

ACTS 18:1-21

“Intentional Living”

1 ¶ after these things Paul departed from Athens and went to Corinth.

Let me paint a picture of Corinth-

A city in Greece about 45 miles west of Athens.

One of the largest, richest and most important cities of the Roman Empire.

Populated by over 400,000 and only surpassed by Rome Alexandria and Antioch in size.

It was known for wealth, Luxurious + immoral living and violence.

Kind of like California today!!

It such a crazy environment let's see how the SPIRIT leads Paul.

POINT 1 Be Intentional

2 And he found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla (because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome); and he came to them.

Found –after searching- to find something that was sought after =

Paul did NOT stumble across Aquila but was looking for something specific.

We see in other texts that this was the beginning of a meaningful loving relationship.

Aquila and Priscilla were mentioned as “a great encouragement “, Fellow laborers, and even risking their own lives”

Now time does not permit me to list all my Aquila n Priscilla's but many of you here have been those things to me.....Mike Neff, Steve B., Jimmy T. Peter, Cecil, Worley ,Rick, of course all the staff and pastors----elders.

This is how life is meant to live.....Together! Find those people you are going to labor with and be an encouragement be someone's Aquila or Priscilla. Be Intentional about it. A great place to look is in a Home fellowship or prayer group.

Ge 2:18 Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him." Paul was single but still needed fellowship and encouragement.

Paul was a very intentional man. He went to key cities where the Gospel would travel quickly because of commerce and location.

I picture Paul praying "LORD I want to be profitable for the Kingdom "

This is how we came to adopt Nkumba—it is a strategic city to reach many others. It will be near the embassy that every person in East Africa (Botswana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Swaziland, Madagascar, Mozambique, Sudan, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe) will come to in order to leave the region.

They will most likely stay very close to the church for several weeks giving us an opportunity to share CHRIST and then they can take HIM with them.

Furthering the gospel to even more people!

Remember last week —*God has determined their pre-appointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, Acts 17:26*

Side note ---historical fact about Claudius kicking out the Jewish people --- Claudius, who was in office AD 41-54, appears in the Acts of the Apostles (18:2), and in the writings of several Roman historians.

3 So, because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and worked; for by occupation they were tentmakers.

Paul had a special Kinship because of they both shared the same occupation.

Have you ever been around a bunch of mechanics, fireman, military they have a special bond. Paul and Aquila hit it off right away.

"Paul's trade was not a menial task with little to no skill. The skill for this sort of trade would be vested in the cutting and stitching together leather and cilicium to make tents that would hold up to heavy use and hold out moisture. Paul would have learned from an early age the skill of stitching together sections of leather and cloth into a tent with waterproof seams. This skill would have been acquired from an early age and was part of his overall education. This would follow the old rabbinic maxim, "whoever does not teach his son a craft teaches him to be a robber." Based on apprentice contracts from the 1st

century, we learn that he would have been contractually bound to approximately two to three years and working sunrise to sunset in the shop. The apprenticeship would have been based on strict discipline and demanding standards. In honor of finishing his apprenticeship, Paul was presented with his own set of knives and awls perfectly suited to his new profession. The size and weight of these tools would have made his trade quite portable and easy to transport across the world as a missionary. [1] His tools would have fit in a light tool bag rolled up to the size of a modern day Study Bible, which illuminates another point. As a light traveler, Paul only carried with him what was useful.” **From Ronald Huck**

GOD used this early experience in Paul’s life to help with the work.

1 cor 11:9 and when I was present with you, and in need, I was a burden to no one, for what I lacked the brethren who came from Macedonia supplied. And in everything I kept myself from being burdensome to you, and so I will keep myself.

Paul’s heart was not to be a financial burden to anyone and many years earlier GOD prepared him with this great skill of making tents.

In the same way GOD has given you a tent-making ability and HE wants you to use it to further HIS kingdom –to do the will of the Father.

Larry---my mechanic is a great example of this GOD gave him the skill to fix cars and the gift of gab!

He talks to everyone that comes into his shop about JESUS and encourages the brothers and sisters that come in. He is another Aquila of mine.

All of us can do this. It does not take being a missionary to be missional....it takes being Intentional.

Knowing that when you wake up in the morning that you will have an opportunity to share, pray, encourage, love every day you can choose to do the Fathers will.

4 And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded both Jews and Greeks.

Paul did as was his custom in every city we read about so far first going to the Jewish synagogue.

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

What does CCO do to reach out to the Jewish people? We have missionaries there and we also have a Jewish ministry that you can be involved.

Being intentional is not only a question of what but how?

This is impossible without prayer!! GOD directs us in prayer and realigns our hearts. Just like your tires get out of alignment so does your heart if you're not spending time in the word and prayer.

I can picture Paul every morning praying, begging that his fellow countryman would listen and repent.

Be intentional in prayer for your co-workers? For friends? For family ? our hearts are cultivated in prayer. Pray for your oikos.

5 When Silas and Timothy had come from Macedonia, Paul was compelled by the Spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ.

Silas and Timothy brought two things with---good news about the church in Thessalonica (their faith and love were standing firm according to [1 thess3:6-10](#) and an offering from phillipi ([phil 4:14-15](#)) so now Paul was free to give himself completely to the word.

POINT 2 Be Encouraged!!

Silas and Timothy were referred to as "my sons" in Paul's letters they came at a great time.

6 But when they opposed him and blasphemed, he shook his garments and said to them, "Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean. From now on I will go to the Gentiles."

[Ezekiel 33: 1-9](#) check it out

7 ¶ And he departed from there and entered the house of a certain man named Justus, one who worshiped God, whose house was next door to the synagogue.

Would you know it! One door closed then the door next store is opened. This location gave him a strategic location to still minister to the Jews and Gentile Proselytes.

As a result.....

8 Then Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his household. And many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized.

Paul had a lot to be encouraged about. He had a great team Priscilla, Aquila, Silas and Timothy were all here. He had financial help and could now stop making tents and serve in ministry full time and they were bearing fruit!!

Here is an application—when we are all working together we will bear fruit. When each part of the body is working together it is a sweet aroma to the LORD.

That is why I encourage people to serve not for my benefit but for the benefit of the whole body and the fruit that will be bore!

I will tell you the truth today if you step out and get involved by being intentional you will face opposition, you will face depression and there will be tension! It will be hard and you will need to be encouraged by GOD HIMSELF.

Paul hit this point....

9 Now the Lord spoke to Paul in the night by a vision, "Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent;

10 "for I am with you and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city."

“As we examine Paul’s ministry in Corinth, you will see that he was fulfilling the Lords commission given in Mathew 28:19-20. Paul came to Corinth “GO” he won sinners to Christ “make disciples” he baptized and taught them and he even experienced the “I am with you”

Mathew 18:19 *“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 “teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.*

GOD’s promises are sure! You can be confident in this that if you step out in obedience GOD will be with you!

11 And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

How long I stayed in Uganda. I acted in obedience.. sometimes we mistake that GOD is calling us to sacrifice something when in reality he asking us to walk in obedience.

12 ¶ When Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews with one accord rose up against Paul and brought him to the judgment seat,

13 saying, "This fellow persuades men to worship God contrary to the law."

Following CHRIST will result in opposition! And persecution but remember

2Co 4:17 *for our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,*

14 And when Paul was about to open his mouth, Gallio said to the Jews, "If it were a matter of wrongdoing or wicked crimes, O Jews, there would be reason why I should bear with you.

15 "But if it is a question of words and names and your own law, look to it yourselves; for I do not want to be a judge of such matters."

16 And he drove them from the judgment seat.

There will be times when you don't need to open your open mouth GOD will defend you HIMSELF or even will raise someone up to defend you.

17 Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and beat him before the judgment seat. But Gallio took no notice of these things.

They ended up beating up Paul's friend

18 ¶ So Paul still remained a good while. Then he took leave of the brethren and sailed for Syria, and Priscilla and Aquila were with him. He had his hair cut off at Cenchrea, for he had taken a vow.

Nazareth Vow- check it out in **number 6:21**

19 And he came to Ephesus, and left them there; but he himself entered the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews.

20 When they asked him to stay a longer time with them, he did not consent,

21 but took leave of them, saying, "I must by all means keep this coming feast in Jerusalem; but I will return again to you, God willing." And he sailed from Ephesus.

We must be flexible in GOD's leading.

Questions for further study/thought:

How will you be more intentional? We must act on the truth we hear.

How can you be more encouraging to your spouse? Workmates? Family and friends?