
CBC WEEKLY RESOURCES



- I. [Sermon Recap](#)
- II. [Study Guide](#)
- III. [Devotional](#)
- IV. [Small Group Resources](#)

“Acts 18”

SEPTEMBER 15, 2026

COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH
3645 Cashiers Rd, Highlands, NC 28741



SERMON RECAP

Pastor Gary continued in Acts by introducing us to Apollos, a remarkable servant of God who appears in Acts 18. Apollos was eloquent, mighty in the Scriptures, bold, and fervent in spirit, yet he did not know the full story of Jesus' death, resurrection, and the gospel as clearly as he needed to. What he knew, he taught accurately and passionately. His life reminds us that God can use people who are still growing, still learning, and still being discipled, so long as their hearts are willing.

The sermon challenged the idea that we must be “experts” before we can speak the truth. Apollos did not have everything figured out, but he had zeal and teachability. Priscilla and Aquila saw God's hand on him, brought him into their home, and explained the way of God more accurately. This is a beautiful picture of the church: mature believers nurturing emerging leaders, and passionate servants remaining humble enough to be corrected and equipped.

At the heart of the message was a pastoral call to recover holy enthusiasm, an enthusiasm rooted not in person but in God Himself. Pastor Gary connected this to the “zeal of the Lord” in Isaiah 9:7, the unstoppable divine passion that brought Christ into the world to redeem sinners. God's people are not meant to drift into apathy, isolation, or purposelessness. We are called to fear the Lord more than man, ask God for an enthusiastic heart, be compelled by the love of Christ, and tell the truth with boldness and love.

STUDY GUIDE

Key Points

- Holy enthusiasm is rooted in God, not personality.

Biblical enthusiasm is not simply extroversion, optimism, or emotional energy. It is “entheos” a life animated by God at the center.

- You do not have to know everything to be faithful.

Apollos only knew the baptism of John, but what he knew, he taught accurately and boldly. God uses available, humble, teachable people.

- Mature believers help others become more fruitful.

Priscilla and Aquila did not publicly shame Apollos. They invited him in, discipled him, and helped him understand the way of God more accurately.

- The zeal of the Lord fuels our witness.

Our courage to speak, serve, give, and love comes from God’s own passion to redeem people through Christ.

Key Scripture

Primary Sermon Text

- Acts 18:24-26 — Apollos is introduced as eloquent, mighty in the Scriptures, fervent in spirit, and teachable as Priscilla and Aquila explain the way of God more accurately.

Every Verse Mentioned or Clearly Alluded to by Pastor Gary

- Acts 18:24-26 — Apollos in Ephesus; eloquent, mighty in Scripture, fervent in spirit, knowing only John’s baptism.
- Acts 18:9-10 — The Lord tells Paul not to be afraid but to keep speaking because He is with him.
- Acts 4:13 — Peter and John were unschooled, ordinary men, but people recognized they had been with Jesus.

- 1 Thessalonians 1:5 – The gospel came not merely with words, but with power, the Holy Spirit, and deep conviction.
- Philippians 3:10 – Paul’s longing to know Christ and the power of His resurrection.
- James 2:17 / James 2:26 – Faith without works is dead.
- Colossians 3:23 – Whatever you do, work heartily as for the Lord.
- 2 Corinthians 9:7 – God loves a cheerful giver.
- 2 Timothy 2:15 – Present yourself to God as approved, rightly handling the word of truth.
- James 1:2-3 – Count trials as joy because the testing of faith produces perseverance.
- Romans 12:11 – Never be lacking in zeal; keep spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.
- Romans 1:16 – Paul is not ashamed of the gospel.
- Isaiah 6:8 – “Here am I. Send me.”
- 2 Corinthians 5:14 – The love of Christ compels us.
- 2 Corinthians 5:18-20 – Believers are entrusted with the ministry of reconciliation and serve as ambassadors for Christ.
- Luke 6:45 / Matthew 12:34 – Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.
- Hebrews 12:1 – Lay aside sin that so easily entangles.
- Deuteronomy 28:13 – The Lord makes His people the head and not the tail.
- Isaiah 9:6-7 – Unto us a child is born; the zeal of the Lord will accomplish His kingdom purposes.
- Genesis 3:15 – The first promise of redemption after the fall, pointing forward to Christ’s victory.
- Romans 5:8 – God demonstrates His love for us in that Christ died for us while we were still sinners.
- Luke 15:4-7 / Matthew 18:12-14 – The shepherd leaves the ninety-nine to seek the one who is lost.

Other Relevant Verses

- Jeremiah 20:9 – “His word is in my heart like a fire...”

General thematic tie: This verse captures the holy inner compulsion Pastor Gary described, a God-given fire that must be spoken.

- 1 Peter 3:15 – Always be ready to give an answer for the hope within you, with gentleness and respect.

General thematic tie: This reinforces the call to witness boldly but lovingly and accurately.

- Galatians 6:9 – Do not grow weary in doing good, for in due season we will reap if we do not give up.

General thematic tie: This encourages those tempted toward boredom, apathy, or discouragement to keep serving with endurance.



DEVOTIONAL MATERIAL

Day 1: Fervent in Spirit

Reflection Question

Where has spiritual apathy or resignation begun to settle into your heart, and what would it look like to ask God to rekindle holy enthusiasm?

Reading

- Acts 18:24-25
- Romans 12:11

Thought

Apollos arrived in Ephesus from Alexandria, one of the great intellectual centers of the ancient world. Alexandria was famous for learning, libraries, philosophy, and Jewish scholarship. Apollos likely came from a context where Scripture was studied deeply and ideas were debated seriously. Luke describes him as “eloquent” and “mighty in the Scriptures,” meaning he was not casual about God’s Word.

But the phrase that shines in this passage is that Apollos was “fervent in spirit.” The idea is of boiling, bubbling, or being inwardly stirred. This was not shallow excitement. It was spiritual heat. Apollos had a Godward intensity that moved him to speak, teach, travel, and serve.

Romans 12:11 gives the same call to every believer: “Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.” This matters because zeal can fade. Life can disappoint us. Retirement, pain, failure, grief, addiction, exhaustion, and shame can make a person withdraw like the isolated bison Pastor Gary described. But God does not call His people to finish in apathy. He calls us to remain spiritually alive, useful, and available.

Holy enthusiasm is not dependent on age, personality, platform, or perfect circumstances. It comes from God being at the center.

Challenge

Pray today around this prompt: “Lord, show me where I have grown cold, and rekindle in me a zeal that comes from You.”

Day 2: Faithful with What You Know

Reflection Question

Have you been using what you do not know as an excuse to stay silent about what you do know?

Reading

- Acts 18:25
- Acts 4:13

Thought

Apollos knew the Scriptures, but his understanding of Jesus was incomplete. Luke says he knew “only the baptism of John.” John the Baptist preached repentance and prepared people for the coming Messiah. Apollos had received and taught that message accurately, but he did not yet understand the full gospel story with the clarity that would come through the apostles’ witness to Jesus’ death, resurrection, ascension, and the giving of the Spirit.

This is deeply encouraging. Apollos was not dismissed because he was incomplete. He was useful, teachable, and fervent. God was already at work in him, even though he still needed instruction.

Acts 4:13 says the religious leaders were astonished by Peter and John because they were “unschooled, ordinary men,” but they recognized that they had been with Jesus. This does not minimize the importance of learning Scripture. Rather, it reminds us that intimacy with Christ is the foundation of fruitful witness. Knowledge matters, but knowledge without courage and love can remain silent. Apollos had enough truth to speak, and enough humility to keep learning.

Many believers feel inadequate because they compare themselves to people who have studied Scripture for decades. But the question is not, “Do I know everything?” The better question is, “Am I faithful with what God has already shown me?”

Challenge

Write down three truths about Jesus you know with confidence. Ask God to give you one opportunity this week to share one of them with someone else.

Day 3: Teachable and Remarkable

Reflection Question

When was the last time you allowed another believer to help you understand God's way more accurately?

Reading

- Acts 18:26
- 2 Timothy 2:15

Thought

Apollos began speaking boldly in the synagogue. That setting mattered. Synagogues were places of Scripture reading, teaching, debate, and communal worship among Jewish people. To speak boldly there required courage, especially as the message of Jesus increasingly created tension.

Priscilla and Aquila heard Apollos and noticed both his gifting and his gap. They did not crush him. They did not embarrass him publicly. They invited him into their home and "explained to him the way of God more accurately." This is discipleship at its best: personal, relational, truthful, and restorative.

Priscilla and Aquila were tentmakers who had worked alongside Paul. They were not apostles, but they were mature disciples. Their home became a place of theological formation and ministry development. Apollos' future fruitfulness was shaped by their willingness to invest in him.

Second Timothy 2:15 reminds believers to rightly handle the word of truth. Accuracy matters. Zeal without truth can become dangerous. Truth without zeal can become lifeless. Apollos needed both, and so do we.

A remarkable person is not someone who never needs correction. A remarkable person is someone whose zeal is matched by humility.

Challenge

Identify one mature believer you trust. Ask them a sincere spiritual question this week, or invite them to speak into an area where you want to grow.

Day 4: Not Ashamed of the Gospel

Reflection Question

Whose opinion has become too powerful in your life, making you hesitant to speak about Jesus?

Reading

- Romans 1:16
- 2 Corinthians 5:14

Thought

Paul wrote Romans 1:16 to believers living in the shadow of Rome, the most powerful empire in the world. Rome celebrated strength, status, conquest, and public honor. The message of a crucified Jewish Messiah sounded weak and shameful to many. Yet Paul said, “I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for salvation.”

The gospel does not need worldly impressiveness to be powerful. It carries the power of God because it announces what God has done in Christ. Jesus died for sinners, rose from the grave, defeated death, and reconciles people to God.

Second Corinthians 5:14 says, “Christ’s love compels us.” The word “compels” carries the idea of being held together, pressed in, or constrained by something stronger than self-protection. Pastor Gary called this being “walled in” by the love of Christ. We do not witness because we are trying to win arguments or prove superiority. We witness because love compels us.

Fear of man often silences believers. But fear of the Lord frees us. When Christ’s love becomes greater than our concern for reputation, we begin to speak with both courage and tenderness.

Challenge

Pray for one person by name who needs Jesus. Ask God to give you love for them that is stronger than your fear of awkwardness.

Day 5: The Zeal of the Lord Will Accomplish This

Reflection Question

Do you believe God is more zealous to redeem people than you are afraid to speak?

Reading

- Isaiah 9:6-7
- Romans 5:8

Thought

Isaiah 9 was spoken into a context of darkness, oppression, political instability, and longing. God promised a child, a Son, a King from David's line whose reign would bring justice, righteousness, and peace without end. Christians understand this promise as fulfilled in Jesus Christ, the Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace.

The final line Pastor Gary emphasized is stunning: "The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this." The birth of Christ, the mission of Christ, the cross of Christ, the resurrection of Christ, and the kingdom of Christ are not fragile human projects. They are driven by the unstoppable zeal of God.

Romans 5:8 shows the shape of that zeal: "While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." God did not wait for humanity to become worthy. He moved toward us in love while we were still rebellious, lost, and helpless.

This means our witness rests on something stronger than our courage. God's zeal fuels the mission. God's love-initiated redemption. God's Spirit empowers His people. We are not trying to talk God into saving people. We are joining the mission of the God who already loves them more than we do.

Challenge

Make a concrete commitment today: one conversation, one invitation, one note, one testimony, one act of love. Begin it, and trust the zeal of the Lord to work through your obedience.

4. SMALL GROUP RESOURCES

Opening

Welcome everyone warmly. As you begin, invite the group to pause and become aware of God's presence. Encourage a brief time of prayer focused on:

- Thanking God for His Word.
- Asking the Holy Spirit to rekindle holy enthusiasm.
- Asking for humility to be teachable.
- Asking for courage to speak truth in love.

Thematic Recap

This week's sermon focused on Apollos, a gifted and fervent servant of God who was bold with what he knew and humble enough to receive further instruction. Pastor Gary reminded us that holy enthusiasm is not a personality trait, but a God-centered zeal rooted in Christ. The message called us to reject apathy, fear the Lord more than man, ask God for an enthusiastic heart, be compelled by love, and tell the truth.

Core Message Highlights

- Apollos was eloquent, mighty in Scripture, bold, and fervent.
- He did not know everything, but he faithfully taught what he knew accurately.
- Priscilla and Aquila modeled wise, loving discipleship.
- Enthusiasm means God is at the center of our motivation.
- Fear of man often silences witness.
- The love of Christ compels us to speak.
- The zeal of the Lord fuels redemption and mission.

Icebreaker

Discussion Question:

Think of a time when you saw someone display genuine enthusiasm—not hype, but deep conviction and passion. What made it meaningful or contagious?

Scripture Exploration

Passage 1: Acts 18:24-26

Discussion Prompts

1. What words or descriptions stand out to you about Apollos?
2. Why is it encouraging that Apollos was both gifted and incomplete?
3. How did Priscilla and Aquila model loving correction and discipleship?
4. What is the difference between being bold and being unteachable?

Passage 2: Romans 12:11

“Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.”

Discussion Prompts

1. What are some common reasons believers lose spiritual fervor?
2. How is biblical zeal different from emotional hype or personality-driven excitement?
3. What practices help keep spiritual fervor alive?
4. Where do you currently need God to renew zeal in your life?

Passage 3: Isaiah 9:6-7

Read the promise of the coming King and the phrase, “The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.”

Discussion Prompts

1. What does this passage reveal about God’s commitment to redemption?
2. How does God’s zeal give us confidence in evangelism and ministry?
3. Why is it important to remember that mission begins with God, not us?
4. How does the reign of Christ give purpose to our everyday obedience?

Grand Synthesis Prompt

How do these three passages together help us understand the relationship between zeal, truth, humility, and mission?

Application: Growing Personal and Communal Prayer Lives

Pastor Gary gave the acronym FACT as a way to cultivate enthusiasm:

- F – Fear the Lord more than man
- A – Ask for an enthusiastic heart
- C – Be compelled by the love of Christ
- T – Tell the truth

Use this as a prayer framework for your group.

Personal Prayer Steps

- Ask God to reveal where fear of people has silenced you.
- Ask for renewed spiritual fervor and joy in serving Christ.
- Pray for Christ's love to become the controlling motivation in your relationships.
- Ask God to give you one clear opportunity to speak truth this week.

Communal Prayer Steps

- Pray for CBC to be a church marked by zeal and accuracy.
- Pray for mature believers to disciple others like Priscilla and Aquila.
- Pray for those who feel isolated, bored, ashamed, or purposeless.
- Pray for courage to share testimonies with humility and boldness.
- Pray for lost friends, family members, neighbors, and coworkers by name.

Closing

Prayer Needs

Leave space for group members to share:

- Personal burdens.
- Areas of spiritual apathy.
- People they are praying will come to Christ.
- Opportunities where they need boldness.
- Places where they need encouragement or discipleship.

Closing Prayer Prompt

Invite someone to close by praying around these themes:

- Gratitude for the zeal of the Lord.
- Confession of fear, apathy, or silence.
- Renewal of holy enthusiasm.
- Courage to speak the truth in love.
- Love for people who need Christ.
- Humility to keep learning and growing.

Leader Notes

- Create safety before depth. Some people may feel shame about not knowing Scripture well. Reinforce that growth is a journey and that Apollos himself needed further instruction.
- Do not let discussion become performative. The goal is not to compare Bible knowledge but to encourage faithfulness, humility, and obedience.
- Honor different personalities. Remind the group that enthusiasm may look quiet, steady, tender, bold, joyful, or deeply resolved.
- Watch for isolated members. Pastor Gary's opening image of the lone bison may resonate deeply with retirees, those in recovery, widows/widowers, empty nesters, or those battling discouragement.
- Encourage testimony. Invite members to share how God has used them even when they felt unqualified.
- Keep prayer Spirit-led. Use prompts and themes rather than scripted prayers. Encourage honest, simple, faith-filled prayer.
- End with a concrete step. Before closing, ask each person to name one practical act of obedience they will pursue this week.