

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JULY 26TH, 2026 // BOOK OF ACTS

CORINTH (ACTS 18:1-11) AN INFLUENTIAL AND IMMORAL CITY

Corinth was the largest and most influential city in Greece in Paul's time. It was located on a narrow strip of land that connected the east to the west with two ports on two different seas. The city also had a temple to Aphrodite, the goddess of love, with as many as 1,000 temple prostitutes. Being a "Corinthian" was synonymous with living an immoral lifestyle.

THE IMPORTANCE OF WORK

This city was a great place to see the gospel going to the world. It seems that Paul had lost some of his financial support and needed to do some bivocational work to support himself. He met a couple who would become lifelong ministry and business partners: Priscilla and Aquila.

- **We should never do ministry alone. We draw strength and support from partners.**

THE IMPORTANCE OF SUPPORT

It seems Silas and Timothy arrived in Corinth with funds that allowed Paul to leave the tent-making business and give full-time attention to preaching the gospel. Paul preached to the Jews first, then to the Gentiles. People followed Jesus by faith and were baptized in obedience.

- **All are called to ministry, while some are called to make their living doing ministry.**

HOW TO RESPOND TO VIOLENT RESISTANCE

Paul kept teaching in the synagogue until those Jews resisted in a particular way—through blaspheming Jesus. Paul symbolically shook out his clothes and held those hearers accountable for their prideful rejection of the truth. Jesus didn't need Paul to defend Him but to proclaim Him. It was now time to move exclusively to the Gentiles in Corinth.

- **We are called to be faithful, not fruitful.**

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE LORD'S SUPPORT

While we often think of Paul as immune to discouragement, it seems his time in Corinth had worn on him. Jesus was kind to give Paul what he needed: encouragement. Jesus would protect him, give him a great return as he spoke, and, through him, build a church for His glory.

- **The Lord meets us at our lowest moments with the gifts of His presence and promises.**

GOD IS FAITHFUL (ACTS 18:12-23)

THE JEWS GO AFTER PAUL AGAIN

Gallio was known as a wise and fair leader in Achaia, the region of Greece in which Corinth was located. The Jews united together in their legal attack against Paul and brought him to Gallio. Gallio wisely saw these charges as religious and not legal, so he drove the Jews out. Whether the Jews or the Greeks beat Sosthenes, Gallio was unmoved in his decision.

PAUL STAYS IN CORINTH THEN HEADS HOME

After the Gallio decision, Paul stayed a little longer in Corinth, then started his trip back to Antioch—probably to give a report to his sending church, which would end his second missionary journey.

- **While Paul was ultimately obligated and accountable to Jesus, he was connected to his sending church too.**

CONNECTED TO HIS JEWISHNESS

It seems Paul had taken a Nazirite vow (Numbers 6:1-21), and that vow ended. He was to take the shaven hair to the temple and offer it as a fire sacrifice. While obedience to Jewish law wasn't required for salvation, Paul chose to use this vow as a way to honor God and his heritage.

- **We can honor our heritage without making it a salvation issue.**

IN EPHESUS

On his way back to Antioch, Paul stopped in Ephesus (Asia), along with Priscilla and Aquila. He preached in the synagogue, and some came to faith in Jesus. They asked him to stay, but he felt led to continue his journey home. Paul left Priscilla and Aquila there to disciple the converts.

- **Timing belongs to the Lord. His call on us is to be faithful with the time we've been given.**

THE THIRD JOURNEY BEGINS

Paul got to Jerusalem, where he took his shaved hair to the temple as an offering. He met with the church and leaders, then went back to Antioch for reporting and refreshment. Verse 23 tells us that after some time, he left to go northwest once again and begin his third missionary journey.

- Paul's calling was to plant churches and see them to maturity, always trusting Jesus.

APOLLOS (ACTS 18:24-28) MORE WORKERS FOR THE WORK

A Jew from Alexandria had come to faith in Jesus and was faithfully proclaiming Him to those who would listen. Apollos is described as eloquent, competent, fervent in spirit (probably the Holy Spirit), and unashamed to speak boldly for Jesus.

- **We don't know a lot about Apollos. What we do know is he loved Jesus and people, which is the most important thing about us.**

ALEXANDRIA

Alexandria was a very influential city in northern Africa. It was the city where the OT had been translated into Greek (Septuagint/LXX). It was also a hub of learning with a world-famous library. Apollos stewarded these blessings well.

- **We are all responsible to steward the gifts of Jesus as He gives them to us. We are to be grateful for all we have.**

KNEW ONLY JOHN'S BAPTISM

Apollos knew Jesus as the Messiah and the fulfillment of the OT Scriptures. Somehow, he had not yet learned of baptism in the trinitarian name or that baptism was linked not only to repentance but also to Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.

- In the ancient world, access to information was limited. **Apollos was ignorant but hungry.**

HUMBLE TEACHERS AND HUMBLE LEARNERS

Apollos was a gifted teacher and used that gift to show that Jesus was the Messiah to the Jews. When Priscilla and Aquila heard what was lacking in Apollos's teaching, they quietly pulled him aside and filled in the gaps. Apollos's gifting and learning could have made him prideful, but he humbly received what they taught him.

- **The gospel was their greatest concern.**

GREATER USEFULNESS

Perhaps Priscilla and Aquila had told Apollos about Corinth, which God used to move his heart in that direction. The Ephesian church urged the Corinthian church to welcome Apollos. Now fully equipped, Apollos was a mighty tool in the hands of Jesus as he pointed people to Him.

- Notice verse 27 says Apollos helped those **"who by grace had believed."**

RESPONSIBILITIES OF A DISCIPLE OF JESUS

- **Be obedient to all that Jesus calls us to.**
- Seek ministry partners with whom we can pray, serve, evangelize, encourage, and if necessary, suffer.
- Always preach the gospel and make disciples, whether paid or unpaid.
- **Faithfulness in the hard times produces fruit in His timing.**

LIVE INTENTIONALLY

- We are accountable to Jesus and our brothers and sisters.
- We can honor our heritage and traditions **without making them salvation issues that cause confusion.**
- We say "yes" to where Jesus leads us.
- **We should know our calling and gifting and live in those to the glory of God.**

TRUST JESUS, WORK HARD, STAY HUMBLE

- Trusting in Jesus isn't passive. It means He is our source of power and purpose, but if we aren't tapping into Him, that's on us.
- Working hard shouldn't fuel pride; it should reveal humble dependence on Jesus.
- **Christianity is modeled on the humility of Jesus who left Heaven and became a servant. Be like Jesus!**