

Acts 18:1-28

“After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth; 2 and found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscila; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them. 3 And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers. 4 And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks [*God-fearing Greeks* that is]. 5 And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews *that Jesus was Christ*. 6 And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook *his* raiment, and said unto them, *Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles* [until he hits the next city, then he’s back in the synagogue witnessing]. 7 **And he departed thence, and entered into a certain *man’s* house, named Justus, *one* that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue.** 8 And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized. 9 Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: 10 for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city. 11 And he continued *there* a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them. 12 And when Gallio was the deputy of Achaia, the Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought him to the judgment seat, 13 saying, *This fellow persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law.* 14 And when Paul was now about to open *his* mouth, Gallio said unto the Jews, If it were a matter of wrong or wicked lewdness, O *ye* Jews, reason would that I should bear with you: 15 but if it be a question of words and names, and *of* your law, look ye *to it*; for I will be no judge of such *matters*. 16 And he drave them from the judgment seat. 17 Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and beat *him* before the judgment seat. And Gallio cared for none of those things. 18 And Paul *after this* tarried *there* a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into Syria, and with

him Priscilla and Aquila; having shorn *his* head in Cenchrea: for he had a vow. 19 And he came to Ephesus, and left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews. 20 When they desired *him* to tarry longer time with them, he consented not; 21 but bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus. 22 And when he had landed at Caesarea, and gone up, and saluted the church, he went down to Antioch. 23 And after he had spent some time *there*, he departed, and went over *all* the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening the disciples. 24 And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, *and* mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus. 25 This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. 26 And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto *them*, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly. 27 And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace: 28 for he mightily convinced the Jews, *and that* publickly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.”

Introduction: Paul Heads To Corinth, What Was Corinth Like?

Audio version:

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“Chapter 18 says this, “**After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth; and he found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla;**” the reason they had come from Italy, it says “**(because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them.**” (verses 1-2) he encountered them there, and most scholars believe that Aquila and Priscilla are believers, had come to faith, maybe had been part of the Roman church. Paul had

not been to Rome yet, he will write to Rome, the letter to the Romans, from Corinth, saying that he is looking for an opportunity to come, the Lord had not yet opened the door, he longs to come to Rome. But he writes that from Corinth, and no doubt he hears more of that church from Aquila and Priscilla, and it stirs his heart. Now Aquila is from Pontus, Priscilla is a diminutive form of Prisca, in that name would put her high in Roman social society. Back in **2nd Timothy**, you don't have to turn, I'll do that, **chapter 4, verse 19** Paul says **"salute Prisca and Aquila,"** he calls her there Prisca, that was the proper name, and that was a very proper family and order in Roman society, so she no doubt had married him, we're not sure if she was Jewish, but she had married Aquila, and no doubt became Jewish in her marriage, and then they had come to Christ, and Paul encounters them, and we're going to hear much about them through the New Testament here in Corinth. But understand the transition that takes place here. Paul is in Athens, and there in Athens, really he's in the middle of the Gentile world, he's encountering Gentile culture, which he understood because he was raised a Hellenist Jew in Tarsus, and no doubt he knew more of Greek culture than Peter and John and Andrew and James and all of the Galilean fishermen put together. Certainly he was steeped in that culture and understood much of its philosophers and so forth, and he listens to them at Athens and he talks to them about God's creation, his work, that he is the Creator. He talks to them about some of their own poets and philosophers, quotes to them, he talks about the resurrection, and when talking about the resurrection the crucifixion is implied, we don't hear [him speaking] specifically about the cross and the blood of Christ and so forth [in Athens]. But we do hear him speak about a day of judgment that God has appointed and so forth. And we listen to him, and there's several schools of thought, one is that Paul considered Athens such a failure, that he really changed his preaching as he came to Corinth. There are those [in the Christian world] who are just overjoyed about his address at Athens, they think he had a secret formula and everything, it was just where the people were at, it was a masterpiece. But I think both of those are extremes. I think Paul was growing in many ways, I think the theology of the Church was being developed in his mind, he would write much to us about that in his Epistles, and I think that he delivered the Gospel at Athens, but I don't think he was content with the results. [Comment: This is the second time Paul witnessed to pagan Gentiles, and in both cases he essentially failed, no church came out of his Athens

address on Mars Hill while he was there. His greatest success in witnessing was to the Jews and *God-fearing Gentiles* who were within the synagogues he entered, those who understood the Old Testament Word of God and its prophecies. It wouldn't be until the middle of the 2nd century and 3rd century when Gentiles would flood into the Church, due to the way "those impious Galileans" ministered to the sick Gentiles during the plagues of Galen and Cyprian (160-185AD and 250AD respectively). Julian in 362AD, who was trying to get the Roman Empire back to paganism, called the Christians who'd been responsible by their charity for the huge influx of pagans into the churches of Asia Minor called them "impious Galileans," demonstrating by this derogatory label that they were the Judeo-Christians of Asia Minor. For historic proof of this, see <https://unityinchrist.com/LegacyOfLove.htm>. Can the Body of Christ rise to those lofty standards during this Corona Virus pandemic? That remains to be seen, I don't think we're getting the point.] We're not even sure at this point if he left a church behind there, at least two specific people are mentioned, and I believe it said others with them. Interesting, we know several hundred years after this, there's actually a church in the Parthenon, ah, the Muslims will take that over then and turn it into a mosque, and then I forget which war it was, a shot from a cannon hit the roof and brought the roof down and destroyed much of the Parthenon, it certainly is a tourist attraction today. But there would be a church there in Athens in the following centuries. But Paul saw little of that here, and I do believe as he comes to Corinth he is intimidated. Ah, the population of Athens was about 50,000 then, it was a university town, it certainly still is respected in regards to its past. But it had declined, this was not the heyday of Athens. The capital of the province was Corinth, and Corinth was at least ten times the population of Athens, Corinth had, that we know of, at least 200,000 Roman citizens and 500,000 slaves, so there were at least 700,000 regular residents in Corinth. Plus because it was on that isthmus it was a trade center, there were cultures from all over the world, tradesmen from all over the world, languages from all over the world. In fact that's why in the Corinthians letter we have a manifestation of tongues then like we did on the day of Pentecost, when people were there from all over the world, we had that kind of environment in Corinth again. This isthmus about three and a half to four miles wide, Nero attempted to build a canal, like the Panama Canal, across there, and gave up on it, imagine in those days using hammers and chisels and so forth. [Comment: Xerxes created an island out of an

isthmus Mount Athos was on, so his ships wouldn't have to sail around the dangerous point Mount Athos was on, a lee shore and very dangerous, so it could be done.] It was completed a little over a hundred years ago and there is a canal there now that crosses the isthmus. But what they did in that day was they had a paved road, and smaller ships they would drag with ropes over logs that were round, they would drag them three and a half miles across the isthmus and put them in the ocean on the other side. If those ships were too big they would unload the cargo, bring the cargo to the other side of the isthmus and another ship would pick it up and take it to its destination. So it was a trade center [and a *sailortown*, much as Naples, Italy is, and this explains the moral depravity of this city. Every self-respecting dieselboat submarine sailor knows what a *sailortown* is. This is reflected in Paul's 1st Epistle to the Corinthians]. Our word "isthmus" comes from Corinth, there they had *the Isthmus Games*, second only to the Olympics that were in Rome. But Corinth, famous for culture, there were philosophers, schools of philosophy there, it was ten times whatever Paul encountered in Athens. He could have argued philosophy there, there were pagan temples innumerable there, it was famous for architecture, there were Corinthian columns, Corinthian bronze was famous throughout that world. But what Corinth was most notable for, in the Mediterranean world was its immorality [remember what I said about it's being a *sailortown*?], it's drunkenness, it's indulgence. If you were called a Corinthian, that was an insult in the Greco-Roman world. If you were Corinthianized, it means you are completely given over to the wrong kind of lifestyle. In the Greek and Roman plays if they portrayed someone from Corinth, they always portrayed them as drunk or in an immoral situation. It was the Las Vegas of the day [or to the German Navy in WWII and afterward, to the US Navy after they moved in it was the Naples, Italy of the day. Napoli didn't miss a beat when the German Navy left and the American Navy came to town]. What happened in Corinth stayed in Corinth, except we know all about it. But one of the centers of worship there, it was called the Acro Corinthus, there is next to Corinth a plateau, that is about 1,700 foot above the city itself, 1,700 foot above the sea, and there's a huge piece of flat land on top where there were government buildings and so forth, but there was a huge temple to Aphrodite there, that had over 1,000 temple priestesses that were prostitutes, and male prostitutes also. And those thousand prostitutes on a daily basis would go down into Corinth to ply their trade with the merchants, with the regular population that

was always there [and of course the sailors who made up a large part of the transient population of Corinth would take full advantage of that], and that money would be brought back then to the temple to support the temple and the worship and so forth that took place there. So Corinth was known for that. Many people today struggle with pornography, imagine in this culture it was reality, not pornography, it was a prostitute that was plying her trade, it was accepted in the culture, it was normal, no one looked down on it, remarkably. And Paul was coming into that. He's walking into a cavern of sin and darkness and pagan religion and immorality and so forth. And I believe this 50 mile journey from Athens to Corinth left time for Paul to think, to muse, to work over his own theology in his heart, and we're going to look at that this evening as he finally comes into Corinth.

Paul Becomes Pressed In The Spirit To Testify That Jesus Is The Messiah In The Synagogue At Corinth

He's alone, the other two men, Silas and Timothy will catch up with him. He comes in and he finds this couple, Aquila and Priscilla, and they have left Rome with 20,000 other Jews. Now Aquila would return to Rome after this, after Claudius dies, but under his reign he drove them out of Rome. In fact, it's interesting, we know Roman archives, he said they were troublemakers, because they were always fighting over *Crastpos*, most scholars feel that should have been *Christos*, over the Christ, there was already tension there in Rome, like there was in other cities, between the Jews and the Christians. Because the Christians then were teaching the Old Testament [such as the Scriptures in this study at: <https://unityinchrist.com/prophecies/1stcoming.htm>], the Christians then were believing that they were receiving the promises made in the Old Testament by Moses and the Prophets, there was great tension between religious Jews and the Church in those early days. So these people are coming from Italy, from Rome, and they come to Corinth. **“And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers.” (verse 3)** Now, some feel that this was in leather, it may have been, certainly if it was in leather, it was nothing relative to the leatherwork of a tanner, who was considered

continually unclean, with the working of dead animals and so forth. But the fabric that was famous in Cilicia where Paul came from, were the black goat hair tanners, when you go to Israel today or the Middle East you see the Bedouin with these huge black tents, living almost as they did three, four thousand years ago, except to see a TV antenna and a Honda generator next to the tent. But it was probably this black goat hair that Paul had learned to work with and to weave, but either way, he found Aquila and Priscilla who were of the same craft, so he found work there with them, and began to work during the week, and he was ministering at weeks end on the Sabbath in the synagogue. And it says, **verse 4, “And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.”** The believing Greeks, the proselytes [as Pastor Joe shows, these Greeks he reasoned with would have been the *God-fearing Gentile* Greeks who were also attending within these synagogues.] **“And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ.” (verse 5) i.e. was Messiah.** Now, we know from **2nd Corinthians, chapter 11**, it says, **“And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself.” (verse 9)** He said to the Corinthians *‘when I came there at first, I worked, and I wasn’t chargeable to you in any way,’* and he said *‘you know that when the brethren, Timothy and Silas came from Macedonia,’* in fact we find out they brought an offering from the Philippian church that loved Paul, that set him free then to minister continually, not just on the weekends, he was set free to minister full time. But where they also brought word of the Macedonian churches, Thessalonica was doing well, the things that were real, were going well and so forth. So Paul was hearing about the churches they had planted, that they were flourishing, that they were doing good. He will write 1st and 2nd Thessalonians from Corinth, we’re going to find out that he is there in Corinth for a year and a half, it is the longest stay that he has made in any European church to that point. And when he writes 1st Thessalonians he says **“For from you sounded out the Word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place, your faith towards God is spoken of, is spread abroad, so that we need not speak anything,”** he says that we’ve heard, he’s encouraged that the Word of God has spread through all of the area from these

churches. He says ***“For this cause also I thank God without ceasing, because when you received the Word of God which you heard of us, you received it not as the word of men, but as it is, in truth the Word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.”*** So Paul, as he hears about the churches in Achaia and Macedonia, and he hears the fact that they’re flourishing, he’s saying in his own heart, ***‘You know what, the Word of God is working in them, I planted the seed and it’s working, and it’s working effectually in them.’*** And through the support that he receives, and the word of the churches, now Timothy and Silas coming, Paul is encouraged, and it says here ***‘that he is pressed in the spirit then to do the work there, to testify, he’s very stirred.’*** We think of Jeremiah saying there was a fire in his bones and he couldn’t keep silent, it’s much like that here, Paul now is greatly stirred, in the face of this incredible immoral, metropolitan environment that he finds himself in, he is pressed in the spirit. And he testified to the Jews that in fact Jesus was Christ, the Messiah. ***“And when they opposed themselves,”*** isn’t that interesting, it pictures them not listening to what Paul said, and it says in doing that the Holy Spirit tells us they were opposing themselves, ***“and they blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.” (verse 6)*** Now two things from the Gospels, Jesus told his disciples to shake the dust off of their feet, Paul here in the same manner, as it were, almost shakes the dust off of his garments and says ***‘I’m through with this, I’m clean, and your blood is upon your own heads,’*** the Jews would have understood, he’s making reference to Ezekiel chapter 3, where the LORD there told Ezekiel if you don’t go to them and don’t testify, I’m going to hold you accountable, your blood will be upon your head, if you do testify, then you’d be free from that [Ezekiel 3:17-19]. Now look, again, sometimes that’s a weight on the Church [greater Body of Christ] in a condemning way. I don’t believe it applies to the Church in that sense, people will tell you *‘If you don’t, because you didn’t share the Gospel with someone and they died unsaved, therefore their blood is on your head,’* I don’t believe that. [I do believe it applies to the Church in that sense, we have to agree to disagree on this one, in the overall sense of the leadership within the Body of Christ, not the individual ‘sheep’, but the leadership of the Body of Christ in the various denominations, they are going to be held accountable for helping to fulfill Matthew 24, verse 14, getting the Gospel to the world. What Gospel you ask? See

<https://unityinchrist.com/misc/WhatIsTheGospel%20.htm>

You know, you look at Ezekiel, and he's sitting by the River Chebar, and the Chariot of God and the presence of God, and the cherubim descend around him, and he sees this scene, and he says he's picked up by the hair, and he's taken from one place and then moved to another place, God sets him down, then God tells him **'Now you speak to these people,'** and he puts his Word in his mouth and gives him a vision, and he says **'If you don't speak you're accountable.'** So, I wouldn't be condemned about that verse. If God comes down to visit you in his chariot from heaven with the cherubim, and he takes you and he picks you up, and moves you somewhere, puts you down, and gives his Word in physical form and sticks it in your mouth and makes you eat it, and says *'Now you share this with people,'* I would do it if I was you. [I feel the leaders of the various parts of the greater Body of Christ have the responsibility to proclaim the Gospel with a warning attached to it, as Jesus said we would in Matthew 24:14, because right after that, in verse 15 of Matthew 24 comes World War III, the great tribulation, described in verses 15-31 of Matthew 24, along with the 2nd coming of Jesus, two of the bloodiest periods of time this world will ever see or go through, with 9/10s of humanity dying within those two events. So yes, the leadership has that responsibility of Ezekiel 33, in my humble estimation. It's a collective responsibility, which falls on the heads of Church leadership. So leaders, head pastors, denominational leaders, take heed.] But in general, this is not a verse that applies to the Church, and Satan would love to condemn us about this. But Paul makes reference to it, he says **'Hey, I'm free now, I've come, and I've tried to speak to you, you're rejecting that, the blood is on your own heads, this is not now my fault, what happens to you from here on, you've just made your own decision,'** and he says **'in fact, I'm going to go to the Gentiles.'** **"And he departed thence, and entered into a certain man's house, named Justus, one that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue."** (verse 7) It says his house shared a wall with the synagogue, it had a common wall. So Paul says **'That's it, I'm done, I'm outa here, I'm going to the Gentiles,'** and walked out the front door and went right next door to the house of Justus whose house was joined hard to the synagogue, had a common wall. I'm sure the synagogue didn't appreciate the fact that he sets up the church next door to the synagogue, they're sharing a wall there [comment: In Oskar Skarsaune's *In The Shadow Of The Temple* he brings out the

historic/archeological fact that many of the early churches of God were set up in very close proximity to the synagogues throughout Asia Minor, so there is a pattern here, which demonstrates the apostle Paul's method and target of his evangelism], ah, scholars tell us that they believe this Justus is Gaius Titus Justus, that that was his full name, we do have him mentioned in a number of places. In the end of the Book of Romans, Paul writing from Corinth, he said **"Gaius mine host, and of the whole church, saluteth you, Erastus the chamberlain of the city saluteth you, and Quartus a brother." (Romans 16:23)** Very interesting, it says **"Erastus the chamberlain of the city saluteth you, and Quartus a brother."** Erastus the chamberlain of the city, archeologists have uncovered in the last century a stone of a main street in Corinth, and on it is engraved the name Erastus, and it says Erastus paved that particular street at his own cost. Here it tells us that this man Erastus was the chamberlain of the city, he was in charge of the roads and streets in Corinth, and they actually found his name carved into the street, isn't that interesting? Here Paul leaves the synagogue, he goes next door to the house of Gaius Justus, Titus Justus, and he sets up the new church there, and evidently lives there in his home, adjoined hard to the synagogue. It says here, **"And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized." (verse 8)** So Paul moves next door to the synagogue, and the ruler of the synagogue, the man who was in charge of all, you had two main rulers in a synagogue, one of them was just in charge of keeping, sweeping things up and keeping things clean, and keeping it locked, the main ruler decided who read the Scriptures, cared for the Torah, the scrolls that they had, this guy's the head of that community, he comes to Christ, and his entire house, so you know the synagogue's not getting happier as time is going on, Crispus comes to faith and his entire family believes. In fact in **1st Corinthians**, when Paul writes to this church, **chapter 1**, he says there **"I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius" (verse 14)** isn't it interesting, because they were saying *'I'm of Paul, I'm of Apollos,'* and Paul says ***'I thank God, when I was there, I didn't baptize any of you, so you can stand around saying Paul baptized me, or Apollos baptized me,'*** he says **"I baptized none of you but Crispus"** that's our man here, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and Gaius. And by the way, that's an indictment on those who would say "baptism saves," Paul was the most zealous evangelist that ever lived, and if baptism

saved, he would never say “I thank God I baptized none of you.” [Comment: Baptism **was** the early method found in the Book of Acts, that people asked Jesus into their lives. Now, today, the main method is the altar call. Both methods, historically speaking, have brought salvation and the Holy Spirit into people’s lives, thus proving God will not be put into a doctrinal box on this issue, in either direction. See <https://unityinchrist.com/baptism/What%20is%20Baptism.htm>] Baptism comes after we come to genuine faith, and it is the time when we stand publicly and demonstrate that we’re willing to enter into the death and resurrection of Christ, and it is important, we should be baptized. Paul says **‘I thank God I baptized none of you’** except he names this ruler of the synagogue Crispus, and Gaius, who was probably Gaius Titus Justus, that we ran up against in the same verse. So you have the Jews coming to faith, you have the Jews offended, and then you have many of the Corinthians, the Gentiles hearing, and they believed also.

Jesus Makes A Nocturnal Visit To Paul Saying “I Have Much People In This City”

Verses 9 and 10 we looked at this morning, it says **“Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city.”** and it says **“And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.”** (verse 11) he stayed with them there a year and six months teaching the Word of God among them, and would write 1st and 2nd Thessalonians and the Book of Romans from Corinth. He took this place literally as a teacher and he taught them for 18 months. Now, it’s interesting, the Lord says to him, the Lord appeared to him in a vision, not like much of the Church where we hear people saying ‘*I have a vision for this, I have a vision for that,*’ I understand what people are doing when they say that, but this is a literal vision, this is reality, the Lord came to him and appeared, it wasn’t a dream, it was a vision to Paul. He says some things to him, he says **“Be not afraid,”** the Greek is **“Stop being afraid,”** it states very clearly that the Lord was aware that Paul was already fearful at this point [just look at what Paul had already been through up to this point, no wonder]. Part of that, no

doubt, is he's afraid of getting thumped again, in his past experience, he goes to a Gentile city, he preaches in the synagogue till they get angry and throw him out, he starts to preach to the Gentiles [who would be *the God-fearing Gentiles* the Jews had previously proselyted into their synagogue, making the Jews doubly angry for stealing their proselytes], when there's a big ingathering of Gentiles, the synagogue gets jealous, and they come, they stone him, they thump him, they beat him with rods, they throw him in prison, he kind of knows the routine by this point in time, so there's some trepidation, some level relative to that, because the Lord says literally, **'not even one man will touch you and hurt you.'** Because if he just said to Paul *'Be encouraged,'* Paul could have thought *'Well you were with me in Lystra, and I got stoned and left for dead, you were with me in Iconium and they drug me out of town, you were with me in Thessalonica and I had to flee after three sabbaths, you were with me in Philippi and they beat me until the skin came off my back and threw me in the dungeon. Lord I appreciate the fact that you're with me, but the lumps are starting to get to me.'* That's not what the Lord says, the Lord says **'I'm with you, and no man, not a single man is gonna touch you here.'** He says **'Stop being afraid,'** literally it says **"continue to speak,"** maybe what he's thinking is *'The contention is rising, I'm gonna shut up,'* we don't know. He says **'Continue to speak, and don't even stop speaking at all,'** is the inference, **'Don't even stop at all,'** and the Lord says, **'because I'm with you, nobody's going to touch you,'** and most importantly, and you just think of the city we're talking about, he says **"I have much people in this city"** the most immoral city in the Mediterranean world, **"I have much people in this city"** filled with prostitutes, filled with drunks, filled with cheats, filled with people from every culture, and the Lord is looking at Corinth, and it's interesting, sometimes I think we need a fresh vision of Jesus Christ. Paul didn't need a vision of a sheet being let down from heaven, Paul didn't need another man from Macedonia saying *'Come over here,'* Paul had a vision of Jesus, that's what he needed here. And I believe he saw Jesus as Jesus revealed himself after the resurrection, and said *'Thomas, put your hand here in my holes, thrust your hand into my side, and see that it's real.'* We see Jesus in the Book of Revelation in the midst of the elders and in the midst of the thrones and in the midst of the cherubim, and it says **'his appearance there is as a lamb with the marks of slaughter upon him.'** And I think Jesus appeared to Paul with the marks of his passion, I think they'll be there forever. And he said

'Paul, I have much people in this city.' And I think Paul is thinking here *'I'm not witnessing just because it's the right thing to do, I'm not sharing just because I'm a zealous evangelist,'* you know, the old Moravians would say *"Let that Lamb that was slain receive the reward of his suffering."* And I think Paul looked at Jesus afresh here, and said in his heart, *'Lord, I will let you, the Lamb that was slain, receive the reward of your suffering, you have died and purchased many people in this city that you have not yet gathered in.'* Is election pointed out here, sure, so what.

'But We Preach Christ And Him Crucified, The Power Of The Gospel To Save'

The Lord says **'I have many people in this city that have not yet come.'** Now, Paul's fear and trembling, I believe personally, that there's something else that happened, I'll tell you, you don't need to turn, from **1st Corinthians** when he writes to this church, he had said in the end of **chapter 1**, **"He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."** there was no chapter break when he wrote it, **"And I brethren, when I came to you"** he attaches himself to that idea, **"when I came to you"** we just read that in Acts chapter 18, verse 1, from Athens to Corinth, **"when I came to you, I came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God"** that's a very important phrase, again, **"for I determined"** very important phrase, **"not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified, and I was with you in much weakness"** he's probably speaking of physical weakness, we believe that he had malaria, he had bad eyes, he had been beaten, the years had not been kind, **"I was with you in much weakness, and in fear and much trembling, and my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in the demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that"** here's the reason, **"that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."** (**1st Corinthians 1:31; 2:1-5**) I think Paul, as he came to Corinth and he looked around, I think he prayed and said *'Lord, what do I do? What do I say? I was just in Athens and I brought the best of my experience, Lord, I gave all that I have as a man, as a Hellenist, a Jew to you, and I saw such little response.'* And I think he realized as he came to Corinth, you know I think God

is sharpening the point of sword, I think Paul did good at Athens, and did his best, but I think as he comes to Corinth, the point of his sword is being sharpened, and he's looking at the situation, and he's realizing *'This is never going to happen in my own wisdom, this is never going to happen in any human ingenuity or excellency of speech,'* in fact he will write to us here, very importantly, ***"Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks"*** he had just come from Athens, ***"seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called,"*** Jesus said "I have much people in this city," ***"both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God stronger than men. For you see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;" (1st Corinthians 1:20-27)*** now he didn't say "not any" he said ***"not many,"*** now the interesting thing is, Paul is one of the "not many wise" that is called [and so was Cornelius the Roman Centurion in Caesarea, Acts 10]. He himself was extremely wise, and extremely learned, so will Apollos because, we're going to encounter him before the end of the evening. He said "not many" he says, ***"wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;" (verse 27)*** So he says ***'So when I came to you, it wasn't with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.'*** (1st Corinthians 2:1) important phrase, for all of us today. The testimony of God is not the testimony about God, that is an objective idea. It isn't objective in the Greek, it is subjective. He said ***'When I came to you, it wasn't with excellency of speech or wisdom, declaring unto you God's testimony.'*** He said ***'When I came, it wasn't my testimony I declared, it was God's testimony.'*** Again, Mike MacIntosh, who was at the end of the Women's Conference there, many of you have

heard his testimony, he has a testimony [see <https://mikemacintosh.net>]. And many of you have heard one another's testimony. When we were at the Pastor's Conference at the end of last month, Frank Drowns who had been with Jim Elliot and had been with Nate Saint, had been there when those things took place, spoke to us, it was very emotional, very moving, very powerful testimony. Paul said **'When I came to Corinth,'** you know, it's almost as though he realized **'If there's gonna be power, if I'm going to make an impact, I have to depend on God, not on any human ability, and God's power is going to be manifest where God's testimony is given, not my testimony, not Frank Drown's, God's testimony.'** God's testimony, he says in relationship to that, **'So I sought to preach nothing, I determined to preach nothing but Christ and him crucified,'** that's God's testimony [and for that testimony in full form, see <https://unityinchrist.com/lamb/lastsix.htm> Jesus Christ and him crucified]. Again, just years ago, watching my own son Joshua, almost bleed to death, and thinking, just crying out, I can relive it, whenever I want to, because it was so frightening, and it was such a dramatic, emotional evening for us, of course he lived, but he bled out over half of his blood, and I'd have done anything to stop that process, that evening. And God the Father, who could have stopped the process, watched his Son beaten, spit upon, his beard ripped out of his face, beaten beyond human recognition, and he did not interfere, he could have stopped the process. He watched his Son, taken from trial to trial, and was silent. He watched him scourged, and no doubt the skin ripped from the bones, maybe down to the organs, and Heaven was silent, God did not interfere, because he saw you and I, the price was being paid for us. His Son was taken again, and a crown of thorns put on his head, he was spit on again, he was beaten with reeds again, and God the Father did not interfere. You know what it would take me to hold back seeing one of my sons treated that way? And I love you guys, I'd have interfered, sorry. And then to watch his Son crucified, go through the whole process, and Heaven was silent. And then it says, in **1st Peter, 'that he bore our sins upon the tree.'** God the Father placed your sins and my sins and the sins of the world, the sins of Hitler, of Adolf Eichmann, Bin Laden, the sins of the world upon his Son. And at that point, his own Son being cut off and crying out in the darkness, **"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" 'Father, this is not like you, this has never happened in eternity, I've never experienced this, you've forsaken me, why have you forsaken**

*me?’ I can’t imagine one of my sons screaming at me ‘Dad! you’ve forsaken me, you can stop this, where are you, I’m cut off, you’ve forsaken me, I’m drowning in this, crying out.’ And again, when Heaven finally answers, it’s with wrath, all of God’s holy wrath came down upon the sin, the sin-bearer, so that John will write to us and say **‘Herein is the love of God manifest, it’s not that we loved him, but that he first loved us, and became the propitiation for our sins,’** that Jesus Christ became the very place where the just wrath of God was satisfied to its full. That’s God’s testimony, that would be my testimony to you if I gave my son so that you could live [Charles Dickens *A Tale Of Two Cities*], if I gave my son so that you could live, that would be my testimony to you. And Paul said, **‘When I came from Athens and I came to Corinth, and I looked at what I was up against, it was with fear and trembling.’** It was in weakness physically, you know, God promised him he wouldn’t be beaten or mocked, but the other thing was, he said, **‘I’m going to fly with this thing, and I’m either going to fly or I’m going to crash and burn, I’m going to go with this, the simplicity of this,’** believing that God is going to add power to the testimony **‘that he so loved the world that he gave his only Begotten Son, that whoever believes in him would not perish, but have everlasting life.’** He was sharpening the point of his sword. So he says **‘When I came to you, I came not with excellency of speech or wisdom, I declared unto you God’s testimony, for I determined’** and see Paul had to determine, **‘not to know anything among you, save Christ and him crucified.’** Because he was one of the wise of this world, and Paul said **‘I had to make up my mind and decide this is what I was going to do, and not flinch, I determined I was not going to know anything amongst you Corinthians but Christ and him crucified, and I was there’** he says **‘in fear and weakness, and in fear and much trembling, my speech and my preaching, it wasn’t with enticing words and man’s wisdom, like it had been in Athens,’** **“but in the demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.” (1st Corinthians 2:4b-5)** He knew that if the Corinthians were going to be delivered, it had to be by the power of God. He knew that if the Corinthians were to repeat the message to their fellow Corinthians, it had to be in purity and simplicity and power for them to be saved. When he writes to the Romans from Corinth, he says **“I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God and salvation to everyone who believeth, to the***

Jew first, also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith, as it is written, The just shall live by faith.” What he realized was, that the simple, pure, straight forward Gospel was powerful enough to save and to regenerate and to take the Corinthians and to set their lives aside for the purposes of God.

What Was This Church In Corinth Like?

Listen, he would write to this Corinthian church and say ***‘that he wanted to present them as a chaste virgin on the Day of Christ.’*** He said ***‘My only concern is that as Satan beguiled Eve with his subtilty, he might beguile you from the simplicity’*** he says to the Corinthians ***‘that’s in Christ Jesus.’*** Imagine that. I might have thought about presenting the Ephesian church as a chaste virgin on that day, and maybe the Thessalonian church, but the Corinthian church? The Corinthian church is famous for division, for lawsuits, for fornication, for drunkenness [sailor-town!], they’ve got all kinds of problems. And of course they did, look, these were God’s people, and when we read of those things, remember, this is the Corinthian church, not the Corinthian population outside the church. The Corinthian church was worse than most societies. They had been gathered in, and inside the church they were divided. Of course they were. That’s because in their culture, they had been of this god, and of that god, and of this persuasion and of this philosopher, and now they’ve come into the church, and Paul had to write and say ***‘No, no, look, I thank God that I baptized none of you but Crispus and Gaius, you guys shouldn’t be saying ‘I’m of Paul, I’m of Apollos, and I’m of Cephas,’ we’re all of Christ, we’re all one in Christ.’*** He says to this church ***‘You guys should not be going to the civil courts suing one another,’*** Corinth was the commercial capital of that part the Mediterranean world, and there were all kinds of legal entanglements there, they were used to that, they got saved, they came into the church, they thought that’s how you still acted, Paul said ***‘No, if you have a problem between brethren, first try to go to the elders of the church, try to settle this first, because someday you’re going to judge angels, you can’t settle something over your bumper? Get these things straightened out with the elders of the church if you can do that.’*** This church is famous for fornication, the whole city was

famous for fornication, Paul's saying ***'These things shouldn't be coming into the church,'*** that's why he tells them not to fellowship with a brother if he calls himself a brother and he's a fornicator or an extortioner. He said ***'I'm not talking about worldly people, we'd have to leave the planet'*** he said, ***'to get away from that.'*** He said ***'But in the church, this is not normal behavior, you even have a man whose sleeping with his father's wife, and you're not doing anything about it, bind this man over to Satan for the corruption of the flesh,'*** and in the 2nd letter to the Corinthians we hear him telling the church to restore him, because he's repented and so forth. So, ya, there were those troubles in the church, but of course, that was the world they came in from, they were getting drunk at the communion table [actually, the Passover table, which they continued to keep, up through Polycarp and Policrates in the Asia Minor churches, past 250AD], Paul is saying ***'no, no,'*** it's through the Roman world, and the plays, they portrayed them as drunk, it was part of their worship, you had Bacchus and so forth, now they've come into the church, they're used to anywhere they go where there's free wine, getting pickled as fast as you can. And Paul is saying ***'No, no, you come to communion [Passover back then], you wait for everyone, this is not the way you act, you're Christians now, you're partaking of communion [Passover] in an unworthy fashion.'*** He's not talking to unbelievers, he's talking to the church in Corinth. He says ***'This is so unlike the One who we remembered, who gave everything that he was betrayed, he said Take this, this is my body,'*** he says ***'The way you act is unlike the One who we come together to honour.'*** They were using their gifts out of order in Corinth, he had to address the issues there [in 1st Corinthians 12-14]. These are God's people, and Jesus said to him ***'I want you to stay here, I have much people in this town.'*** And again I believe he has much people in this town, I'm so thankful for Buddy Osborn and the Rock Ministry and Mark Abrams down in North Philly, and down in West Philly and the churches we're starting to see born in every part of Philadelphia so we can get our arms around the city, I believe the Lord has much people in this city. He loves the drug addict, he loves the crack addict and the crack pusher, he loves the prostitute, he loves the people in this city in organized crime, some of them get saved. [Reminds me of a guy named Lou whom God called when I was a member of a Sabbath-keeping Church of God, he was a bag-man for the Mob. He had to convince them he wanted to pursue a closer life with God (normally, you can't get excused

from the Mob except by going six feet under). They believed him, and gave him “an honorable discharge” so he could pursue his religious convictions.] And I hear from some of them in prison. He loves the people in this city in unorganized crime, there’s enough of those too. You know, he loves the people in this city, and here you and I are, we have to be convinced that the message we have is powerful enough to change a human life. And we need to remember what Paul said, look, **‘One man sows,’** he says this to the Corinthians, **‘another man waters, but God brings the increase,’** but never let anyone belittle this center. We have to hold to center, because there’s a whole part of the Church [greater Body of Christ] that’s starting to entertain, that’s turning into a thousand other things, no, **the center is Christ and him crucified, that’s God’s testimony.** And if we want God’s power endorsing what we share with individuals, if we share **his** testimony to a lost world, he will empower us and enable us to do that effectively. And it still changes destinies and lives, and it is as powerful now as it was then. And we have to convince ourselves, and maybe you and I, maybe we need a fresh vision of Jesus Christ, maybe we need to come back to our first love, maybe we need to remember how on fire we were when we first got saved. Maybe we need a vision, not of dietary things, not of sheets let down from heaven, missionary programs and men from Macedonia, maybe we need, you and I, just a fresh look at Jesus Christ, and what he’s done for us, the nail marks on his hand, his beard torn out, his giving himself to the smiters, those who spit, tore out his beard, we need to see him afresh and realize the price that he paid for the people in Philadelphia that have not yet come, so that when we go and do his bidding, we’re doing it **for him.** There are other reasons that are attached, but they should not be the center.

“Be Not Afraid, But Speak, And Hold Not Thy Peace, For I Am With Thee, And No Man Shall Set On Thee To Hurt Thee”

And Paul says when he was there at Corinth **“Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace:”** (verse 9) **‘continue to speak, and don’t begin to be silent,’** **“for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee:”** **‘not a single person shall put his hand on thee to hurt thee,’** and again, **“for I have much people in this**

city.” (verse 10) how remarkable. **“And he continued *there* a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.”** (verse 11) 18 months Paul was there teaching the church there at Corinth, and no one touched him or injured him, now it even gives an example of that here, it says, **“And when Gallio was the deputy of Achaia, the Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought him to the judgment seat, saying, *This fellow persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law.*”** (verses 12-13) now they found, by the way, that judgment seat, it’s the Bemis seat found there today, it’s made of blue and white marble, the archeologists have excavated it, it’s a remarkable judgment seat. Gallio is the brother of the famous Stoic philosopher Seneca, there’s much written about him in secular history. This seems to be the fall of 52AD, that he comes to this area, and he’s very shrewd, he’s very likable, he’s a great manager, he had incredible skills, and he comes there, and evidently the Jews think because he’s a new guy, he might be a pushover. They grab Paul, and they brought him to the judgment seat there, to stand in front of Gallio, **“saying, *This fellow persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law.*”** (verse 13) Now, what they’re saying is, he is breaking the law. Judaism was a recognized religion under Roman control. The Romans recognized Judaism, it was one of the legal religions in the Roman Empire. What they’re saying is, *‘This guy is doing something that’s illegal.’* Gallio knows that Paul is preaching from the Old Testament, Gallio knows this is an argument between Jews. Paul considers himself a Jew still, he considered himself a man who was fulfilling the promises made in the Old Testament, there was no New Testament written yet at this point in time. So Paul is representing himself in no other way but as a Jew, and Gallio knows that, he knows they have no single thing to accuse him of. They’re saying *‘This fellow is doing things contrary to the law,’* and notice this in **verse 14, “And when Paul was now about to open *his* mouth, Gallio said unto the Jews, *If it were a matter of wrong or wicked lewdness, O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you:*”** now should he be about to open his mouth, should he have been about to do that or not? I don’t know. The Lord had told him ***‘not one man is going to set his hand on you,’*** Paul gets ready to defend himself, when he got ready to do that, **“Gallio said unto the Jews, *If it were a matter of wrong or wicked lewdness, O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you:*”** (verse 14) *‘I’d get involved,’* **“but if it be a question of words and names, and of your law, look ye to it; for I will be no judge of such *matters.*”** (verses 14-15) *‘This*

is arguing about the name of Jesus, arguing about names and things of your own Old Testament and things of Moses, don't get me involved, don't try to pull me into this, I'm smarter than that, that doesn't have anything to do with my jurisdiction, I'm not going to be involved in this at all,' and look at **verse 16, "And he drave them from the judgment seat."** He got the lictors out with the rods and began to beat the Jews and drive them out of the public court, and then it says **"Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and beat him before the judgment seat. And Gallio cared for none of those things."** **(verse 17)** now Crispus had gotten saved, so he's no longer chief ruler, now Sosthenes is the chief ruler, this must have just been recent, this guy, tough time here. The Greeks then took Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue and beat him before the judgment seat, and Gallio cared for none of those things. So they beat Sosthenes, and the idea is, they beat him to the ground, they beat him to a pulp. Here are those who would attack Paul, the tables are turned on them, they're driven out, and even Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue who took the place of Crispus is at this point beaten to the ground. Now I have a feeling that Paul and some of the Christians got around Sosthenes and ministered to him. Paul, when he was beaten with rods, it tells us back in chapter 16 and verse 33, when the Philippian jailor came and cleansed his wounds, and patted him down, and ministered to him. Because when we come to the Letter to Corinth, when Paul writes, the very **first verse of 1st Corinthians** says **"Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth,"** this man, beaten to a pulp here, ends up traveling with Paul, and as Paul writes to the Corinthian church, Sosthenes, now he's got two chief rulers of the synagogue converted, and the Jews are not daring to lift their voices again. So Sir William Ramses says *"This was the edict that set the church free in Corinth, never to be attacked by the Jews again."* So Sosthenes, again, this man, I have a feeling somebody gently and tenderly ministered to him, and he becomes a believer. I was believing we were going to finish this chapter. Next five verses, very quickly.

*Paul Heads Out To Sea Again, Heading To Ephesus
On His Way Back To Jerusalem*

“And Paul after this tarried there yet a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila; having shorn his head in Cenchrea: for he had a vow.” (verse 18) Romans chapter 16, just trying to put a picture of all this together, **16:1** says **“I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea:”** Cenchrea was 9 miles from Corinth, and was the port on that side of the Isthmus towards [Asia Minor and] Syria, Paul goes there to that port, where a church will begin, and he shaves his head, he’s taking a vow. Like a Nazarite vow, he’s not under the law, but no doubt there’s some kind of vow he’s taking relative to committing himself to the Lord fully. Ah, I think his head was a hard head to shave. I think under his hair he had a lot of scars and a lot of lumps. I see people, and some people look good with a bald head and some people don’t. There’s self-inflicted baldness, some guys just like to shave their head, and got a nice round globe, they look good, and some heads just look better covered with hair, to be honest. And I think Paul, this had to be a hard head to shave, with all the nicks and scars, and remember this wasn’t an electric razor, this wasn’t even a Bic razor, this was a knife he had to shave his head with, he must have had band-aids everywhere by the time he got done and got his head shaved. He shaved his head and he took a vow, **“And he came to Ephesus, and left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews.” (verse 19)** ah, let me show you where he’s going here, from Cenchrea, the port in Corinth, he sails all the way over here to Ephesus. Ephesus is the capital of Asia Minor, Corinth was the capital of Achaia, the southern territory of Greece and so forth. [see https://www.bible-history.com/Pauls_Second_Mission_Map/]
Ephesus here, Ephesus has a population of about 300,000, it is again a large city. We’re there from Cenchrea, he sails and comes to Ephesus, there’s a large port in Ephesus, the silt always had to be cleaned out, the silt came from the Nile River, always filled the port there, and it took tremendous care, for your information, in case you’re interested... **“And he came to Ephesus, and left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews. When they desired him to tarry longer time with them, he consented not;” (verses 19-20)** now imagine this, he finally gets to a synagogue where they want him to stay, and he says **‘I can’t, I made a vow to get to Jerusalem.’** Everywhere else he went, he went to the synagogue, they ended up beating him and

chasing him and so forth, he finally gets to this synagogue, and **“they desired him to tarry longer with them”** *‘why don’t you stay and tell us more,’* but **“he consented not; but bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus.”** (verses 20b-21) now normally in the New Testament when it says “the feast” and doesn’t identify the feast, it’s the Feast of Passover, which was their central, was their first Feast on their calendar, it was the main Feast of their nation [i.e. the whole nation of Israel, all 12 tribes, was born out of the first Passover down in Egypt, see <https://unityinchrist.com/lamb/exodus1.html>], **“I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus.”** (verse 21) he understood it had to be God’s will, **“And he sailed from Ephesus. And when he had landed at Caesarea, and had gone up** [whenever it says “had gone up” it means “had gone up to Jerusalem.”], **and saluted the church, he [then] went down to Antioch.”** (verse 21b-22) He goes all the way down to Caesarea, and we’re going to find after he goes to Jerusalem, he goes back up to Antioch, we’re talking about a 1,500 mile journey, it’s hard for us to imagine, from Ephesus, all the way down to Caesarea and to Jerusalem. [again, see https://www.bible-history.com/Pauls_Second_Mission_Map/] It says, **“And when he had landed at Caesarea, and gone up,”** that speaks of going up to Jerusalem, 65 miles from Caesarea to Jerusalem, **“and saluted the church, he went down to Antioch”** (verse 22) that’s 300 miles north. Look, all of this, Paul says **‘I can’t stay, I gotta go, I made a vow, I can’t stay, ya, gotta get to Jerusalem, got to get to Jerusalem,’** and it says **‘so he went to Jerusalem, then he left.’** Now I want more information, why did he have to get there [I think when that synagogue told him to stay because they wanted to spend more time talking to him and listening to him, that God was trying to tell him after all of this, *‘Don’t make vows, restricting yourself, stay flexible, these folks wanted to talk to you.’* That’s my take. Ya, he wanted to spend the Feast of Passover with the Jerusalem brethren, but maybe God wanted him to stay in Ephesus. That’s my take. It does show Paul was observing the Holy Days as the early Church was. But we’re missing something here, like Pastor Joe is saying.] You think we might find out more than that. I’m sure as he goes there, it says that he saluted the church, he must have told those in Jerusalem, **‘hey look, we kept the edict, the 15th chapter we decided to lay no greater burden on the Gentiles, the Gentiles**

didn't have to be circumcised,' he must have told them what had been happening in the Gentile world and in Europe, in Philippi, Macedonia and Athens and Corinth, they must be amazed to listen to him. But then he goes back from there to Antioch, it says, it's 300 miles to the north, and he's back where he started, that's the end of the 2nd Missionary Journey. Read ahead, the rest of chapter 18 into 19, next week we'll start the 3rd Missionary Journey, and we'll see Paul leaving Antioch for the last time. He ends up not going back to Antioch [of Syria] again, this church that he loved...so we'll leave him there this evening, in Antioch, we see where that is up in the...everybody know where Antioch [of Syria] is? Ya, you should know. Here's Antioch, he goes down to Jerusalem from Caesarea, then travels up to Antioch, right there...300 miles right there on the coast, and that's the completion of Paul's 2nd Missionary Journey. He was there for a number of months, and again he must have reported, imagine, he's been gone for a long time, a year and a half, two years again. But it must be, he also shows up, they didn't get emails, he didn't call on the cell-phone, he didn't send a carrier pigeon, all of a sudden Paul shows up, and how word must have spread in the community, the church must be excited, and he stays there with them again, preaching, and what it must have been like for him to come back, and hear what God was doing throughout the Roman and Greek world, it must have been amazing for them. So, this early church, stirred, the cost of travel, the cost of these things. Again, I would just encourage you this evening, in regards to the simplicity of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, it is the power of God unto salvation. It is as effective now as it was 2,000 years ago, it has not changed, it has not changed. Let's stand, let's pray, we'll sing a last song together, final song this evening. Please read ahead, be familiar with the journey, as we head into the 3rd Missionary Journey, remarkable things, challenging things that we want to take note of...

Acts 18:23-28

“And after he had spent some time *there*, he departed, and went over *all* the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples. 24 And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, *and* mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus. 25 This man was instructed in the

way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. 26 And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto *them*, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly. 27 And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace: 28 for he mightily convinced the Jews, *and that publickly*, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.”

Paul Starts His 3rd Missionary Journey

“We followed Paul, last week, back from his 2nd Missionary Journey, from Cenchrea, the sea port area of Corinth, back to Asia Minor to Ephesus, he stopped there, and then from Ephesus back to Caesarea, then from Caesarea down to Jerusalem, and from Jerusalem then he went back up to Antioch. We were in Corinth with Paul, over to Ephesus from Cenchrea, and then from Ephesus down here all the way to Caesarea the port, down to Jerusalem for the Feast [of Passover], he reported to the church, and then back up to Antioch where the journey began. And I’m sure he took time to tell the church there the details of his 2nd Missionary Journey. And verse 22 is as far as we had come, **verse 23** says, **“And after he had spent some time *there*, he departed, and went over *all* the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples.”** So he stayed for awhile in Antioch, Paul, knowing Paul was not to stay there long, then he goes through this area, all through this area, Derbe, Lystra, all through this area of Pisidian Antioch again, and he will work his way over then to Ephesus, on this island road, part of the Ignatian Way back over to the city of Ephesus. He leaves, goes through this area, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe where he had planted churches, to Pisidian Antioch, this time he’ll take the trip straight over to Ephesus there on the coast, that’s where we’re following him. [see https://www.bible-history.com/pauls_third_mission_map/]

Who Is Apollos? Divisions Occur In The Corinth Church of God

Verse 24 tells us though, **“And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria,”** which is down in Egypt, **“an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus.”** Alexandria is second only to Rome, the library there had over 700,000 volumes, if you can imagine, those were hand-written, were 700,000 volumes. Population, over 600,000, ah, this man Apollos coming from there, no doubt a Jew raised in the Jewish tradition, but somehow comes to be familiar with Jesus Christ. **“This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent”** *“boiling,”* boiling is the word **“in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.”** (verses 25-26) remember Paul encountered them in Corinth, they journeyed with him back to Ephesus, and then he left them there as he went to Jerusalem. **‘Aquila and Priscilla, when they had heard him, they took him unto them,’** the idea is, privately, alone, **‘and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.’** So they heard Apollos in the synagogue, they realized as he preached, and there are questions now, is he a believer? I personally believe he is a believer. What is missing in his perspective of Christ, he’s familiar with the baptism of John the Baptist, which was a baptism of repentance, evidently he is not familiar with the baptism of Christ, in the sense of baptizing in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. What things were they that he didn’t hear of about the completion of the ministry of Jesus? we’re not certain, but Aquila and Priscilla, rather than embarrassing him, this is a man whose eloquent, of great speech, he’s a great scholar, they invite him to their home after the synagogue, and he comes over, and as they have him alone, and in a tactful way, they begin to explain to him more completely the way of the Lord. And evidently he listens, he’s humble enough to be teachable, and then he goes over into the area of Corinth. **“And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace:”** (verse 27) evidently fully approving of his doctrine, he goes to the area of Corinth, **“who, when he was come, helped them much which had**

believed through grace: for he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.” (verses 27b-28) Now, **1st Corinthians chapter 1, verses 11 to 13, chapter 3, verses 3 to 6**, describe to us, well it’s easier if I just read it, **1st Corinthians chapter 1, verses 12-13** says **“Now this I say”** Paul writing to the Corinthians, **“every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?”** he’s telling them, in the third chapter he says **“For ye are yet carnal: for whereas *there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos; but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.”* (1st Corinthians 3:3-6)** So evidently what happened is Apollos now goes into the area of Corinth, he helps the brethren much there, he’s convincing mightily the Jews, so he is evidently tall, dark and handsome, he’s eloquent, he’s an expositor, he’s a great speaker, and in Corinth, as carnal as they were, they’re saying *‘Hey, I don’t know about you guys, I’m outa Paul’s school, this guy Apollos is knocking me dead, I mean, this guy’s a public speaker...’* You know, it’s sad that it caused divisions, then Paul would have to address that later, not done deliberately certainly by Apollos. But something unthankful that Paul wrote to the Corinthians about, so we can make application certainly in our own lives. [transcript of a connective expository sermon on Acts 18:1-28, given by Pastor Joe Focht, Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia, 13500 Philmont Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19116]

related links:

Audio

version:

<https://resources.ccphilly.org/teachinglibrary.asp?Book=44>

Paul really didn’t bring in a huge number of pagan-Gentiles into the Church (but *God-fearing Gentiles*, yes he did), as many believe. What two historic events did bring a huge number of pagan-Gentiles

into the Church? see
<https://unityinchrist.com/LegacyOfLove.htm>

What was Paul and Apollos preaching to the Jews and God-fearing Gentiles that proved Jesus' Messiahship? See
<https://unityinchrist.com/prophecies/1stcoming.htm>

Paul taught the simple Gospel, ***Jesus Christ and Him crucified.*** For a thorough Passover study on that event, see
<https://unityinchrist.com/lamb/lastsix.htm>

“The Feast” always referred to the Feast of Passover because it was the very Feast that freed the 12-tribed nation of Israel from Egyptian slavery and made them into a nation, see
<https://unityinchrist.com/lamb/exodus1.html>