

- A Study in Acts -

Chapter Eighteen – Second Journey of Paul Continued

ACTS 18:1-5:

Upon arrival in Athens, and while he is waiting for Silas and Timothy, he begins to speak in the city's synagogue and marketplace (Paul is uniquely moved by the city being given over to idolatry); his preaching soon gains him an audience with the city's philosophers. Paul's sermon to these philosophers finds some limited success and from Athens he will now come to **Corinth**.

Please use the map

Text #1:

Acts 18:1-5 “After these things Paul departed from Athens and went to Corinth. ² And he found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla (because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome); and he came to them. ³ So, because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and worked; for by occupation they were tentmakers. ⁴ And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded both Jews and Greeks.

⁵ When Silas and Timothy had come from Macedonia, Paul was compelled by the Spirit, and testified to the Jews *that Jesus is the Christ.*”

Having covered the background and introduction to Corinth in the previous lesson, let's move on and begin to engage in the events surrounding Paul's stay in the Roman capital of Achaia.

Aquila and Priscilla: Paul is going to cling to this Jewish couple, not because they were already Christians, but because they were of the same trade. They would convert to the Lord Jesus Christ and serve Him with Paul. Paul could support himself here in Corinth as he engages in sharing the Gospel of Jesus as the Christ (this would also give him access to many in the marketplace as he and this couple sold their merchandise).

This couple is originally from Pontus, which is a province in Asia Minor; they have come to Corinth from Rome, having been forced to leave by Claudius, as he expelled all the Jews from Rome.

Their conversion was not a dormant service to the Lord, but an active passionate service that they were able and willing to offer even though they had jobs. We will see this at the end of this chapter, and we will additionally see the Apostle Paul approve of this couple, virtually right up to the point of his own death (**Romans 16:3; 1 Corinthians 16:19; 2 Timothy 4:19**).

Reasoned in the Synagogue: Paul went, as was his custom to where he knew the Jews would be, and reasoned with them concerning the O. T. teaching of the Christ and His coming. It seems evident by the statement in **Verse 5**, that this reasoning was all foundation; however, without actually naming the Christ as Jesus. This obviously allowed the Jews to acknowledge the

instruction without prejudice and anger, as was the case in many places (which allowed many to be founded in this knowledge, both natural born Jews and proselytes).

However, when Silas and Timothy final arrive in Corinth (remembering that they were actually supposed to come to Paul in Athens – **Acts 17:6**); the Spirit is going to compel Paul to boldly state the name of the Christ of God.

Silas and Timothy: We will talk more about the results of Paul’s preaching Jesus as the Christ in the next lesson; however, we want to take this moment and the remainder of this lesson to note the importance of the coming of Silas and Timothy.

When Paul was forced to leave Berea, because the Jews that had come from Thessalonica (**Acts 17:13**); he left behind Silas and Timothy. We learn from the first letter that Paul writes to the Thessalonian Christians, that Timothy actually stayed behind in Thessalonica (**1 Thessalonians 3:1-10**).

As these two actually arrived in Corinth to find Paul, they would report to him concerning the brethren in Macedonia that they were left with to strengthen and assist. It would be at the report of Timothy concerning the brethren in Thessalonica, which would now have Paul write his very first letter – **1 Thessalonians**.

Take this moment to make a note in your Bible, that during the events of **verses 5-10**; Paul will write this letter.

1 Thessalonians:

Problems Reported:

First, these brethren had come under attack by their own countrymen who had not obeyed the Gospel, and took this opportunity to begin to persecute them – **2:13-16**.

Second, while Paul was with them, he had spoken of the return of the Lord. They had taken his words in such a way as to worry without cause concerning the time of His coming. They were anxious in understanding about what would happen if they died prior to His coming – **4:13**. They were anxious about the order of the events at His return – **4:14-15**; and finally, they struggled in anxiety over when He would return – **5:1-2**.

Theme:

The theme to this first letter of Paul is also the solution for all the problems that the Thessalonians are experiencing – **“Walk Properly!”** See: **1 Thessalonians 2:12; 4:41**; strategically placed within the doctrine of each problem!

Just to make sure; when the Lord or His Apostles talk about a **“Walk”**, they are not talking about a certain stride in our locomotion, they are talking about *‘How we live!’* This properly guided and occupied life is educated and practiced by a single source of information – **“The Word of God”**; **2:13**, which is effective in the hearts of those who trust it. This is something that Paul will share with Christians in all of His letters:

Romans 1:16-17 *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. ¹⁷ For in it the*

righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “The just shall live by faith.”

Romans 10:17 “*So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”*

Colossians 1:9-10 “*For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; ¹⁰ that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God”*

These are just a few of the examples of internal commentary concerning the universal understanding that the truth of God’s word brings one to the blessings of God’s grace; and that one cannot hope to achieve it any other way! God only speaks to us now through Jesus Christ (**Hebrews 1:1-3**); thus, everything written to us through the Apostles and prophets in the doctrine of Christ Jesus, is the grace of God (commands to be obeyed, promises to keep, warnings to heed, etc.). These brethren had not just heard the word, but additionally received it (**1:5-6**), and most importantly must stand firm in it, in order to be able to overcome their anxieties (brought on by ignorance – **3:2; 4:13**).

Outline:

Chapters 1-3 – Very Personal Matters:

Intro – **1:1**

Men are watching them – **1:2-10**

How Paul demonstrated the Christian walk, while there – **2:1-12**

Their suffering and fellowship in it with other saints – **2:13-16**

His longing to see them again – **2:17-20**

Paul’s concern for their growth in faith – **3:1-5**

Timothy’s report actually encouraged Paul – **3:6-10**

Paul’s prayer for them shared – **3:11-13**

Chapters 4-5 – Conduct in Relation to the Second Coming:

The universal benefits of a pure and orderly Christian life – **4:1-12**

Trying to dispel ignorance concerning the coming of the Lord – **4:13-18**

Not too be concerned with when – **5:1-2**

Instead focus on how you live and it does not matter – **5:3-11**

Exhortations to the training of Christ that keeps them walking correctly – **5:12-22**

Farewell blessing and admonition – **5:23-28**

Paul will send this letter back to these brethren by the hand of Timothy and Silas, with the expectation that it be shared with them and with all the brethren (possibly all the brethren in Macedonia) – **1 Thessalonians 5:27**; and that they return to him in Corinth and report concerning how the instruction is received – **2 Thessalonians 1:1**.