

Putting Feet to Your Faith

Acts 18:12-28

- Paul has traveled from Athens into Corinth the most immoral city in the Mediterranean, and like before he is bombarded by the idolatry and depravity of man, so what does Paul do? He rolls up his sleeves, gird up his loins, and settles his heart, and begins to share the gospel with as many people who would listen and receive the truth. Unlike Athens many responded to the gospel and followed Paul, one was the ruler of the Jewish Synagogue (Crispus and his whole household)
- At this point Paul became fearful, because when God is moving the enemy is plotting, and this usually is when an uproar starts and Paul is placed under arrest, beaten or thrown out of the city, but not this time, the Lord promises him that he will not be physically harmed or thrown out of the city, because The Lord would provide much support for him in Corinth **V9-10**. What's amazing is the Corinthian church will be known for division not unity, carnality, fornication, lawsuits, and yet the Lord says He has many here who will stand up in support for you and Me.

V12-28

- **V12-13** after Paul receives a word of assurance its followed by an attack from the enemy, Gallio was the brother of a man named Seneca who was a philosopher of great influence in the Roman empire and one of his prized students was Caesar Nero the crazed emperor who later caused the deaths of thousands of Christians. So the Jews thought here's our chance to do away with Paul and cause significant damage to the spread of Christianity by having it declared illegal to share or practice. So the charge was that Paul and Christians were persuading people to worship God contrary to both Jewish and Roman Law, as Roman Law forbid the spread of new Religions.
- Paul is brought to the "**judgment seat**" > bema seat **2 Cor 5:10**, the same word used to describe how we must all appear before Jesus to give an account for what we did with our lives after coming to know Him as our Lord. Paul could object for any of three reasons > the **1st** Paul was not introducing a new religion but opening their understanding of the scriptures to the truth that they were incorrectly interpreting, **2nd** Paul could say I'm not teaching them to worship contrary to the Law, I'm preaching the fulfillment of the Law, in the Person of Jesus Christ, **3rd** being a Roman citizen it was illegal for the Jews to bring him to court without Roman permission
- So he has a myriad of defenses that he could unleash but before he opens his mouth something miraculous happens, Gallio speaks up for him. **V14-16** saying if it was a matter of Paul robbing, murdering, or blatantly breaking the law then he'd hear them, but this is a religious matter, not a civil case so see to it yourselves, and throws them out of his court. This is what is called divine protection > **Prov 16:7, V17** this leads to the people turning on the new leader of the Synagogue "**Sosthenes**" as they beat him on his way out of the court, this leads to something amazing.

- **V8** after Crispus trusted Jesus he is replaced by Sosthenes, and in an attempt to impress those who placed him in leadership he goes after Paul, Justus, and Crispus, only to be soundly defeated and then publicly humiliated as he's not only thrown out of the court but beaten as well. Nothing drives you to the cross quicker than having our pride humbled, and this humiliation led to Sosthenes coming to the Lord according to most commentaries > **1Cor 1:1**.
- **V18-21** Paul leaves Corinth but not alone as he takes with him Aquila and Priscilla and heads toward Antioch but he stops in Ephesus and as we've seen everywhere Paul went he made sure to find out where the saints were and connect with them first. Paul has taken a vow a Nazarite vow in appreciation and thanksgiving for how the Lord blessed and protected him in Corinth. Like before he reasons from the scriptures with any who has ears to hear, **V20** says the believers loved it and wanted him to stay longer just as he'd done in Corinth but Paul says "no".
- In leaving the Ephesians Paul does two things > **1st** he leaves Aquila and Priscilla there to teach and disciple, so that they wouldn't be alone, **2nd** he tells them that if it's the Lord's will he'd return. The phrase "if it's God's will" wasn't just some religious slogan to Paul he lived by it, in **Acts 16:6**- two years earlier he wanted to preach in Ephesus but the Lord said no, after **18** months in Corinth Paul knew it was the Lord's will to leave, and now after an invitation to stay he knew it was God's will to return to Jerusalem and keep the feast and if it's God's will come back later, this takes discernment and patience to know whether something is of God or not.
- Most people are led by either their circumstances, emotions, or desires, but Paul was led by the Spirit, and if we were patient, and alert, we can be led by Him as well. **V22-23** so he goes to Jerusalem fulfills his vow and returns back to Antioch where he both greeted the churches and strengthened them by sharing what the Lord was doing through his travels. This is why it's so important to allow the Lord to use us because it brings glory to God and it emboldens the saints, think about it, when people tell you about a witnessing opportunity you can't help but think who is it you need to share with, as it blesses and stirs us to hear other people's praise reports.
- **V24-28** this is how you know that the decision that you made was the Lord, as it will not only bless you but also others. Aquila and Priscilla instead of traveling further with Paul stay behind in Ephesus, and a man named Apollos who's described as not only brilliant intellectually but also fervent in heart spiritually. The problem is he's never heard of the resurrection of Jesus before only the message of repentance from John the Baptist, this meant all he could preach was repent for the Messiah was coming, he had no idea that He had already come.
- Although we read that Apollos had many Godly characteristics, the most important was is he "teachable" because if he wasn't then he couldn't receive the gospel of grace from Aquila and Priscilla and all those other qualities listed wouldn't mean much as he'd be stuck where he is spiritually. What's great is how Aquila and Priscilla approached him, they saw his passion, they heard his zeal, and they gently showed him the truth.

- The word “**Explain**” is what we saw Paul do when he went into the Synagogues and shared with the listeners about who Jesus was and what he had done for us. This is exactly what Aquila and Priscilla did for Apollos, they explained to him how Jesus was the fulfillment of the Law, and that He was the Son of God, and He was Who John the Baptist was speaking of who’s shoelace he wasn’t worthy to tie, and when He went to the cross he didn’t stay there He resurrected.
- When Apollos received the truth the church wrote him a letter of recommendation and he was accepted by the believers in Achaia and he greatly helped the church there in sharing and discipling the saints in the gospel of grace. He also because of his own personal experience in lacking the full understanding of the gospel of Grace, was able to meet many of the Jews who still wanted to follow Judaism and the Law, and reject Jesus as the Messiah to see the error of their ways through the scriptures and come into the knowledge of the truth.