the Jews publicly, showing from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ.

21. Compare the message of Apollos before meeting with Aquila and Priscilla and the message thereafter. See how the encounter with this husband and wife changed this man's; perspective and thus improved his delivery of the gospel. Prov 27:9, Heb 10:24, Job 4:3-4.

22. Consider the effect of Apollos on the gospel: I Cor 3:6

CONCLUSION: We must never abandon ship as the one who has sent us is able to ensure a successful landing. He did not send to leave us alone. In a time when the gospel is becoming harder to preach as a result of the devil's

tricks, we must make efforts to ensure that we are in are doing the master's business with every zeal, wisdom and understanding. May the Lord help us to receive the imperishable crown.