

Acts 18

Vs 1-17 consists of Paul's visit to Corinth.

- He meets Priscilla and Aquila Vs 2
 - The couple is also mentioned in Paul's letters (Rom 16:3; 1 Cor 16:19; 2 Tim 4:19)
- His trade & work is revealed: He is a tentmaker vs 3

18:3 (ESV) *and because he was of the same trade he stayed with them and worked, for they were tentmakers by trade.*

- The trade of tent-making for a teacher He stays a year and a half. Vs 11
- He has a vision from God letting him know he is protected. Vs 9-10

18:9-10 (ESV) *"And the Lord said to Paul one night in a vision, "Do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent, 10 for I am with you, and no one will attack you to harm you, for I have many in this city who are my people."*

Vs 18-23 Paul heads back to Antioch

- Paul takes a Nazarite vow.
 - The vow was perhaps in connection with his vision (Acts 18:9–10), a means of expressing thanksgiving and seeking the continued blessing of the Lord in his Corinthian mission.
 - In his mission to the Gentiles, he did not abandon his own Jewishness. He was still a "Jew to the Jews" and still continued his witness in the synagogues.

18:18 (ESV) *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 [sin'-crah-a] he had cut his hair, for he was under a vow.*

Vs 24-28 Priscilla and Aquila disciples a powerful preacher named Apollos

Paul's Trade

18:3 (ESV) *and because he was of the same trade he stayed with them and worked, for they were tentmakers by trade.*

1Thes 2:9 (ESV) *For you remember, brothers, our labor and toil: we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, while we proclaimed to you the gospel of God.*

1 Corinthians 9:1–20 (ESV) *Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are not you my workmanship in the Lord? 2 If to others I am not an apostle, at least I am to you, for you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord. 3 This is my defense to those who would examine me. 4 Do we not have the right to eat and drink? 5 Do we not have the right to take along a believing wife, as do the other apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas? 6 Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working for a living? 7 Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard without eating any of its fruit? Or who tends a flock without getting some of the milk? 8 Do I say these things on human authority? Does not the Law say the same? 9 For it is written in the Law of Moses, “You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain.” Is it for oxen that God is concerned? 10 Does he not certainly speak for our sake? It was written for our sake, because the plowman should plow in hope and the thresher thresh in hope of sharing in the crop. 11 If we have sown spiritual things among you, is it too much if we reap material things from you? 12 If others share this rightful claim on you, do not we even more? Nevertheless, we have not made use of this right, but we endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ... 15 But I have made no use of any of these rights, nor am I writing these things to secure any such provision 19 For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them.... 20 To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law.*

Paul’s tentmaking shows his selflessness. Something incredibly difficult to find in believers today. Instead we are marked with selfishness, not selflessness. your self-centeredness. Be selfless like Jesus and like Paul who learned to be selfless by Jesus.

Selfishness in essence is pride, and it is our pride that will be taken out of the way when God sends revival.

Five traits of selfishness - John Piper

1. Selfishness is a reflex to expect to be served.
2. Selfishness is a reflex to feel that I am owed. (elder brother)
3. Selfishness is a reflex to want praise.
4. Selfishness is a reflex to expect that things will go my way.
5. Selfishness is a reflex to feel that I have the right to react to being crossed.

We must intentionally fight the sin of pride and selfishness to be free from its dark prison.

“Be killing sin or [sin] will be killing you.” John Owen.

Romans 8:13 (ESV) *For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.*

2 Corinthians 3:17 (ESV) *Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.*

Galatians 5:1 (ESV) *For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.*

A gospel response to these five traits: The path out of the prison of the decomposing sin of pride and selfishness.

Use SWIRL to combat sin.

Stop - freeze, pause, get by yourself for a moment - don't go inside the prison.

Will - You, because sin has been cancelled, can conquer this pride. I will take the path away from the prison. I will build a tent not enter a prison.

Invite - the Spirit to help you.

Remember the gospel and your new identity - you are a tentmaker not a navel gazer.

Let freedom reign

1. Selfishness is a reflex to expect to be served.

Stop - freeze, don't go inside the prison no matter how worn the path is. Pause. Think. I don't have to be served.

Will - Sin has been cancelled therefore I can conquer. I will take the path away from the prison. I will build a tent not enter a prison.

Invite - the Spirit to help you.

Remember the gospel and your new identity - you are a tentmaker not a navel gazer.

Phil 2:3-8 (ESV) *Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. 4 Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. 5 Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, 6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being*

found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

We expect to have Christ formed in us (Gal 4:19) and follow His example (Jn 13:15) AND he came not to be served but to serve (Mark 10:45)

Let freedom reign - I am free to serve rather than be served. I am free to have the joy of freedom in the obedience of Christ and having him formed in me.

Ask, "What can I give to this job, my family, my church" Not what can I get. When you do, you are pleased and happy.

2. Selfishness is a reflex to feel that I am owed.

Stop - Wait, the prison brings forth rot, anxiety, depression, and a withering away. I am not owed anything.

Will - I have been given the ability to conquer what has been cancelled.

Invite - Holy Spirit, you cannot lie, you keep your promises - Rom 8:13 *"by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body,"*

Remember -

We are owed nothing but rather we owe. Praise be to God that Jesus paid what we owed by His bloody death on Calvary's hill.

Let Freedom Reign -

Remember, we are not owed anything but hell, we need not be waiting for what's coming to us, but instead give to others what they don't deserve. The result is joy.

3. Selfishness is a reflex to want praise.

Stop - Hold up - I'm not God. I can't handle the praise of man - I wasn't designed in that way.

When we strive for personal praise we are simultaneously giving up our praise to God turning into self-centered, self-consumed navel gazers that creates a disdain for God and misery for us.

Will - Romans 6:12 (ESV) Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions.

Invite - 1 Corinthians 15:10 (ESV)...*I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.*

Remember the gospel and identity

(Identity) 1Cor 15:10 *But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain.*

Let Freedom Reign -

Instead of waiting for others to give you praise for all your good works and talents, make the tent of worship in a festival of praise to God and the encouragement of others

4. Selfishness is a reflex to expect that things will go my way.

Stop: Think a minute - I live in a broken world - I'm currently in the Fall of God's history. If anything goes my way, it's a miracle.

Will - No running to the prison of sin this time, I'm fighting sin head on.

Remember the gospel and your identity.

Christ has taken our 'worst news' upon himself and given to us 'good news' that belongs to us for eternity. We live out of that good news - never having to buckle under the discouragement of things not going our way.

Things have already gone our way for the believer - we are not afraid of bad news

(Psa 112:6-8) *For the righteous will never be moved; he will be remembered forever. 7 He is not afraid of bad news; his heart is firm, trusting in the LORD. 8 His heart is steady; he will not be afraid,*

Let Freedom reign: We don't have to be anxious or depressed - we rejoice and let it spill out on others.

Help make things go others' way instead of always losing energy and peace because things don't go your way. Make the tent of self-sacrifice to see others flourish. The result is energy and peace. Calmness and rest.

5. Selfishness is a reflex to feel that I have the right to react to being crossed.

Stop - making everything about me. I am not controlled by this person - My emotions are not a slave to others reactions toward me, instead I am a bondsman to Christ who loves me and is good to me.

Will - I don't need to fight with this person; I need to fight my sin. "Be killing sin or it will be killing me.

Invite - the Spirit of the Lord to empower your will. I need you, Lord.

Remember the gospel and your new identity.

We do not have to take vengeance for ourselves, protect ourselves or even get selfishly angry if others say or do things against us. We are meek and lowly like Jesus - our new identity.

God says vengeance is the Lord's. (Rom 12:19). All peoples who sin against us will have the just penalty paid for their sins either by God's wrath in the last day or Jesus' atoning blood. That frees us up to be kind toward others. Jesus death gives me forgiveness and forgiven people forgive people (Col 3:13-14).

Let Freedom Reign -

Make the tent of a gentle answer to turn away their wrath - **Proverbs 15:1 (ESV)** *A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.*

John 8:36 (ESV) *So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.*