

Acts 18:1-11

Routine Faithfulness Isn't Routine/Automatic

Paul Comes to Corinth from Athens and Starts Phase One of His Ministry in the City (Evangelism) 18:1-4

Corinth was the capital city of Achaia (Southern Greece)

- It was the largest city in Greece at that time with a population 20x that of Athens
- It had a strategic location on a narrow isthmus between the Aegean/Ionian Seas
- It had a temple of Aphrodite-the goddess of love with 1000 female "priestesses"
- It was a spiritually needy place, but an intimidating place for Christian ministry
- Its exact location has been located by archeologists

After his arrival at Corinth, Paul bumped into a Jewish couple from Rome, Aquila and Priscilla, and they become good friends him in Christ, working together as Paul began the first phase of his ministry in the city

Our disappointments are often God's appointments: Aquila and Priscilla were forced to leave Rome by Imperial Decree...not realizing at that time that this would put them in a position to meet the Apostle Paul.

The three of them shared the same trade-they were leatherworkers (the term used in the Greek is more general than simply tentmaker). Please Note: When Paul was in full evangelistic mode, he would work to pay his finances to avoid any appearance of "peddling" the Gospel. However, once believers formed a church in a city, Paul would receive \$\$\$ from that church as he shifted gears from evangelist to pastor-teacher.

Summary of Paul's ministry at this point: on Sabbath days, he would "reason from the Old Testament Scripture" to present Christ as the Jewish Messiah and the Savior of the world with Jews and Gentile God-fearers who would be present.

Two Practical Principles

- God Works Not Just Through Miracles But Also Thru Mundane Events
- Wisdom + Work is the SOP for Christian Living/Ministry

Paul Transitions to Phase Two of His Ministry in Corinth (Church Planting) 18:5-8

Silas and Timothy brought a financial gift from PBF (Philippi Bible Fellowship) which allowed him the luxury of focusing 100% of his time to the ministry of the Word-and his baseline message was simple: Jesus was/is the Christ

Bad News about the Good News in Corinth:

When a large percentage of the Jews in the synagogue of Corinth categorically rejected Paul's message and ministry, he dramatically illustrated the dire consequences of repudiating Christ/the Gospel (similar to 13:46)

Good News about the Good News in Corinth:

Titius Justus, a worshiper of God...became a believer; Crispus, the (former) ruler of the synagogue and his whole family believed (and Paul baptized Crispus 1 Corinthians 1:14), and a good many other Corinthians believed and were baptized.

Practical Principle

- Rather than Allowing the Faithless to Freak Us Out, We Should Actively Appreciate Those Who Truly Believe in Christ and Who Walk with Him

The Lord Tells Paul to Continue “Doing the Same Old Thing” Rather Than Giving It Up or Watering It Down 18:9-11

The Lord said to Paul: do not be afraid, but go on speaking [the Word]...I am with you... ...I have many [more] in this city who are my people.

So Pastor Paul stayed another 18 months, [and the primarily thing he did was “just”) teaching the Word of God.

Final Practical Principle

- We Must Lean Upon the LORD/Seek His Encouragement If Our Lives are to Truly Be a Ministry Over the Long Haul Because Christian Faithfulness/Service (for Both Clergy and for Laity) Isn't Easy and Involves Unique Pain/Pressures.