

August 4, 2024

Lead Pastors

**Unstoppable Kingdom**  
**Globally: The Big Picture**  
Acts 18:18-28

*“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.”* **2 Corinthians 5:17-20**

**Main Idea:** God is orchestrating His plan of redemption and He invites us to be part of it.

*After this, Paul stayed many days longer and then took leave of the brothers and set sail for Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila. At Cenchreae he had cut his hair, for he was under a vow. And they came to Ephesus, and he left them there, but he himself went into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. When they asked him to stay for a longer period, he declined. But on taking leave of them he said, “I will return to you if God wills,” and he set sail from Ephesus. When he had landed at Caesarea, he went up and greeted the church, and then went down to Antioch. After spending some time there, he departed and went from one place to the next through the region of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples. Now a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was an eloquent man, competent in the Scriptures. He had been instructed in the way of the Lord. And being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus, though he knew only the baptism of John. He began to speak boldly in the synagogue, but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately. And when he wished to cross to Achaia, the brothers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him. When he arrived, he greatly helped those who through grace had believed, for he powerfully refuted the Jews in public, showing by the Scriptures that the Christ was Jesus.* **Acts 18:18-28**

2 ways we get to participate in God's redemptive plan from Acts 18:18-28

**I. Submit to the will of God (18-23)**

*“Come now, you who say, ‘Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit’—yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. Instead you ought to say, ‘If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that.’”* **James 4:13-15**

“If the Lord wills” - Thoughtless religious saying, or a way to brush someone off? Or is it a statement of our dependence on the will of God & our submission to Him? There is no *better* place to be than in the will of God!

*“Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.”* **1 Peter 4:19**

**Obvious Big Question:** How do I know what God's will is?

*“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”* **Romans 12:2**

- Bring it to the Word of God - What does it say on the topic? Is it sin? Is it harmful? Maybe it's already a direct command, like sharing the gospel.
- Pray about it.
- Seek godly counsel - people who love Jesus; trustworthy; experienced; wise.
- Do it.

Move in faith and trust that God is guiding your decisions made in wisdom.

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**II. Join in the work of God (24-28)**

**a. Recognize that He is already at work**

*“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”* **Ephesians 2:9-10**

**God doesn't need you and me! BUT look how dearly He wants you!**

*“Now the word of the Lord came to me, saying, ‘Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.’ Then I said, ‘Ah, Lord God! Behold, I do not know how to speak, for I am only a youth.’ But the Lord said to me, ‘Do not say, “I am only a youth”; for to all to whom I send you, you shall go, and whatever I command you, you shall speak. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you, declares the Lord.’ Then the Lord put out his hand and touched my mouth. And the Lord said to me, ‘Behold, I have put my words in your mouth.’”* **Jeremiah 1:4-9**

**b. Believe that He will continue the work**

*“And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.”* **Philippians 1:6**

*“For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to give strong support to those whose heart is blameless toward him.”* **2 Chronicles 16:9a**

He doesn't need your hands, but He wants your heart!

The joy of growing in Christ and know Him more is yours as well, as God continues to reveal Himself to us while we join in His work. **How?** Similar to Apollos' situation. **Through the word of God and the people of God.**

*“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”* **2 Timothy 3:16-17**

*“Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another.”* **Proverbs 27:17**

*“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”* **Hebrews 10:24-25**

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**1) Submit to the will of God. 2) Join in the work of God.**

**It all starts with knowing Jesus as Lord and Savior!**

*“because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.”* **Romans 10:9**

#### **Sources and Further Reading Opportunities**

- *Sources and Further Reading Opportunities*
- *The Bible Exposition Commentary – Warren Wiersbe (1996)*
- *ESV Study Bible – Crossway (2008)*
- *New American Commentary - Acts – John Polhill (1992)*
- *Acts: The Church Afire - R.K. Hughes (1996)*
- *The Message of Acts: The Spirit, the Church, & the World - John Stott (1994)*
- *Acts - K.O. Gangel (1998)*
- *The Acts of the Apostles - William Barclay (1976)*
- *Acts: Bible Study Commentary - F.F. Bruce (2017)*
- *Acts for Everyone Pt 2 - Chapters 13-28 - N.T. Wright (2008)*
- *Illustration story from Daniel L. Jacobs - <https://qr.ae/psfjvr>*