

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

TENTMAKERS (ACTS 18:1-4) FROM ATHENS TO CORINTH

After leaving Athens, Paul comes to the large and important city of Corinth and meets a Jewish couple that has become successful for making tents. Aquila and Priscilla owned a tent and leather-making firm that had locations in Rome, Corinth, and Ephesus. Paul also made tents to supplement his income.

PRISCILLA STANDS OUT AS ONE OF THE GREATS

Many women are mentioned in the NT in relation to ministry, but Priscilla seems exceptional. She is always mentioned with her husband as a team that is knowledgeable and mature in their faith. When Paul met them, they were already Christians. Paul may have sought them out based on their good reputation.

THIS CONNECTION WAS LIFELONG

The spiritual and occupational similarities between Paul and this couple lasted a lifetime. Paul often wrote about his "secular trade" and took a healthy pride in his work. Paul, like Aquila and Priscilla, **saw the marketplace as an opportunity to share their faith.**

THERE IS NO OFF TIME FOR THE CHRISTIAN

Paul shows us that there isn't a dividing line between "professional" and "normal" Christians. **God's commission to share the gospel, serve, love, and give is not solely the responsibility of occupational ministers.**

- **Whether we're janitors, accountants, pastors, realtors, or students, we're to do all things for the glory of God.**

IT IS ALSO A TEAM EFFORT

In Paul's journeys we've seen his dependency on others in order to share the gospel. Paul had financial help from Lydia, missionary help from Silas and Tim, and now mentorship from Aquila and Priscilla for 16+ years.

- **We need all kinds of people with all kinds of resources to advance the gospel as effectively as possible.**

CORINTH (ACTS 18:5-11)

SILAS AND TIMOTHY ARRIVE IN CORINTH

Paul's teammates rejoined him and told him good news about the congregations in Philippi and Thessalonica. They also brought money from Philippi that was to be used to free up Paul's time for ministry in Corinth.

- We see **the importance of churches helping start and sustain other churches. This takes a Kingdom mindset!**

THE JEWS IN CORINTH WEREN'T HAVING IT

After sharing the gospel with the Jews in Corinth, Paul "shook out his clothes and told them, 'Your blood is on your own heads!'" because they'd "resisted and blasphemed." This was Jewish symbolism of being finished with someone.

- **We're not responsible for the results of witnessing, only planting and watering the seed.**

ON TO THE GENTILES

Paul proclaimed his innocence in regard to the non-believing Jews, and went to a Gentile's house named Titius that was next door to the synagogue. The first Corinthian church met in Titius' house, also known as Gaius.

A VERY IMPORTANT CONVERT

Another man named Crispus, the leader of the local synagogue also became a Christian along with his entire family. Not only did God provide a place to start a church right next to the synagogue, but the leader even started worshipping there!

"MANY BELIEVED AND WERE BAPTIZED"

Not only did many people become Christians, many of the prominent leaders of the community believed (Rom. 16:23). We also see an affirmation from God in a vision to Paul that God "has many people in this city." Paul came to Corinth with "fear" (1 Corinthians 2:3), but God showed him that He had a **foreknowledge** of his success.

GOD DOESN'T LEAD US INTO FAILURE

If we have a relationship with God and learn to listen and trust His "still small voice," He will lead us into a successful life. This isn't vain worldly success but a life of true abundance.

- **Jesus wants us to have great community, families, marriages, work ethics, and a close connection to the Father! This is true success!**

CITY LIFE (ACTS 18:12-23)

AN UNINTERESTED PROCONSUL

After being in Corinth for about a year and a half, the Jews that hated Paul made a "united attack" against him and brought him to an apathetic governor named Gallio. This wasn't Paul's first time to be falsely accused in front of city officials, but oddly enough, Gallio cares so little that he doesn't even want to hear the defendant.

- Because he didn't feel the religious problems of the Jews were worth his time, Gallio threw them out of the tribunal.

WE ARE GOING TO BEAT SOMEBODY!

After Crispus converted, the Jews got another synagogue leader, Sosthenes. After Gallio took no interest in the Jews' complaints, they beat Sosthenes in the streets. Luke doesn't say why, but we can assume that he was beaten because he was a Christian sympathizer. Paul records later that he became a Christian (1 Corinthians 1).

PAUL SAID FAREWELL

After staying in Corinth until about A.D. 52, Paul heads back to Antioch in modern day Turkey. This marks the end of the 2nd missionary trip.

- It seems that Aquila shaved his head as part of a Nazarite vow. Most don't believe it was Paul because it was highly out of character.

A SHORT BREAK, AND THEN HITTING THE ROAD

Paul probably hung out in Antioch for about a year before heading back towards Asia Minor on his 3rd missionary trip. He planned on going back to Ephesus, 1500 miles away where Aquila and Priscilla now lived and set up their business.

TESTIMONY (ACTS 18:24-28)

A NEW LEADER COMES INTO THE MIX

A man named Apollos from Alexandria Egypt met Paul in Ephesus. He was well educated and well versed in the OT and had become a Christian before coming to Ephesus. Why he came to Ephesus we don't know, but we know that he "was speaking and teaching" about Jesus.

CLOSE, BUT NOT QUITE THERE YET

Though Apollos spoke fervently and accurately about Jesus, he only knew about Jesus from John the Baptist's example. In other words, he didn't know the full story of the Christian faith yet. Apollos' pre-Pentecost knowledge limited him on **understanding the Holy Spirit** and mission to the Gentiles.

PRISCILLA AND AQUILA TO THE RESCUE

After the couple heard Apollos teaching in the synagogue, they took him aside and proceeded to tell him the rest of the story of Jesus and the Christian movement starting at Pentecost (Acts 2). After realizing that Ephesus was in good hands, Apollos decides to head west back to Corinth and help the church there.

APOLLOS BECOMES A HEAVY HITTER

Because of the teaching and leadership of Priscilla and Aquila, Apollos goes on to be a major factor in the development of the church in Corinth and is regarded as one of the most important leaders of the early church.

KNOW THAT GOD WANTS THE BEST FOR US

- First, we need to know that **God loves us and wants us to live fulfilling lives** that honor each other and give Him honor.
- If we can start to understand that **our value comes from God and not the superficial things of the world**, it will change how we live.

NOW THAT THIS LIFE TAKES HARD WORK

- Though a life with Christ is fulfilling, **it isn't always easy**. The Word tells us that we will have troubles, it relates life to a marathon, and calls us to diligently work and be patient.
- **Anything of value takes dedication, sacrifice, and hard work.**

KNOW THAT WE MUST KNOW

- We have to be **knowledgeable in the Word**, we need to **pray and ask for wisdom**, we need to be **educated on the works of the Holy Spirit** and constantly be **seeking God's will**.
- Without knowledge we will be incapable of achieving all God wants for and from us.

KNOW THAT IT'S BIGGER THAN THE INDIVIDUAL

- Like Apollos, we need to **go to where the need is**. There are people at your work, school, coffee shop, gym, etc. that need what you have!
- God has not given us the light to keep it covered but to **"let your light shine to show your good deeds and bring glory to our Father in heaven."**