

Promise Keeper

Acts 18:9-10

- Corinth was ancient Greece most important trade city; it was ideally situated between the Ionian Sea and the Aegean Sea, making it the connecting link between Rome the capital of the world and the East. In fact it was Rome in **146 BC**, who invaded Corinth killing the men and enslaving the women and children, and it remained that way for **100yrs** until Julius Caesar ordered it to be rebuilt and restored it as the capital city of the Roman province Achaia.
- Because it laid doormat for so long Caesar also repopulated it with freed Italians and slaves from every nation and it became a melting pot for **loose living, sexual immorality, and idolatry**. Soon the city takes off as merchants and sailors anxious to work the docks flock back to Corinth. Corinth also was known for its isthmian games, so gamblers and athletes also took up residence there, so by the time the Apostle Paul arrives there, Corinth is knee deep in **sin** and **ungodliness**.

V1-3

- It's not surprising that Paul ends up going to Corinth after he leaves Athens since it was only about **50** miles apart, but what I find interesting is the environmental adjustment he had to make. **Athens** was noted for its **culture** and **learning**, its **sophistication** so to speak, **Corinth** is known for its **commerce** and **immorality**, it would be like having **Boston** and all its universities, being next to **Las Vegas** and the **Vegas strip**, just such a stark contrast, and yet after the confrontation on Mars Hill this is where God leads the Apostle to start a church.
- Now before Paul had **met anyone** or **did anything** we read in **1Cor 2:1-5** > that he had determined to magnify the cross and Jesus, and to present the gospel in simplicity not in man's wisdom. So in order to do that God supplies him with **devoted helpers**, you know I've found that the more sinful an environment the better it is to have people around you of like mind. Paul meets for the **1st** time Aquila and Priscilla, Jews who had lost their homes in Rome because the emperor Claudius despised the Jews, so in their suffering and pain they meet the Apostle Paul.
- This would become a very profitable friendship for both, as God used them mightily in each other's lives to not only strengthen each other but also the church as a whole > **Rom 16:3-5, Acts 18:24-28**,. In hindsight I am sure that both Aquila and Priscilla would have gladly given up all their earthly possessions for friendship, growth, and spiritual opportunities they received after being deported from their home.
- God brought them together by providence and by trade; they both had the same job skills being **tent makers**. Paul needed this look at his **mental state** as reported by his own writing in **1Cor 2:3** > He was **weak, fearful, and trembling**, he needed friends. So the Lord allowed Paul to not only work with this couple but also to live with them.

V4-17

- This emboldened Paul, so much so that he was able to overcome his fears, his personal weakness and witness boldly in the synagogues on the Sabbath. Then Silas and Timothy join him from Macedonia, according to **2Cor 11** they bring him financial aid this allowed Paul to devote himself full time to the preaching of the gospel, testifying diligently that Jesus is the Christ.
- **V6** their rejection of Jesus being the Christ is called blasphemy, here is another indirect example of Jesus being God because someone can only blaspheme God, and since Paul was preaching Jesus as the Christ this is what the Jews despised more than anything and they oppose him greatly. Paul tells them he has done his job so now their blood is upon their own head, and he leaves and moves next door and continues his ministry.
- **V7** I love this, as **opposition** didn't shut Paul down, it only served to **increase** his **opportunities**. You can believe that what was going on next door was coming to the ears of the Jews, as they couldn't help but see **the miracles, the joy abounding, and the church growing**, and so **irresistible** and **undeniable** this was that the chief ruler of the synagogue and his family, and many others became believers > **V8 wow!**
- The conversion of Crispus an important Jewish leader opened up more opportunities for evangelism and brought more opposition from the enemy, so God gives him a word of assurance. **V9-10** it's interesting that its after Paul has experienced success and not at the beginning of his ministry that God speaks to him about fear.
- You need to remember that Paul is used to Jewish opposition rising up and driving him out of the city like in Thessalonica and Berea, but God tells him unlike the other places you're going to be here a while. **V11** Paul is there for **18 months**; Paul is used to raising up churches and being forced to leave after **3wks**, so a yr and a half teaching the word of God nonstop must have seemed like an eternity.
- **V12-** when God makes a promise you can believe it's for a reason, as the governor and the Jews rise up against Paul. **V13-** the Jews charged Paul with persuading people to worship God in a way that was contrary to Roman law, and Roman law prohibited the propagation of new religions. **V14-16-** just when Paul was about to open his mouth to defend himself, the Lord intervenes and uses the unsaved judge to speak up on his behalf and shoot down all their accusations.
- **V17** now if that wasn't enough the new ruler of the Jewish synagogue, a man named Sosthenes, who took over after Crispus became saved, **grabbed** by the crowd > we don't know if it was the **Jews** who did this because he didn't **argue** the case **persuasively** enough or if it was the **Greeks** who did this for **wasting** their time, what we do know is he got a public beat down in front of everyone. Before we say he **deserved** it for messing with Paul > **1Cor 1:1-** look who's a believer,

- folks how many of us have been brought to **salvation** after we've been **beaten** up by the **world**. As this was going on you can believe Paul was thinking about God's **word of assurance** to him, and like Paul let all of us be **encouraged** not only by the **presence** of God, but also by **His promises**.