

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JULY 26TH, 2026 // BOOK OF ACTS

THE CHURCH IN CORINTH (ACTS 18:1–11) FROM ATHENS TO CORINTH

Corinth is a city located on the east side of the Peloponnese, the peninsula attached to the mainland of Greece. At this point in time, Corinth would have boasted about 200,000 people. Because of Corinth's location, it was culturally diverse and highly influential.

- Paul wrote two letters to the church in Corinth and eventually wrote Romans while in Corinth.

AQUILA AND PRISCILLA

In verse 2, we see evidence of Claudius forcing Jews to leave Rome. Suetonius, a Roman historian, wrote, "Claudius expelled the Jews since they were causing disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus."

- Aquila and Priscilla's move would have been extremely fresh, with both Chapter 18 and Suetonius's writing taking place around 50 A.D.

When Paul met Aquila and Priscilla, it was the beginning of something special. In 1 Corinthians 16:19 and 2 Timothy 4:19, we see greetings from Paul to the couple. In Romans 16:3–4, Paul claims them as "coworkers in Christ Jesus, who risked their own necks for [his] life."

- Paul goes so far as to thank them on behalf of **ALL the Gentile churches.**

"TENTMAKERS BY TRADE"

Rabbis and scribes did not consider it proper to financially gain from their teaching. Paul and others financially supported their mission work by other trades, like tentmaking. Still, there were those who blessed them on their journeys.

- Like the evangelists who have come before us, do we see sharing Jesus as a **calling**? Or is it an avenue of **personal gain** (1 Corinthians 9:15–18)?

PERSUADING THE JEWS AND GREEKS

Debating Scripture should never be done in an aggressive or demeaning way. It should always be rooted in our desire for others to know Christ. **If we are looking to win an argument rather than win people for Jesus, our evangelism is ineffective** (1 Corinthians 9:19).

- "I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified" (1 Corinthians 2:2).

PAUL WALKED AWAY INNOCENT

Paul's devotion to testifying about Jesus to the Jews has been evident in many other areas up until this point. Here, we see a response similar to what happened in previous chapters: some Jews resisted and blasphemed.

- "We are God's coworkers" (1 Corinthians 3:9a). "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth" (1 Corinthians 3:6).

THE CORINTHIANS' RESPONSE

When Paul shared the gospel with Justus (Gentile) and Crispus (Jew), they believed and were baptized by Paul (1 Corinthians 1:14). We are also led to believe that many more believed and were baptized; **their response was immediate.**

- Once we've heard and accepted the gospel message, the next step is baptism. **Baptism is an outward profession of an inward work.**

A WORD FROM THE LORD

Some Bibles have portions of them written in red font. This is used mostly in the four Gospels but occasionally in scripture references as well.

- Based on God's words of encouragement, we can assume that Paul may have feared his work being cut short or the failure of the Corinthian church. As God spoke to Paul, He also speaks to us: **"For I am with you."**

RETURN TO ANTIOCH (ACTS 18:12–23)

GALLIO, THE PROCONSUL

A proconsul was appointed as a Roman governor to manage a peaceful territory. Typically, these territories were major provinces—here, the province was Achaia.

- In a similar fashion to Jesus' trial with Pontius Pilate, Gallio is quick to dismiss the case. The religious case was no threat to the Roman state and was therefore thrown out.

A ROMAN GOVERNOR DEFENDING A CHRISTIAN

At this point, Paul was used to opposition, and he was prepared to defend himself, whether as a Jew or as a Roman citizen.

- Though Paul was prepared to defend himself, there was no need. Gallio may not have been a Jew, but it seems like he was used to dealing with their cultural issues. **Let us not forget God's promise in verse 10!**

SOSTHENES, SUCCESSOR OF CRISPUS

With Crispus professing faith in Jesus (Acts 18:8), the synagogue had a new leader in Sosthenes. Just as Crispus had, it seems Sosthenes also put his faith in Christ following these events (1 Corinthians 1:1).

- As has been the narrative in Acts, here, in the midst of persecution, faith and perseverance are strengthened.

"...BECAUSE OF A VOW HE HAD TAKEN..."

In verse 18, Paul shaved his head "because of a vow he had taken." This is most likely referring to a Nazirite vow, as depicted in Numbers 6.

- Jewish Christians weren't bound by the law and traditions, so why would Paul take such a vow? There was nothing inherently wrong with this tradition. **In the same way, we must not be legalistic with various traditions of faith.**

A SECOND JOURNEY ENDS AND A THIRD BEGINS

In Chapter 16, the Holy Spirit prevented Paul from moving into other parts of Asia. Here, in Chapter 18, two years later, we see that it must have been the right time for Paul and others to visit Ephesus. Things were going so well that Paul was asked to stay, and Priscilla and Aquila stayed to assist.

- **Trusting God's will is essential.** His timing and purpose are perfect.

TEACHING APOLLOS (ACTS 18:24–28)

BOLD AND FERVENT

Apollos was a man who was eloquent, powerful in the Scriptures, fervent in spirit, and he spoke boldly in the synagogue. He even **"vigorously refuted the Jews in public."**

- Though it was limited, Apollos's knowledge of Jesus was still accurate. **Whether limited by knowledge or not, are we fueled by fervor to passionately and boldly share Jesus?**

BOUND BY OUR EXCUSES

Ultimately, if we claim to be Jesus followers, every reason not to take part in our calling as evangelists is an excuse. **"I don't know enough," "I am not an eloquent speaker," "I am too shy," or "I am just not a passionate person"** should never prevent us from sharing our faith.

- **We must pray for boldness, we must be driven by passion, and we must study to know.**

EFFECTIVE MINISTRY

As great an example of boldness for Christ as Apollos was, he still needed others to sharpen his knowledge and abilities. Aquila and Priscilla effectively refined Apollos.

- Without A&P, Apollos's work may not have been as effective. Our work in ministry is never to be done alone, and we must never forsake how others in the Church can assist in that work.

ENDURANCE IN EVANGELISM

- What is our motivation for sharing the gospel?
- **When it comes to the gospel, sharing must precede teaching, and teaching must succeed sharing (Matthew 28:18–20).**
- Paul stayed in Corinth for a year and a half. He was committed to God's purpose; he was committed to planting and watering.
- **If we follow Jesus, are we in for the long haul?**

ENDURANCE IN DISCIPLESHIP

- Evangelism is the beginning of discipleship!
- Paul was an incredible evangelist, but he was also an incredible disciple-maker. He saw the need to check in with the churches in Derbe, Iconium, Lystra, and Antioch to strengthen the disciples.
- **If we have begun in our calling to share Jesus, have we continued to make disciples?**

TRUSTING HIS TIMING

- How are we at trusting His will and His timing?
- **When God shuts a door, are we more focused on questioning Him or fighting Him? Instead, we should be trusting Him.**
- **When God opens a door, are we so worried about the "closed doors" in the past that we are unprepared or unwilling to be obedient?**
- **"For I am with you."**