

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JULY 25TH–26TH, 2026 // THE BOOK OF ACTS

CORINTH (ACTS 18:1–8)

FINDING LIKE-MINDED PEOPLE FOR MINISTRY

From Athens, Paul went west to Corinth to meet Aquila and Priscilla, a Jewish couple exiled from Italy. This couple was in the same line of work as Paul and became extremely influential in the First-Century Church.

- Their tentmaking business was lucrative with locations in Rome, Corinth, and Ephesus.

PRISCILLA

Priscilla stands out as one of the great NT women and leaders. She and Aquila are mentioned six times in the Bible; four of those times, she is mentioned first because she was a Roman citizen with higher social standing.

- Priscilla is a great example of **Christianity's progressive view of women in leadership.**

PAUL CHOSE TO PROVIDE FOR HIMSELF

Paul advocated for occupational ministry (1 Corinthians 9; 1 Timothy 5; Galatians 6), but he chose to support himself to be independent, to be above suspicion, and to model servanthood.

- **There is no secular work for Christians.** Regardless of how we make a living, **we do all things as a service to Christ.**

PEOPLE CAN BE FRUSTRATING

Eventually, Silas and Timothy arrived and freed Paul up to do more of the teaching in the synagogues. But the majority of the Jews rejected and “blasphemed” Jesus.

- Paul reached a boiling point, “shook out his clothes,” declared “your blood is on your own heads,” and focused more on Gentiles.

THE BEGINNING OF THE CORINTHIAN CHURCH

Though there was a lot of tension in Corinth, there was also much success! Paul met and saw the salvation of Titius Justus, Crispus (a leader in the synagogue), and many others.

- Matthew 24 tells about “two men in a field.” **We're not responsible for people's salvation but for the introduction to the one who saves.**

PROTECTION (ACTS 18:9–17)

ANOTHER VISION IN ACTS

Here, Paul has a “night vision” of Jesus telling him, “**Don't be afraid**” to preach in Corinth because “no one will lay a hand on you” and He “[had] many people in [that] city.”

- **We are not always promised physical protection, but we are promised provision if we are courageous and obedient.**

A TRIP TO SEE THE GOVERNOR

While Paul was teaching, “the Jews made a united attack against [him] and brought him to the tribunal [court]” to the governor.

- Gallio was a Roman proconsul who couldn't care less about the Jews. Before Paul could even open his mouth, Gallio refused to be bothered by the situation.

LIVING IN HIS WILL

At times, God uses people who don't align with Him to fulfill His will (Pharoah, Augustus).

God also makes “all things work together for the good of those who love” Him (Romans 8:28).

- **God never condones evil but uses all things to benefit and bless those who humbly repent and submit to His will.**

SOSTHENES

Sosthenes succeeded Crispus as the leader of the synagogue, after Crispus converted.

He was the one to bring Paul to the tribunal, but he became the target of the mob because he eventually sympathized with Paul.

- Shortly after this sympathy, he converted to Christianity and co-authored 1 Corinthians.

A YEAR AND A HALF

Paul was in Corinth from 50 A.D. to 52 A.D. The Corinthian church was both successful and problematic, hence two disciplinary letters.

- The Corinthians became an example of **what churches must avoid: unaddressed sexual sin, misuse of spiritual gifts, factions, and disrespecting authority.**

THE VOW (ACTS 18:18–23)

PAUL SAID FAREWELL AND SAILED TO SYRIA

Priscilla and Aquila left with Paul as his second missionary journey came to an end. He also shaved his head in Cenchreae, a harbor in Corinth, to conclude a Nazarite vow.

- Nazarite vows came from Numbers 6. It was a temporary oath to not cut hair, to abstain from wine, and to not touch the dead.

SOMETIMES WE NEED TO TIGHTEN UP

Paul's vow was similar to us **fasting** and sacrificing comforts in order to grow closer to Jesus. Paul wasn't lost, but he understood that **mature Christians occasionally need to fine-tune their spiritual engines.**

- **True Christians don't aim to maintain but to grow in their relationship with God.**

BACKTRACKING AND ENCOURAGING

After leaving Corinth, Paul backtracked to Ephesus, Israel's coast, Jerusalem, Antioch in Turkey, and back into Galatia and Phrygia to strengthen the churches he had helped start.

- Disciples are to be disciple-makers. This means we don't just share truth but walk out faith with others as best as we can.

APOLLOS (ACTS 18:24–28)

MODELS FOR US AS READERS

Apollos was a Jew from Egypt who came to Ephesus and converted. He was “**eloquent,**” “**competent,**” **educated,**” fervent [**sincere**] in spirit,” and **taught “accurately,”** though he was limited in his knowledge of Jesus.

- **One cannot overemphasize the importance of personal character.**

LIMITED BUT LOOKING

Though Apollos hadn't been exposed to the complete truth, **he was passionately looking for more and humbly submitting to what he did know of God and the truth.**

- Apollos knew of John the Baptist, and when Priscilla and Aquila found this out, they told him the rest of the story.

“VIGOROUSLY REFUTED”

Apollos responded to the gospel and became a “great help” and teacher when he arrived in Corinth. Luke records he was “vigorous” in “demonstrating through the Scriptures that Jesus is the Messiah.”

- *Vigorous* here is **energetic** and **mentally strong**. **Do we have this passion for truth?**

ALL THINGS UNTO GOD

- “Whatever you do, do it from the heart, as something done for the Lord and not for people” (Colossians 3:23). Whether it was work, relationships, or teaching the gospel, Paul did everything to the best of his abilities.
- We're responsible for the effort, not the outcome. That is up to God (1 Corinthians 3).

NOTHING TO FEAR, IF...

- When we place our faith in Jesus, **His love and truth drive out anxiety and fear** (2 Timothy 1; 1 John 4; John 14). This doesn't mean we don't have moments of panic but that **in Him, we regain peace and security.**
- But **God isn't obligated to protect those who live in rebellion to Him** (Isaiah 58; Galatians 6).

WHAT IS A DISCIPLE?

- A **disciple** is one who **wholeheartedly and genuinely follows Jesus, follows the written Word despite cultural shifts, and is faithfully involved in a local church.**
- We aim to make/equip disciples who aim to make/equip more disciples. This is the desire of Jesus (Matthew 28:19–20).

ARE WE GROWING IN DISCIPLESHIP?

- Like Paul, there are times when we may need to **take an inventory of our life and faith and take some steps to tighten up.**
- Are we trying to maintain? Or do we take the time to **study, deeply pray, fast, or sacrifice** some comforts to grow closer to Jesus and our understanding of Him?
- Like Apollos, **do we strive to be people of strong character?** Are we sincere? Do we want to learn? Do we want to communicate more articulately and accurately so others can be blessed by the gospel?
- **Do we desire to be more than mundane in our spiritual walk and to impact others?**