

Putting Feet to Your Faith

Acts 18:1-11

V1-11

- **V1** says “**after these things**” what things? We left off with Paul preaching in Athens at a place called “**Mars Hill**”, to a crowd of learned philosophers who professed a curiosity toward the gospel of Grace and what it was and meant. Once he finished preaching there were three different responses > **1st** laughed and mocked and didn’t take his message seriously, **2nd** others mocked saying they were interested but not convinced and they’d hear more later, **3rd** a small group believed and accepted the message, and even joined Paul on his mission to Evangelize.
- Also were told that the main thing they disagreed with was the “**teaching of the resurrection**” why would God care enough to die for man when all he’s been is a disappointment? In their philosophy of many gods they couldn’t fathom one who would care to have a personal relationship since the gods were so impersonal, interested only in pleasure and judgment. For they saw God as being like themselves, selfish, unreasonable, angry, but Paul’s preaching that He’s compassionate, merciful, Gracious, it was hard for them to receive, so most rejected.
- If Paul’s spirit was stirred up from all the idolatry he saw in Athens, one can imagine how he felt when arriving in Corinth, it was known as the most immoral and ungodly places in all of Greece. Thanks to its location the city was a center for both trade and travel, money and vice, along with strange philosophies and new religions, it was the place where Paul wrote > **Rom 1:18-32**.
- **V2-3** in the midst of this cesspool God brings to Paul a couple who would become lifelong blessings to him and the many churches he would plant. When speaking about this couple in **Rom 16:3-4** not only did they bless Paul but put their lives on the line so that the gospel would continue to grow and take route in Europe. During this time Jews were being driven out of Rome and spreading out all over Europe and because of this discomfort Aquila-Priscilla come to Corinth, notice what brings them together initially is not the gospel but their occupation > **tent makers**, this again shows how working was a part of Paul’s witness as he wrote in > **1Thess 2:9**.
- **V4-5** as usual Paul goes where the people are and on the Sabbath days he would go to the Synagogue and preach the gospel to both the Gentiles and the Jews, it’s here where his protégé’s Silas and Timothy catch up to him, remember he’d left them in Berea when he’d moved on to Athens and once there he sent for them to join him but by the time they caught up with him he was already in Corinth and so now the team is together again ready to minister. This “**compelled him**” meaning it stirred him up as Timothy and Silas brought news of how the other churches and believers were doing, as afterward he writes 1Thessalonians > **1Thess 3:6-10**.

- Notice here's that word "**reasoned**" used when Paul was sharing with the Thessalonians in **Ch 17** it's where we get the English word "**dialogue**" from. Paul is not just telling the people what to do he's explaining to them why they should do it, parents understand this as your kids get older and just saying "**because I said so**" doesn't do it anymore, they want to know why your saying it. **1Pet 3:15** people use for the gospel but also its anything pertaining to the truth of God's Word, which is why we need to do what? Study to show ourselves approved; workmen who need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth > **2 Tim 2:15**.
- **V6-7** Paul is again met with opposition, in Athens it was the resurrection of the dead, here its Jesus as the Christ, it's always going to be something with those who don't want to believe, and yet were still called to share the truth with them. In **1Cor 2:1-5** were told the perspective Paul had and what he wanted to say to them, notice he was beat down from Athens as they had mocked him and called him a "**seed picker**" which means a person who spouted information that they'd gathered from others and communicated it in an unsophisticated way proving that they'd gathered it without understanding it themselves, this is what they said about Paul wow!
- So when he comes here he says I'm not trying to impress anyone, with my wisdom or excellence of speech, in fact I'm not even going to get into the complexity of the resurrection and why God cared so much for man who is so rotten. I am going to just stick with "**Christ and Him crucified**" and launch out from there. In doing that he says I'm going to depend upon the Holy Spirit and present the gospel in simplicity, meaning he is just going to stay with the basics. You have to love Paul he has no problem in showing that he is just like us, we like to display intellect, we want people to think we know what we're talking about and be just a little impressed by us.
- But Paul says in doing that we can take away from God receiving the glory causing people to focus too much on us, and we can set ourselves up for a big disappointment when people don't respond in the way we want them to and then start to doubt what God wants to do with us. The best thing is to just stay with the simplicity of the gospel and speak the truth in love and allow the Holy Spirit to do His Work while we get out of the way. Paul says he did what he was suppose to and now he'll move on to those who want the truth specifically the Gentiles and he moves next door to a man named Justus house and starts a church right there.
- **V8-11** Crispus who once ruled the Synagogue hears the truth and gets saved and you know that didn't sit well with the Jews and it leads to many others believing and getting baptized. Paul knowing the history that usually this is when an uproar occurs and he's either beaten and thrown in jail, or expelled and hurried out of the city, but God reassures him and lets him know that he's going to be here for a while and so he settles in teaches the Word, disciples the new converts, edifies and roots the new church, and pens **1Thessalonians**. What I find interesting is Athens was the cultural educational center of the world producing Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and Corinth was commercial trade center of the world producing money- vice, and it led to the same result, because whether you possess knowledge or materialism without Jesus it's still a waste.