

Don't Give Up – Acts 18:1-28

Introduction:

One of the hardest places to share the Gospel message is in the halls of the secular university. There is a false belief that religion is illogical and only for the superstitious. No doubt Paul hit that kind of attitude in Corinth. We saw the reception of Paul in Athens was rather cool. People were interested to hear more, they loved to discuss, but it was a small group that accepted the message. Paul walked 60 kilometers southward and arrived at Corinth, the party capital of the country. To be called a “Corinthian” was to be called a drunk or loose living person. But this was still Greece, the place where scholars figured out the world was round, that it was 25,000 miles in circumference (240 BC) and that the sun was 240,000 miles from the earth (129 BC). The Greeks prided themselves in their intellectual life, and so looked down on the wandering Jew who came proclaiming a message that God came to earth in Judea in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. Not too different from the University professors today. So it should not surprise us that it was here that God gave Paul a very special message: “Do not be afraid and go on speaking. I am with you.” Today’s lesson looks at why those words were needed and how Paul responded. It may also encourage us when we feel like giving up...

A Welcome Host – Acts 18:1-4

1. Paul arrives in Corinth alone. Who does he meet there? What do we learn about Paul’s new friend (vss. 1-3)? What do we learn about Paul’s missionary work (v. 3)? (ie. who supported him?) What do we learn about the relationship of the Romans to the Jews? (v. 2) (cf. AD 49)



¹ By Ilya Yakubovich - This file has been extracted from another file: 1stMithradicwar89BC.png, CC BY-SA 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=87939799>

- Describe Paul's ministry in Corinth looking at verse 4. How is this similar to his ministry in other cities? At this point would you say the ministry is going well, or not? Why?

The Good and the Bad – Acts 18:5-11

- Who finally arrives to work with Paul (v. 5)? Describe what Paul was doing according to verse 5.
- Who were those who opposed and reviled Paul in verse 6? How did Paul respond to them? (cf. Nehemiah 5:13 for background) What message does he give the Jews? (cf. Ezekiel 33:4)
- Where does Paul go to continue his ministry (v. 7)? Where was this house located? Who was reached during this ministry (v. 8)? How did the new believers demonstrate they had entered this new found faith (v. 8)?
- In verses 9-10 we have a message from God to the Apostle Paul. What seven things does God say to Paul?
 -
 -
 -
 -
 -
 -
 -
- How long did Paul stay in Corinth teaching the people (v. 11)?

Opposition in Corinth – Acts 18:12-17

- Luke mentions the proconsul Gallio in verse 12. Why might he do this?

Note: Gallio was brother to the Stoic philosopher Seneca. His adoptive father was a Roman senator, and he also entered politics. Emperor Claudius appointed him proconsul of Achaia in June of AD 51. He was known as a leader with a pleasant disposition, which may be evident in the Acts 18 account.

9. What happened in Corinth according to verse 12? What was the charge (v. 13)?
10. It tells us that before Paul could mount a defence Gallio jumped in and addressed the Jews (v. 14). Why might he have done that? What does he tell the Jewish mob (vss. 14-15)?
11. In verse 16 we have Gallio's response to the Jewish mob. What does he do?
12. In verse 17 we read how they responded to Gallio's action. What did they do? Who is Sosthenes? Why might he be the target of their frustration?
13. They are desperately trying to drag Gallio into their dispute with Paul. Nonetheless, how does Gallio respond to their beating of Sosthenes?

The Journey Back to Antioch – Acts 18: 18-23

14. Paul stays a little longer and then decides it is time to leave the city. Who does he leave behind (v. 18)? Who does he bring with him (v. 18)?
15. What happened in Cenchreae? (v. 18) Why might Luke mention this?
16. Where do Paul Priscilla and Aquila end up (v. 19)? What does Paul do there?
17. In verse 20 we have a request from the Jews in Ephesus. What is it? How does Paul respond? However, what promise does he make (v. 21)?
18. Paul then sails to Caesarea, which is about 400 km south of Antioch, where he ends up. From Caesarea, where did Paul go according to verse 22? Paul finally arrives in Antioch (v. 22), spent some time there, then where did he go (v. 23)? What was his purpose for this journey?

The Work in Ephesus Begins – Acts 18: 24-28

19. In verse 24 we are introduced to a man named Apollos. He came to Ephesus and began teaching about Jesus. Name seven things we learn about him in verses 24-25:

-
-
-
-
-
-
-

20. Where do Priscilla and Aquila meet Apollos (v. 26)? What was their response to his preaching (v. 26)?

21. Once fully instructed by Priscilla and Aquila, what does Apollos want to do (v. 27)? He was sent with letters of recommendation so he would be welcomed by the church. What impact did Apollos have on the believers in the church of Corinth (v. 27)? What impact did he have for the furthering of the Gospel (v. 28)? What was his message?

Conclusion:

In Hebrews 12:1-2 we read:

12 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, ² fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

This was Paul's motto. It would have been easy to quit, considering all the obstacles he faced. But he pushed on, and we see new people entering the race with him. Apollos becomes a great advocate for Jesus. Priscilla and Aquila are instrumental in the work of God. Person by person the Holy Spirit is building His Church. May we also persevere in the work God has given us to do.