

***Journey Through Acts***  
***“God Is Faithful”***  
***Acts 18:1-23***

**Introduction:**

1. Please Turn Back In Your Bibles With Me:
  - To Acts 18 Tonight:
    - As We Continue In Our:
      - ***Journey Through Acts*** - On Sunday Nights!
        - Acts 18 - Where The Apostle Paul Continues His Journey:
          - To Some 50 Miles Away From The City Of Athens!
  - And He Arrives In:
    - What Will Become A Well-Known City:
      - And Center For Christianity:
        - The City Of Corinth!
          - 18:1 - “After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth!”
2. **Here Is A Map Of The Southern Part Of Greece:**
  - Known As The Peloponnesus:
    - Where Other Famous City-States Of Ancient Greece:
      - Were Located - Such As:
        - Sparta!
    - But Corinth Stood:
      - As The Gate-Keeper Into This Part Of Greece:
        - And Was Separated From Athens & The Rest Of Greece:
          - By A Relatively Thin Isthmus!
3. But - It Was On The Far Western Side:
  - Of The Isthmus - **Pictured Here:**
    - Where Both The Ancient & Modern Cities:
      - Of Corinth Are Located!
  - It Was Between:
    - Two Major Ports:
      - In The Cities Lechaion & Cenchrea!
        - And - Many Times - In Order To Cut The Distance And Time To Travel Around Southern Greece By Ship:
          - They Would Transport The Cargo, And Sometimes Even The Ship Itself, Between The Two Ports By Land!
  - During The Reign Of Nero:
    - He Attempted To Dig A Canal - Where The White Line Is:
      - But Never Finished It!
        - However - The Canal Was Finished In 1893 - **And This Is What It Looks Like** Today!
4. But - After The Apostle Paul:
  - Would Have Crossed The Isthmus Of Corinth:
    - Traveling On The Lechaion Highway:
      - He Would Have Arrived In Corinth:
        - **To This View!**
  - It Was A Cosmopolitan City:
    - With Modern Streets & Modern Shops:
      - All Under The Shadow Of A Mighty Mountain:
        - Known As The Acro-Corinth:
          - Or The Acropolis Of Corinth!
5. Now - The City Of Corinth In That Day:
  - Was Not Unlike Our Own Prominent Cities Today!
    - Corinth Was A Very Powerful City!
      - Because It Was One Of The Most Strategically Located Cities In The Ancient World!
    - Corinth Was A Very Prosperous City!
      - Because It Was Just A Few Miles From Those Two Major Ports! There Was A Lot Of Money To Be Had!
    - Corinth Was A Very Prominent City!

- The Acro-Corinth Was One Of The Most Amazing Things About The City! Standing 1,886 Feet High - You Could See It From Miles Around!
  - Corinth Was A Very Proud City!
  - Just 200 Years Before Paul Went To Corinth To Preach The Gospel – The City Rebelled Against Rome - And The Entire City Was Completely Destroyed & Left In Ruins:
    - For 100 Years!
    - But After 100 Years, The City Was Completely Rebuilt By Rome – And Became One Of Rome’s Most Successful Colonies!
6. And So - It Was Into This Kind Of City:
- That Paul - According To 18:2-3:
    - “Found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them. / And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers!”
    - They Might Have Had A Shop In The Agora / Marketplace Of The City - **Pictured Here:**
      - Or - They Might Have Set Up A Tent To Sell Their Wares On The Outskirts Of The City!
      - But - In The Providence Of God - He Provided Paul With Some Friends - Who, Though They Were Not Yet Believers, Would Become So Through Their Connection With Paul!
7. But - While Paul Was In Corinth:
- He Continued His Pattern Of Ministry:
    - In 18:4 - “And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks!”
    - Now - Even Though Corinth Is One Of The Most Well-Preserved Sites:
      - Of Biblical Antiquity - The Location Of This Synagogue Has Not Been Determined!
      - However - Along One Of The Streets - An Ancient Lintel To A Door Was Found - That Was Inscribed In Greek:
        - “Synagogue Of The Hebrews!”
    - **Here Is What That Stone Lintel Looks Like Today!**
      - But - You Can Make Out:
        - The Last 3 Letters Of “Synagogue” As Well As:
          - The First 3 Letters Of “Hebrew!”
            - Did The Apostle Paul Pass Under This Lintel On His Way Into The Synagogue To “Persuade The Jews & The Greeks” Who Met There?
              - It’s Quite Possible!
8. And While Paul Was In Corinth:
- Eventually, There Was Some Success For The Gospel!
    - Which We Read In 18:5-8 - “And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ. / And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles. / And he departed thence, and entered into a certain man’s house, named Justus, one that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue. / And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized!”
    - But Along With This Success - There Was Some Trouble On The Horizon For Paul As Well There In Corinth!
9. And So - The Lord Sought To Encourage Paul:
- In 18:9-11 - “Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: / 10 For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city. / 11 And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them!”
  - So - There - In The Shadow Of:
    - **One Of The Most Pagan Temples Of Ancient** History:
      - Paul Continued To Preach The Gospel For A Year & A Half!
  - You See - The City Of Corinth:
    - Was Not Nearly As Refined As The Community Of Athens:
      - Its Closest Neighbor!
        - In Fact - Corinth Became Known All Over The World For A Few Things!
  - Corinth Was Known For Its Mixture!
    - It Too Was A “Melting Pot” – With Different Kinds:

- Of People, Fortunes, Trades & Religions!
  - Corinth Was Known For Its Morality!
    - Or - Rather - Its Lack Of Morality!
    - Because Of The Great Mixture Of People:
      - What Happened In Corinth Could Stay In Corinth!
        - It Became Known As The Roman City Of Vice - A City Of Sin!
    - In Their Temple To The Goddess Aphrodite, Wicked Acts Of Immorality Would Take Place:
      - Even In Worship!
  - Corinth Was Known For Its Materialism!
    - When Someone Would Say: “To Live As A Corinthian” – It Meant That You Were Living In Luxury And Immorality!
      - And The Romans Made It The Finest City In Greece, And Some 5 Times As Large As Athens, When Paul Arrived!
  - It Was Known As A Truly Modern City!
    - But It Was To This City Of Corinth:
      - That God Called The Apostle Paul:
        - And A Church Was Born - Through The Preaching Of The Gospel Of Jesus Christ!
10. But Then - The Storm Came In All Its Fury!
- Picking Up In 18:12-17:
    - “And when Gallio was the deputy of Achaia, the Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought him to the judgment seat, / 13 Saying, This fellow persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law. / 14 And when Paul was now about to open his mouth, Gallio said unto the Jews, If it were a matter of wrong or wicked lewdness, O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you: / 15 But if it be a question of words and names, and of your law, look ye to it; for I will be no judge of such matters. / 16 And he drave them from the judgment seat. / 17 Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and beat him before the judgment seat. And Gallio cared for none of those things!”
    - **Here Is A Picture Of The “Judgment Seat” - Or - The “Bema”:**
      - A Stone Platform On Which Gallio:
        - Would Have Sat - In Order To Render Judgments For The People!
          - And The Partial Column Standing In The Fore-Ground Is About Where The Apostle Paul Would Have Stood!
      - But - God Once Again Proved His Grace And Faithfulness:
        - To Paul & The Other Believers:
          - And Spared Him!
11. And So It Was Time For Paul:
- And His Missionary Companions To Move On:
    - Once Again!
      - And On Their Way Out - They Probably Would **Have Placed Their Feet On The Very Pavement:**
        - That Had The Name Of A Very Wealthy Man Inscribed On It!
          - A Man Named “Erastus!”
  - This Is Noteworthy:
    - Because Later - In Paul’s Letter To The Romans:
      - Which He Wrote From The City Of Corinth:
        - He Sends Greeting In Romans 16:23 From A Man Named - “Erastus the chamberlain of the city saluteth you!”
  - So - There Was Fruit Even Among The Officials:
    - Of That Great City Of Corinth!
12. And With That:
- **Paul Heads To The Port City Of Cenchrea:**
    - In Order To Work His Way:
      - First - To Ephesus - And Then:
        - To Caesarea, Jerusalem, And Back Home:
          - To The Church In Antioch!
    - And Thus Ends:
      - The Second Missionary Journey:
        - And The Beginning Of The Third!
  - Which We Read About:
    - In 18:18-23 - “And Paul after this tarried there yet a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren,

and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila; having shorn his head in Cenchrea: for he had a vow. / 19 And he came to Ephesus, and left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews. / 20 When they desired him to tarry longer time with them, he consented not; / 21 But bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus. / 22 And when he had landed at Caesarea, and gone up, and saluted the church, he went down to Antioch. / 23 And after he had spent some time there, he departed, and went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples!”

- **Here Is A Map:**

- That Shows How Paul Eventually Got Back:
  - To Antioch - Which Covers A Lot Of Miles:
  - And Probably A Lot Of Time:
    - Which Is Condensed Into These 6 Verses!

12. But - Before We Move On From Corinth:

- I Want To Draw Your Attention:

- Back To 18:9-10 - Where - Even As The Church Started Growing In House Of Justus:
  - One Night - Paul Was Restless - And Was Trying To Get Some Sleep!
  - Even Though There Was Some Visible Success:
    - It Is Clear That There Was Something Still Troubling Paul!

- Were There Other:

- Doubts & Discouragements Plaguing Paul’s Heart & Mind?
  - We’re Not Sure What Paul Was Thinking Or Feeling Or Praying That Night:
    - But We Do Read Again:

- 18:9-10 - “Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: / For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city!”

- Now - If Paul Was Encouraged & Inspired:
  - When Silas & Timothy Finally Came To See Him In Corinth:
    - **How Much More** Encouragement & Inspiration Would Have Filled His Heart:
    - When **Jesus Himself** Visited Him In This Vision!

- And The Lord Had Some Special Words:

- Of Encouragement For Paul!
  - Just When He Needed Them The Most!
  - And Doesn’t The Lord Do This For Us As Well?

- And So - We - Along With Paul:

- Can Take Comfort In:

1. **The Presence Of The Lord!**

- The Lord Knew That Paul Was Afraid:

- And So - He Says - 18:10 - “I Am With Thee!”
  - Now - I Don’t Think This Was Anything New To Paul - But It Was A Fresh Comfort & Encouragement From The Lord!
  - And This Truth Belongs To All Believers!
    - Remember?

- Isaiah 41:10 - “Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness!”

- Matthew 28:20 - “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world!”

- No Matter What You Face As A Christian:
  - You Can Persevere Because The Lord Himself Is With You!
  - And Will Never Leave You!
  - He Is Faithful!

- Also - Comfort In:

2. **The Protection Of The Lord!**

- At Times - Paul Was In Physical Danger:

- And It Was No Different Here In Corinth - But The Lord Was Not Through With Paul!
  - And So - He Says - “And no man shall set on thee to hurt thee!”

- Now - We May Not Be Promised Temporal Protection:

- But We Do Have Eternal Protection!

- And So - Nothing Should Prevent Us From Serving & Speaking For The Lord!
- Romans 8:31 - "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"
- No Matter What You Face As A Christian:
  - "We Are Immortal Until Our Work On Earth Is Done!" (George Whitefield)
  - Are You Alive? God Is Not Through With You Yet! Also - Comfort In:

### 3. *The Promise Of The Lord!*

- God Had A Reason For Paul To Be There In Corinth!
  - 18:10 - "For I have much people in this city!"
    - The Lord Knew This & Could Say This - Because In That Profligate City - He Had Personally & Graciously Chosen Some To Become A Part Of His Family!
- Matthew Henry - "Yet In That Heap, That Seemed To Be All Chaff, There Was Wheat! Yet In That Ore, That Seemed To Be All Dross, There Was Gold!"
  - And So Paul Was Given The Encouragement:
    - That There Were "Fish In That Sea!"
      - And This Prospect & Hope Would Help Motivate & Encourage Him To Keep Fishing – For Men! For Souls!
- And This Promise:
  - Of God's Own Electing Grace:
    - Is A Comfort & And An Encouragement:
      - To Us - As We Seek To Live & Serve & Witness For The Lord Right Where We Are!
      - In Our Church! In Our Community! In Our Families!
- We May Not Know Them Yet!
  - They Themselves May Not Know It Yet!
    - But - 2 Timothy 2:19 - "The Lord knoweth them that are his!"
    - "Paul Knew Them Not, But Jesus Did!" (Hawker)

### **Conclusion:**

1. So - Like Paul - You And I Do Not Need To:
  - "Be Not Weary In Well Doing" - Because:
    - We Can Have Confidence In The Faithfulness Of The Lord!
      - His Faithful Presence!
      - His Faithful Protection!
      - His Faithful Promises!
  - And Even / Especially His Faithful Possession!
    - You See - Paul Was Also In That City:
      - And He Could Rest Assured That "By Grace Through Faith" He Belonged To The Lord!
2. And So - With These Fresh Encouragements:
  - 18:11 - "And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them!"
    - His Heart Was Encouraged:
      - And So He Stayed In Corinth!
3. It Is Easy For Us To Get Discouraged:
  - In Our Lives & Walk With The Lord!
    - But The Next Time You Are:
      - Remember The Faithfulness Of God!

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