

ACTS 18 PART I

There's work to be done.

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

Acts 18:9–11.

Digging Deeper

In Acts 18 Paul and his companions connected with some believers that came from Italy: Priscilla and Aquila. Verse 3 says, "So, because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and worked; for by occupation they were tentmakers." This shows us an often-overlooked aspect of ministry: THERE IS A COST! There is always a cost in ministry. Paul did not rely entirely on support from the churches he was working so hard to plant and serve, as he likely did not want to be a burden to them. Many times in scripture we see his allusions to the "hard work" (Acts 20:35) they would endure together side by side in the ministry. So, there is work to be done. Every Christian has a part to play in the kingdom just as every Christian has been called to His purpose. In the words of Jesus "For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it— " Luke 14:28. But as we step out in faith to serve the King we often paint a target on our backs. The enemy works hard to discourage and isolate us.

YET, there are 365 times in scripture that we are told not to be afraid, or some variation of it. It's almost like God knew that we would humanly struggle with fear and doubt as well as isolation. At the root of that fear and isolation, there is always an enemy that is pulling the puppet strings. His goal is to get you to STOP serving God, or worse yet, to have never started.

Read Luke 14:25-33 then discuss what is the cost of following Christ?

Discussion Questions

1. Every Christian is called into ministry. What fears often prevent you, or try to prevent you, from living your calling?
2. Scripture shows us that Paul worked hard in every city he preached to, in order to cover the cost of his ministry. This reveals that every ministry has a cost, have you considered the cost of yours?
3. Paul was reminded he was not alone, when was the last time you felt alone in your ministry? Were you actually alone?
4. As evident here in Acts 18, for one reason or another, Paul took a vow of holiness or separation to the Lord. What vows have you taken in life? How seriously do we consider vows today?
5. How does Paul's vow of holiness demonstrate the separation we are to have from the world? How can we emulate that separation?