

# ACTS

## Chapter 18

### Note from Kathy

*These last few chapters share with us Paul's second missionary journey. How can a journey that has spanned over 2 years be written about in so few pages? You leave out the personal and focus on the eternal. What is important is not what he ate or where he slept, but did he carry out the call he was given by God. The answer is a hearty, yes!!! Let's think about our own call this week while we study. What has God called all believers to do?*

#### Acts 18:1-4

*After this, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth.<sup>2</sup> There he met a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had ordered all Jews to leave Rome. Paul went to see them,<sup>3</sup> and because he was a tentmaker as they were, he stayed and worked with them.<sup>4</sup> Every Sabbath he reasoned in the synagogue, trying to persuade Jews and Greeks.*



## Observation

1. In Acts 18 we see Paul had left Athens and gone to \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Paul met a man and his wife who were both Jewish believers, Priscilla and Aquila. Paul stayed in their home and worked with them. What was their trade? \_\_\_\_\_
3. On the Sabbath you could find Paul in the synagogue doing what?
4. Silas and Timothy arrived from ministering in Macedonia and are once again helping Paul. As usual, not everyone welcomed Paul's teaching. The Jewish opposition became so abusive Paul made it clear he would no longer waste time trying to persuade them of the truth. How serious was his response? Write out Paul's words from verse 6.
5. Gentiles were not allowed in the synagogue, so Paul and those with him went to a believer's home and taught there. What was this man's name, and where was his house located?

■ Acts 9:3-6

*As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. <sup>4</sup> He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" <sup>5</sup> "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied. <sup>6</sup> "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."*

■ Acts 16:9-10

*During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." <sup>10</sup> After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.*

■ Acts 18:9-11

*One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: "Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. <sup>10</sup> For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city." <sup>11</sup> So Paul stayed in Corinth for a year and a half, teaching them the word of God.*

6. Paul's preaching was not without results. According to verse 8, who believed and saw his entire family come to faith.
7. In verses 9-11 Paul has his third of 6 visions from the Lord. Summarize these first three visions? Do not get Peter's vision in Acts 10:9-16 confused with Paul's.
  - Acts 9:3-6
  - Acts 16:9-10
  - Acts 18:9-11
8. How long did Paul remain in Corinth teaching them the word of God?
9. In verses 12-17 we read of the opposition Paul faced in Corinth. Summarize this event in your own words.
10. Who are the two leaders of the synagogue mentioned in this chapter, and what did you learn about each of them?
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11. When Paul left Corinth, he had several friends with him. He traveled from Corinth to \_\_\_\_\_. Paul went into the synagogue as was his custom and reasoned with the Jews. What does it mean, "he reasoned with the Jews?"
12. Despite the request to stay in Ephesus, Paul was compelled to move on. What did he promise the Ephesian believers?
13. Paul left Priscilla and Aquila in Ephesus to strengthen the church there. While he was gone a man named Apollos came to Ephesus. What did you learn about this man?
14. When Priscilla and Aquila heard Apollos, what did they do?
15. Using the map of Paul's Second Missionary Journey on the next page, list the cities and regions where Paul has traveled in this chapter.
  - Athens
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Matthew 3:1-2

*In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea<sup>2</sup> and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near."*

16. Priscilla and Aquila helped Apollos understand the way of God better. He had only known the teaching of John the Baptist. What was John the Baptist's message? Read Matthew 3:2.
17. From Ephesus, Apollos took a ship and went over to visit the churches established by Paul. Since Apollos was unknown to these brothers and sisters in Corinth, the church in Ephesus wrote him a letter of introduction. What do we know about the content of this letter?

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## Application

1. Corinth was not an easy city in which to share the good news. Of course, neither was Athens with all their idols. Corinth was about 40+ miles from Athens. It was a city known for its wickedness and immorality. This would be a great challenge for Paul, but also a great opportunity. I have the privilege of living in Oklahoma, which is often referred to as the *Bible* belt of America. It is not unusual to see people in a coffee shop reading their *Bible*. But the truth is, Oklahoma City needs the gospel just like every city. Are you more likely to view certain places as wicked, immoral and difficult, or do you look at them as places of great opportunity?

All believers have been called to share the good news with their words and through their actions. What are you doing to help others have a relationship with God?

■ Psalm 46:1

*God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.*

■ Luke 6:32-35

*If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. <sup>33</sup> And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that. <sup>34</sup> And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, expecting to be repaid in full. <sup>35</sup> But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. <sup>36</sup> Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.*

2. There are times we need to simply overlook those who oppose us, and continue despite criticism. But, there are times when like Paul, we must say enough is enough. We need not waste time sharing with those who refuse to hear. Have you ever felt it best to walk away and find someone else with whom to share the good news?
3. God has used the opposition to spread the gospel all over this part of the world. This time God spoke to Paul in a vision, encouraging him to stay put. The Lord assured him that no one would be able to harm him. Paul was promised a time of divine protection. He stayed a year and a half and taught the people the word of God. There is nothing like getting a word from the Lord. Have you ever stayed somewhere difficult, just because God told you to stay?

Read Psalm 46:1. What has God promised those who love and serve him?

4. Paul was brought before the proconsul of the region and charges were brought against him. Paul didn't even get a chance to speak in his own defense. God moved on the proconsul's heart, and he rejected their charges. He said there was no real crime, only a religious difference. How has God come to your defense?

How does knowing God will deal with your opposition, help you face the insults and injustices of life?

5. Of course, a blood-thirsty crowd is not easily calmed. Sosthenes had only been the leader of the synagogue for a short time, and, yet he was the one they expected to present their made up charges as if it were something huge. Obviously, his execution was a bit lacking because Gallio kicked them out of his court. Sosthenes bore the rage of this crowd. I am not sure exactly why they took out their frustrations on him. There are several possible reasons, but the Scripture does not say. Have you ever felt a crowd or group turn on you? Perhaps a boss has taken out his frustrations on you, even though you were not the one he was really upset with. This happens from time to time. If we are to truly follow in Jesus' footsteps, we must respond as he responded. How should we respond to undeserved and unjust treatment according to Luke 6:32-35? In your own words, summarize this verse.
6. Paul, Priscilla and Aquila left Corinth and went to Ephesus. While they were there, Paul went into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. Reasoning is different than teaching or preaching. It was much less formal. Paul probably allowed them to ask him questions and used Scrip-

John 10:2-4

*But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.<sup>3</sup> To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.<sup>4</sup> When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.*

John 10:27

*My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.*

ture to help them see the truth. You are doing a good thing by digging in and learning what the *Bible* has to say. What are some ways you share God's word? Do you spend time reasoning with others?

7. The people of Ephesus would have loved for Paul to stay longer and continue teaching them. Paul was a man in tune with his master's voice. Notice the promise he gives them, "I will come back if it is God's will." Read John 10:2-4 and John 10:27. Are you listening for the Father's voice and only going where he has instructed?

How are you able to distinguish his voice from all that is going on around you?

8. Paul left Aquila and Priscilla to care for the church in Ephesus. He traveled across the Mediterranean Sea to Caesarea. From Caesarea he traveled to Jerusalem and then on to Antioch to complete his second missionary journey. After spending some time in Antioch, Paul set out on his third missionary journey. What role does kingdom work have in your life?

To the apostle Paul kingdom work is life and breath. Imagine how hard these first two journeys were for Paul—away from his friends and family, facing opposition at every turn, mistreatment seemed to be the norm almost every place he went. And, yet all he focused on was the joy of sharing the good news and seeing people saved. What are you focusing on every day?

9. Chapter 18 draws to a close, but not before introducing us to an amazing man of God, Apollos. He was a Jewish man raised in Alexandria, near the Nile River. We do not know what business or reason brought him to Ephesus. He was a man of great fervor for the Scriptures. He was a gifted speaker, and, yet there were some facts of which he was unaware. Notice the care extended by Priscilla and Aquila, who took him into their home and shared with him more of God's plan for salvation. This is a beautiful example of how we are to help others. List some ways we can come alongside a friend to help them grow in their walk of faith?

- *Choose to be available*
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10. What examples of faith did you see in chapter 18 that you would like to follow, and were there some you want to avoid?

