

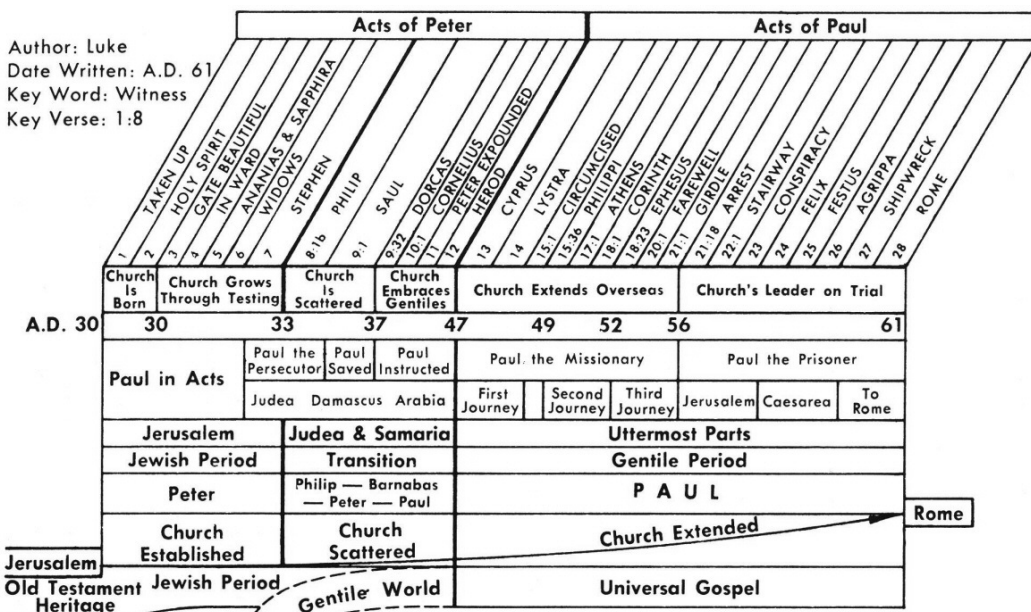
Acts 18 Commentary

PREVIOUS

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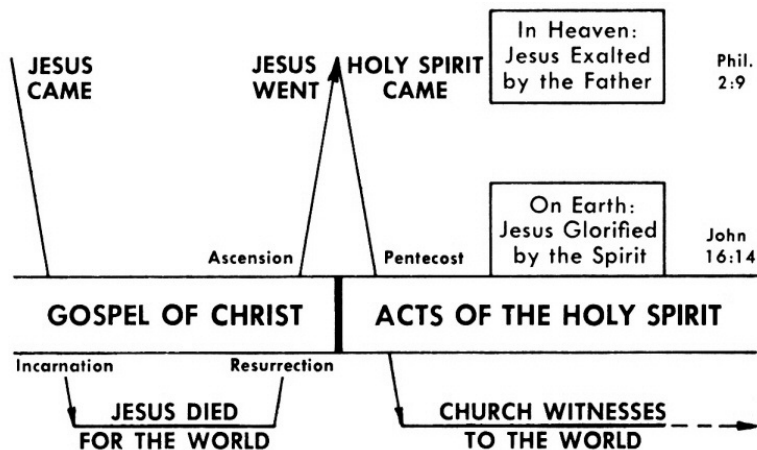
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Click chart to enlarge
Chart from Jensen's Survey of the NT - used by permission

THE EXPANDING WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT-EMPOWERED CHURCH



Click chart to enlarge

Considering the fact that Acts 13 is such a strategic chapter in regard to world evangelism, take a moment and study Irving Jensen's chart at top of the page (click it to enlarge it which is what I have to do at age 72!). Notice the **bold vertical line** (|) at the end of Acts 12 and beginning of Acts 13 which Jensen estimates to be about year 47 (it could be a short time prior). Note the horizontal description of "Church" - **Church Established** in the first 13 years from Acts 1 through Acts 7, then the **Church Scattered** between Acts 8 through Acts 12, which occurred over a period of about 14 years (and remember all dates and times are at best approximations because Luke gives only a few events that allow us to give specific dates, such as the death of Herod in A D 44 in Acts 12:23) and lastly, beginning in Acts 13 (and until the end of this age), the **Church Extended**, this extension being the primarily the fruit of Paul's Three Missionary Journeys which "upset the world!" (Acts 17:6) Now, you have a good grasp of the chronological context of Acts 13. And as they say in the restaurant when your delicious meal is served "Enjoy!" The three missionary journeys are summarized below (this note will be repeated in subsequent chapters). Click links for the maps of each journey.

Paul's First Missionary Journey	Acts 13:4-14:28
Paul's Second Missionary Journey	Acts 15:36-18:22
Paul's Third Missionary Journey	Acts 18:23-21:26

- Maps in table above are from the **Holman Bible Atlas** ([Hardcover/Paperback version](#)) copyrighted © 1998 B&H Publishing Group, used by permission, all rights reserved. This is one of the best resources for Bible maps as the maps also include helpful short descriptions of the events portrayed on the maps. Please do not download for use on another website. Thank you.
- [Here is a map](#) with all three journeys on one map.

THE ITINERARY OF PAUL'S THREE MISSIONARY JOURNEYS

FIRST	SECOND	THIRD

1. Antioch Acts 13:1-3	1. Antioch Acts 15:36-40	1. Antioch Acts 18:23
2. Seleucia Acts 13:4	2. Syria Acts 15:41	2. Phrygia/Galatia Acts 18:23-28
3. Salamis on Cyprus Acts 13:5	3. Cilicia Acts 15:41	3. Ephesus Acts 19:1-41
4. Paphos on Cyprus Acts 13:6-12	4. Derbe Acts 16:1	4. Macedonia Acts 20:1
5. Perga in Pamphylia Acts 13:13	5. Lystra Acts 16:1-5	5. Greece Acts 20:2
6. Pisidian Antioch Acts 13:14-50	6. Phrygia/Galatia Acts 16:6	6. Macedonia Acts 20:3-5
7. Iconium Acts 13:51	7. Mysia Acts 16:7	7. Philippi Acts 20:6
8. Lystra Acts 14:6-20	8. Troas Acts 16:8-10	8. Troas Acts 20:6-12
9. Derbe Acts 14:20	9. Samothrace Acts 16:11	9. Assos Acts 20:13
10. Lystra Acts 14:21	10. Neapolis Acts 16:11	10. Mitylene Acts 20:14
11. Iconium Acts 14:21	11. Philippi Acts 16:12	11. Samos Acts 20:15
12. Pisidian Antioch Acts 14:21	12. Amphipolis Acts 17:1	12. Miletus Acts 20:15-38
13. Pamphylia Acts 14:24	13. Apollonia Acts 17:1	13. Cos Acts 21:1
14. Perga Acts 14:25	14. Thessalonica Acts 17:1-9	14. Rhodes Acts 21:1
15. Attalia Acts 14:25	15. Berea Acts 17:10-14	15. Patara Acts 21:1
16. Antioch Acts 14:26	16. Athens Acts 17:15-34	16. Tyre Acts 21:3-6
	17. Corinth Acts 18:1-17	17. Ptolemais Acts 21:7
	18. Cenchreae Acts 18:18	18. Caesarea Acts 21:8-14
	19. Ephesus Acts 18:19	
	20. Caesarea Acts 18:22	
	21. Jerusalem Acts 18:22	
	22. Antioch Acts 18:22	

Charles Swindoll points out that "When we study the journeys of Paul in the book of Acts, we're not just reading the travel log of a man; we're observing the redemptive plan of God unfolding as He promised. Through the ministry of Saul of Tarsus, God's mission to reclaim His creation from the death grip of evil would move to its next stage. The plan of this mission was outlined in the Lord's promise at His ascension, where He said,

"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses...

1. In Jerusalem [Stage 1: Acts 2–7],
2. and in all Judea and Samaria [Stage 2: Acts 8–12],
3. and even to the remotest part of the earth [Stage 3: Acts 13–28]." (Acts 1:8)

John Hannah's Outline for Second Missionary Journey

- C. The second missionary journey of Paul (Acts 15:36-18:22)
 1. The preparation for the ministry (Acts 15:36-16:5)
 - a. The conflict between Barnabas and Paul (Acts 15:36-40)
 - b. The confirmation of the churches (Acts 15:41-16:5)
 2. The ministry in Macedonia (Acts 16:6-17:15)
 - a. The call from Macedonia (Acts 16:6-10)
 - b. Arrival at Samothrace and Neapolis (Acts 16:11)
 - c. Ministry at Philippi (Acts 16:12-40)
 1. The conversion of Lydia (Acts 16:12-15)
 2. The demon possessed slave girl (Acts 16:16-18)
 3. The imprisonment of Paul and Silas (Acts 16:19-25)
 4. The release of Paul and Silas (Acts 16:26-27)
 5. The conversion of the jailor (Acts 16:28-34)
 6. The departure from the city (Acts 16:35-40)
 - d. The ministry in Thessalonica (Acts 17:1-9)
 1. The message (Acts 17:1-3)
 2. The response of belief (Acts 17:4)
 3. The response of unbelief (Acts 17:5-9)

- e. The ministry in Berea (Acts 17:10-15)
 1. The ministry (Acts 17:11-12)
 2. The departure (Acts 17:13-15)
3. The ministry in Achaia (Acts 17:16-18:17)
 - a. The ministry in Athens (Acts 17:16-34)
 1. His message in Athens (Acts 17:16-30)
 2. The response in Athens (Acts 17:31-34)
 - b. The ministry in Corinth (Acts 18:1-17)
 1. Arrival in Corinth (Acts 18:1-4)
 2. His ministry to the Corinthians (Acts 18:5-11)
 3. The trial before Gallio (Acts 18:12-17)
4. The ministry on the return to Antioch (Acts 18:18-22)
 - a. In Cenchrea (Acts 18:18)
 - b. In Ephesus (Acts 18:19-21)
 - c. In Antioch (Acts 18:22)

[Hannah's Bible Outlines](#) - Recommended Resource

1. Stage 1: Tent Making (Acts 18:1-4)
 1. Paul's coworkers (Acts 18:1-3)
 2. Paul's work ethic (Acts 18:3-4)
2. Stage 2: Full-Time Ministry (Acts 18:5-8)
 1. Support (Acts 18:5)
 2. Opposition (Acts 18:6)
 3. Fruitfulness (Acts 18:7-8)
3. Stage 3: Weakness and Fear (Acts 18:9-10)
 1. The Lord's Gentle Rebuke (Acts 18:9a)
 2. The Lord's Strong Mandate (Acts 18:9b)
 3. The Lord's Sovereign Promises (Acts 18:10)
4. Stage 4: Long-Term Discipleship (Acts 18:11-17)
5. Paul Returns to Antioch (Acts 18:18-22) (Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary – Exalting Jesus in Acts)

Acts 18:1 After these things he left Athens and went to Corinth.

KJV Acts 18:1 After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth;

- **went to Corinth** Acts 17:32,33 Corinth 19:1; 1 Cor 1:2; 2 Cor 1:1,23; 2 Timothy 4:20
- [Corinth](#) Acts 18:1-17
- [Acts 18 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

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PAUL ARRIVES AT SIN CITY

After these things - This is a [time phrase](#) and should always provoke the question "What time?" or in this case "After what things?" While this genre of question is not "rocket science," it will force you to review the context and thus helps solidify the passages in your mind (never a bad thing!) Here the time is after Paul's ministry in Athens, including his message (Acts 17:16-30) and the response in Athens (Acts 17:31-34). And just to convince you how important observation of time phrases can be this same phrase, **after these things**, occurs some 19 times in the NT, and most are in the Revelation of Jesus Christ (Rev. 1:19; Rev. 4:1; Rev. 7:9; Rev. 9:12; Rev. 15:5; Rev. 18:1; Rev. 19:1; Rev. 20:3) where this phrase serves as an important "key" which helps unlock John's

great prophecy of the end-times (assuming you approach the text literally).

Jack Andrews comments that "Sometimes preachers, pastors, evangelists, and missionaries may not be run out of a place, but because of the obstinate, indifferent, or rebellious response to the man of God and the message of God that place and those people push away the servants of God. That is what happened to Paul in Athens—he was ready to move on." (Jack Andrews Expository Studies – Understanding Acts)

R Kent Hughes - The greatest description of Christian zeal that I know of was given by the famous nineteenth-century Anglican bishop J. C. Ryle in his book Practical Religion.

A zealous man in religion is pre-eminently a man of one thing. It is not enough to say that he is earnest, hearty, uncompromising, through-going, whole-hearted, fervent in spirit. He only sees one thing, he cares for one thing, he lives for one thing, he is swallowed up in one thing; and that one thing is to please God. Whether he lives, or whether he dies, whether he has health, or whether he has sickness, whether he is rich, or whether he is poor, whether he pleases man, or whether he gives offence, whether he is thought wise, or whether he is thought foolish, whether he gets blame, or whether he gets praise, whether he gets honour, or whether he gets shame, for all this the zealous mans cares nothing at all. He burns for one thing; and that one thing is to please God, and to advance God's glory. If he is consumed in the very burning, he cares not for it; he is content. He feels that, like a lamp, he is made to burn; and if consumed in burning, he has but done the work for which God appointed him... This is what I mean when I speak of "zeal" in religion. (p. 130)

Paul was such a man, and he made a brilliant contrast to the pagan philosophers of Athens with their studied, philosophical detachment. For a man like Paul, burning with prophetic unction, smug complacency in his hearers was too much to bear. So he left Athens in search of more receptive fields. So eager was Paul to get out of Athens that he did not even wait for Silas and Timothy, then en route. Paul must have felt at least a little dejected as he walked the fifty miles to Corinth. Since coming to Europe, he had suffered a terrible beating in Philippi, civil rejection in Thessalonica and Berea, and indifference in Athens. (Preaching the Word – Acts: The Church Afire)

He left Athens and went to Corinth - After preaching a sermon to the philosophical elite of Athens with mixed results, Paul departed for Corinth which was about 50 miles directly west of Athens (click map above).

Merida notes that "Between the years 49 and 52 Paul traveled approximately two thousand miles by foot and about a thousand miles by boat (Schreiner, "A God-Glorifying Ministry"). That means this nearly fifty-year-old man walked the equivalent of the distance between Raleigh, North Carolina, and Denver, Colorado, just to tell people about Jesus." (Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary – Exalting Jesus in Acts)

The People's Bible Commentary writes "The cold, mocking tone of the Athenian philosophers was as discouraging to Paul as the scourgings, stonings and imprisonments of the Jewish mobs; so he withdrew to Corinth."

Left (parted) ([5563](#))([chorizo](#)) means to be separated from (with preposition ek = out of), to depart from a place (cf Acts 1:4).

Herschel Ford wrote, "**Corinth** was a wonderful commercial center and it was also the sports center of the ancient world. Boxing, foot races, discus throwing and many other games were indulged in by hundreds of people and watched by thousands of others. Of course, all forms of gambling flourished. Venus, the goddess of love, was worshiped by the Corinthians. In her name they engaged in the vilest religious rites. Sodom and Gomorrah at their worst were no worse than Corinth. Sailors coming from the West brought to Corinth the vilest Roman customs; travelers from the East brought the vilest Oriental customs. The Roman Empire was rotten, yet all Rome looked down upon Corinth as a place of the greatest evil."

So corrupt was **Corinth** that it was actually made into a verb so that to be '**Corinthianized**' meant to be morally corrupt in the extreme. **Lenski** adds that Corinth was an every more wicked city than "larger cities of the empire went at this period. The very term "**Corinthian**" came to mean a profligate. *Korinthiazomai*, "to Corinthianize," meant to practice whoredom; *Korinthiastēs* = a whoremonger; *Korinthia korē* (girl) = a [courtesan](#)." (The Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles).

B.H. Carroll wrote of Corinth "The religion was too vile to discuss publicly... no decent tongue could describe what occurred under the name of religion."

G Campbell Morgan wrote of Corinth "It was proverbial for its debauchery. Men of the time, when desiring to describe utter corruption, said, 'They live as they do in Corinth.'"

Merida writes that "While Paul wrote his letters to the Corinthians after this initial visit, his letters still shed light on his early ministry

and the Corinthian context. (He wrote 1 Corinthians from Ephesus near the end of his three-year ministry in Ephesus—see Acts 19:21-22; 20:31—and 2 Corinthians about a year later, probably from Macedonia—see Acts 20:2-3.) (Ibid)

And so in his Second Letter **Paul** describes how he came to Corinth...

And when I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. 2 For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. 3 **I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling** (PAUL HAD ALREADY EXPERIENCED STONING, REJECTION BY JEWS, MOCKERY AND APATHY BY INTELLECTUALS. VERSE 3 SUGGESTS HE FELT LIKE HE HAD "BEEN THROUGH THE PROVERBIAL WRINGER!" - WEAKNESS IS A GOOD PLACE TO BE - See 2 Cor 12:9,10+), 4 and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, 5 so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the **power** of God (cf "**power**" in 2 Cor 12:9+). (1 Corinthians 2:1-5)

John Stott wrote "It seems that the only preaching God honors through which His wisdom and power are expressed is the preaching of a man who is willing in himself to be both the weakling and the fool."

Charles Spurgeon - The power that is in the Gospel does not lie in the eloquence of the preacher, otherwise men would be the converters of souls, nor does it lie in the preacher's learning, otherwise it would consist in the wisdom of men. We might preach until our tongues rotted, till we would exhaust our lungs and die, but never a soul would be converted unless the Holy Spirit be with the Word of God to give it the power to convert the soul.

Everett Harrison describes Paul's likely "condition" as he arrived in Corinth - "The combination of only limited success at Athens, loneliness, and the prospect of facing this city, with its commerce and vice, accounts for the weakness and fear that gripped the apostle as he arrived to begin his work". ([Interpreting Acts](#))

John MacArthur adds that "A little-appreciated truth about the ministry is that pastors and missionaries, perhaps more than other believers, are subject to **discouragement**. Charles Spurgeon explains that "good men are promised tribulation in this world, and ministers may expect a larger share than others, that they may learn sympathy with the Lord's suffering people, and so may be fitting shepherds of an ailing flock. ("The Minister's Fainting Fits," in *Lectures to My Students: First Series* [reprint; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980], 168)" (MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Acts)

Corinth (2882)(**korinthos**) was the capital of **Achaia** and a renowned and sinful city of Greece, about 40-50 miles west of Athens on an **isthmus** ([pix](#)) (Pindar calls it "the bridge of the sea") between the **Peloponnesus** ([map](#)) on the south and the northern Grecian mainland. **Corinth** was about five miles in circumference located on an elevated plain at the foot of Acrocorinth, on the south an immense rocky mountain that rises abruptly to the height of 1,886 feet above sea level. Upon the summit of the **Acrocorinth** which was the **Temple of Aphrodite**. (see note below) In the reconstruction above note the north and south **stoas**, the **Temple of Apollo** (**son of Zeus**; [pix](#)), the **Temple of Octavia**, the **Pirene fountain**, the **Glauke fountain**, the **Odeion** (more), the **Theater** ([more](#)), **Lechaion Way** (road going north to port at **Lechaion**), and **the Bema** (see Acts 18:12+).

[Watch a 6 minute animation](#) of the city of Corinth ([see the agora](#)).

Merida on Corinth - Commercially it had "location, location, location" working for it. There north-south land routes intersected with east-west sea routes. (Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary – Exalting Jesus in Acts)

Corinth was a maritime city located between two important harbors, the port of **Lechaion** on the Gulf of Corinth (**Adriatic Sea**) about two miles to the north and the port of **Cenchreae** on the **Saronic Gulf** (**Aegean sea**) about six miles east of Corinth. Because of this strategic location Corinth had an extensive commerce and became celebrated for its wealth, magnificence, and learning.

Corinth was a great entertainment city (see [play in amphitheater](#)). It was esteemed as the light and ornament of all Greece; it was, however notorious for its luxury, looseness of morals, and licentiousness. "**To live as at Corinth**" was a proverb signifying **profligate** living, and to call a woman "**Corinthian**" was to pronounce her **infamous**. The famous **Isthmian games** (see [stadium on animation](#)) which were celebrated in Corinth every other year and were second in importance only to the **Olympic games** held every four years. The gladiators were particularly popular in this city that loved bloody sports.

Corinth, with a transient and cosmopolitan population, was a center of commerce and industry. Slavery was one of the factors that brought so many nationalities to Corinth. The city had an estimated population of 600,000 (some say up to 750,000 but others say it was much smaller). It has been estimated that 400,000 of these were slaves, many of whom were talented and cultured people. Pfeiffer and Vos note that "much of the population was mobile (sailors, businessmen, government officials, *et al.*) and was therefore cut off from the inhibitions of a settled society" (Wycliffe Historical Geography)

Corinth was also a major religious center where the ancient Greek gods and goddesses were still worshiped. Eastern mystery religions were popular and the Egyptian religion of Isis was a favorite of many. The Jews had a synagogue there. The most famous cult there was that of Aphrodite. In the old city of Corinth the worship of Aphrodite was popular. Aphrodite was worshiped elsewhere in Greece, but her worship took a unique form in Corinth. The mixture of sexual immorality and religion was similar to the Baal worship of Old Testament times. In fact, the worship of Aphrodite in Corinth was probably an imported version of the Phoenician worship of Astarte (Astoreth or Ashtoreth in Old Testament). Astarte was the female consort of Baal. We cannot be sure that this blend of religion and immorality was still practiced in Paul's day, but it seems very likely. In light of the rampant immorality that had free reign in the lives of the people of Corinth, Paul had to give the church much-needed instructions about sexual purity in 1 Cor 6:12-20.

Corinth was destroyed in 146 B.C. and lay desolate for about 100 years until Julius Caesar rebuilt the city in 44 B.C., after which it quickly became an important city in the Roman Empire. An overland shiproad across the [isthmus](#) connected the ports of [Lechaion](#) and [Cenchreae](#). The Corinthians controlled the east-west trade across the isthmus as well as trade between Peloponnesus and the area of Greece to the north. Cargo from ships was unloaded, transported across the [isthmus](#), and reloaded on other ships. Small ships were moved overland on a road composed of wooden rollers over which men pulled the ships. In AD 67 Nero began work on a canal, but one was not completed until 1893 (See [article](#), see [map](#)). In this way the ships were able to avoid the 200 miles of treacherous travel around the southern tip of [Peloponnesus](#).

Approaching the city from the north, the [Lechaion](#) road passed through the [Propylaea](#) (name for any monumental gateway in ancient Greek architecture - see [depiction on the animated video](#)), the beautiful gate marking the entrance into the [agora](#) ([see on animation](#)). The agora was rectangular and contained many shops. A line of shops divided the agora into a northern and a southern section. Near the center of this dividing line the Bema was located. The Bema consisted of a large elevated speaker's platform and benches on the back and sides. Here is probably the place Paul was brought before Gallio (Acts 18:12-17).

Korinthos - 6v - Acts 18:1; Acts 19:1; 1 Co. 1:2; 2 Co. 1:1; 2 Co. 1:23; 2 Tim. 4:20

[Temple of Aphrodite](#) at Acrocorinth was famous for the temple prostitution of [courtesans](#), which were dedicated to the service of the temple, and contributed to the attraction of visitors to the city of Corinth. When evening fell in Corinth, 1000 so-called "*priestesses*" (more accurately ritual prostitutes) would descend on the city to ply their seductive, ensnaring "wares!" Talk about deception -- they men of Corinth could rationalize their adultery as carrying out the rituals associated with the worship of Aphrodite! If you doubt God's longsuffering, the very fact that He did not immediately incinerate the Temple of Aphrodite is clear evidence of His "patient toward (men), not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance." (2 Pe 3:9+)

The temple prostitution is described by the Greek historian [Strabo](#):

The temple of Aphrodite [in Korinthos in the days of the tyrant Kypselos] was so rich that it owned more than a thousand temple slaves, courtesans, whom both men and women had dedicated to the goddess. And therefore it was also on account of these women that the city was crowded with people and grew rich; for instance, the ship captains freely squandered their money, and hence the proverb, 'Not for every man is the voyage to Korinthos.' . . . Now the summit [of the Akrokorinthos] has a small temple of Aphrodite; and below the summit is the spring Peirene . . . At any rate, Euripides says, 'I am come, having left Akrokorinthos that is washed on all sides, the sacred hill-city of Aphrodite.'"[1] [...] Korinthos, there, on account of the multitude of courtesans, who were sacred to Aphrodite, outsiders resorted in great numbers and kept holiday. And the merchants and soldiers who went there squandered all their money so that the following proverb arose in reference to them: 'Not for every man is the voyage to Korinthos.'"[2]

[Pausanias](#) described the **Temple of Aphrodite at Acrocorinth** in the 1st century: "On the summit of the Acrocorinthus is a temple of Aphrodite. The images are Aphrodite armed, Helios, and [Eros](#) with a bow. The spring, which is behind the temple, they say was the gift of Asopus to [Sisyphus](#)."

R E Glaze article on **Corinth** - One of four prominent centers in the New Testament account of the early church, the other three being Jerusalem, Antioch of Syria, and Ephesus. Paul's first extended ministry in one city was at Corinth. On his first visit to Corinth, he remained for at least eighteen months (Acts 18:1-18). Paul's three longest letters are associated with Corinth. First and Second Corinthians were written to Corinth, and Romans, from Corinth. Prominent Christian leaders associated with Corinth include Aquila, Priscilla, Silas, Timothy, Apollos, and Titus....Although the restored city of Paul's day was a Roman city, the inhabitants continued to worship Greek gods. West of the Lechaion road and north of the agora stood the old [Temple of Apollo](#). Probably partially destroyed by Mummius in 146 B.C., seven of the original thirty-eight columns still stand. On the east side of the road was the shrine to [Apollo](#). In the city were shrines also to [Hermes](#), [Heracles](#), [Athena](#), and [Poseidon](#). Corinth had a famous temple dedicated to [Asclepius](#), the god of healing, and his daughter [Hygieia](#) (gives us English "hygiene" - why are they always depicted

holding snakes? I hate snakes!). Several buildings were constructed around the temple for the sick who came for healing. The patients left at the temple terra cotta replicas of the parts of their bodies that had been healed. Some of these replicas have been found in the ruins.

The most significant pagan cult in Corinth was the cult of [Aphrodite](#). The worship of Aphrodite had flourished in old Corinth before its destruction in 146 B.C. and was revived in Roman Corinth. A temple for the worship of Aphrodite was located on the top of the [Acropolis](#). [Strabo](#) wrote concerning this temple.

"And the temple of Aphrodite was so rich that it owned more than a thousand temple-slaves, [courtesans](#), whom both men and women had dedicated to the goddess. And therefore it was also on account of these women that the city was crowded with people and grew rich; for instance, the ship-captains freely squandered their money, and hence the proverb, "Not for every man is the voyage to Corinth."

Although the accuracy of Strabo has been questioned, his description is in harmony with the life-style reflected in Paul's letters to the Corinthians. Jewish worship also was a part of the religious life of the city. Paul began his Corinthian ministry in the synagogue in Corinth. The city of Corinth as Paul found it was a cosmopolitan city composed of people from varying cultural backgrounds. Being near the site of the Isthmian games held every two years, the Corinthians enjoyed both the pleasures of these games and the wealth that the visitors brought to the city. While their ships were being carried across the isthmus, sailors came to the city to spend their money on the pleasures of Corinth. Even in an age of sexual immorality, Corinth was known for its licentious life-style. ([Holman Bible Dictionary](#))

Related Resources:

- American Tract Society [Corinth](#)
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary [Corinth](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Corinth](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Corinth](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Corinth](#)
- Hitchcock Bible Names [Corinth](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Corinth](#)
- King James Dictionary [Corinth](#)
- Morrish Bible Dictionary [Corinth](#)
- People's Dictionary of the Bible [Corinth](#)
- Webster Dictionary [Corinth](#)
- Watson's Theological Dictionary [Corinth](#)
- 1911 Encyclopedia Britannica [Isthmus of Corinth](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Corinth](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Corinth](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Corinth \(2\)](#) [Corinth](#)
- The Nuttall Encyclopedia [Corinth](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Corinth](#)

PAUL'S PATTERN: TO THE JEW FIRST	
LOCATION	REFERENCE

1. Damascus	1. Acts 9:20+
2. Jerusalem	2. Acts 9:28-29+
3. Salamis	3. Acts 13:5+
4. Pisidian Antioch	4. Acts 13:14+
5. Iconium	5. Acts 14:1+
6. Philippi	6. Acts 16:13+
7. Thessalonica	7. Acts 17:1-2+
8. Berea	8. Acts 17:10+
9. Athens	9. Acts 17:16-17+
10. Corinth	10. Acts 18:1-4+
11. Ephesus	11. Acts 18:19; 19:8+
12. Rome	12. Acts 28:17+

Acts 18:2 And he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, having recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. He came to them,

KJV Acts 18:2 And 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.

- **Aquila** Acts 18:26; Romans 16:3,4; 1 Cor 16:19; 2 Timothy 4:19
- **Pontus** Acts 2:9; 1 Peter 1:1
- **Claudius** Acts 11:28
- [Acts 18 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Painting of Paul, Aquila and Priscilla
Tent-making

And he found a Jew named Aquila (eagle Acts 18:2,18, 26 Ro 16:3 1Co 16:19 2Ti 4:19) **a native of Pontus having recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla** (ancient): We do not know if [Aquila and Priscilla](#) were Christians when Paul first met them, but it seems likely that they were since Luke did not mention their conversion (as he does often in Acts). And we know from Acts 2:9+ there were Jews from " Pontus and Asia" at Pentecost. Alternatively, it is possible that Paul led them both to Jesus as they worked together as tentmakers (those who worked with leather).

As an aside Aquila and Priscilla give us a wonderful example to follow if we are laymen or laywomen for not only did they befriend Paul and provide hospitality for Paul but as they grew in their faith they became teachers of Apollos and hosts to a church in their own house. So do not underestimate your value (or your purpose) in God's plan to build His Kingdom.

Warren Wiersbe wrote, "They are a good example of how 'lay ministers' can help to further the work of the Lord. Every pastor and missionary thanks God for people like Aquila and Priscilla, people with hands, hearts, and homes dedicated to the work of the Lord." (BEC)

Found ([aorist tense](#), [active voice](#))(2147)([heurisko](#)) means to find after searching and so to discover (Mt 7:7), to find accidentally or without seeking (Mt 12:44). In the present context the former sense is probably the most correct. Paul was alone and lonely and looking for fellowship. The Messianic Jewish writer Edersheim says that a Jewish guild always kept together whether in street or synagogue so that by this bond they probably met. (ATR)

Recently (4373)([phosphatos](#) related to [prospatos](#) = new, newly slaughtered in Heb 10:20+) is used only here in the NT and is an adverb of time meaning recently, shortly before. "Prospatōs is a temporal adverb expressing the recentness of an event relative to another past event. Thus, there is no fixed time limit implicit in the word. In Deuteronomy 24:5 a period of up to 1 year is referred to as prospatōs, but a much longer period (several years) is called prospatōs in 2 Maccabees 14:36." (Gilbrant)

Jack Arnold - Aquila and Priscilla were probably confused as to why they were driven out of Rome where they were making such a good living, but God designed it so they would meet Paul in Corinth and become Christians. What seemed to be a tragedy became the greatest blessing of all for Aquila and Priscilla.

THOUGHT - Aquila and Priscilla had been kicked out of Rome where they probably had a profitable business established. And in God's providence they made their way to Corinth, where they would discover that what seemed to be a major life setback was just the opposite. What they lost in business in Rome, they more than made up for in their relationship with the apostle Paul. Undoubtedly they grew mightily in the Lord over the 18 months they spent with Paul in Corinth and they became close friends with him as attested by their mention in three other Pauline books. The lesson for all of us to take to heart is that God is able to take our disappointments and make them His appointments for His Kingdom work. The eternal rewards of Priscilla and Aquila will far and forever overshadow any temporal earthly loss they might have experienced by being displaced from Rome. They will forever affirm the absolute truth of Romans 8:28+ that "God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose."

Pontus ([see map](#)) was the Roman province in Asia Minor that lay east of **Bithynia** on the Black Sea coast (in modern northern Turkey).

Priscilla had another name, **Prisca** (see below), the latter being more formal. Her name appears before her husband Aquila's name in 4 of the 6 New Testament passages and the reason is not clear. Speculations are that (1) She was of a higher social class; (2) She was more educated; or (3) She was more spiritually mature. I favor the latter, for in the training of Apollos she seems to have taken the lead (Acts 18:28). Below are all 6 mentions of this notable NT couple who eventually established a house church (1 Cor 16:19).

Acts 18:2 And he found a Jew named **Aquila**, a native of Pontus, having recently come from Italy with his wife **Priscilla**, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. He came to them,

Acts 18:18 Paul, having remained many days longer, took leave of the brethren and put out to sea for Syria, and with him were **Priscilla** and **Aquila**. In Cenchrea he had his hair cut, for he was keeping a vow.

Acts 18:26 and he began to speak out 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.

Romans 16:3; Greet **Prisca** and **Aquila**, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, who for my life risked their own necks, to whom not only do I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles;

1 Cor 16:19 The churches of Asia greet you. **Aquila** and **Prisca** greet you heartily in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.

2 Ti 4:19 Greet **Prisca** and **Aquila**, and the household of Onesiphorus.

Related Resource:

- [Who were Priscilla and Aquila?](#)

Because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. When Paul met Aquila and his wife Priscilla, presumably they were already Christians. They had recently come from Italy because **Claudius** (the 5th Roman Emperor between 41-54 reigning 13 years as a weak minded man who, the laughing stock of the court) had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome. This [formal outbreak of anti-Semitism occurred in about AD 49](#), (other expulsions of Jews from Rome occurred in 139 BC and 19 AD) when there were approximately 20,000 Jews in Rome. They were unpopular; **Tiberius** (reigned 14-37 AD) had exiled 4,000 from Rome to Sardinia ([see note](#)). Some 50 years later the Roman historian **Suetonius** (was born in AD 69 lived to 122 AD wrote after the event) maintained that Claudius' decree against the Jews came because the "*Jews were in a state of constant tumult* (i.e., they are indulging in constant riots) *at the instigation of one `Christus.'*" (or "Chrestus" - [see note](#)) The Jews probably pronounced the name "*Christ*" this way. (See [Suetonius on Christians](#))

Wycliffe Bible Commentary - It is possible that **Chrestus** (meaning "the useful one") is a Roman misunderstanding of *Christus*, a term that was meaningless to Romans. If so, this means that the gospel of Christ was being preached in the Jewish synagogues in Rome and was meeting such strenuous resistance that Claudius ordered all Jews to leave the city.

References to an **expulsion of Jews from Rome** by the Roman Emperor [Claudius](#), who was in office AD 41-54, appear in the [Acts of the Apostles \(18:2\)](#), and in the writings of [Roman historians Suetonius](#) (c. AD 69 – c. AD 122), [Cassius Dio](#) (c. AD 150 – c. 235) and fifth-century Christian author [Paulus Orosius](#). Scholars generally agree that these references refer to the same incident.^{[1][2]}

The exact date is uncertain. The maximal time window for the expulsion of Jews from Rome is from January AD 41 until January AD 53. More detailed estimates such as those based on the AD 49 date by Orosius or the reduction of the AD 53 upper limit due to Proconsul [Gallio's](#) health are possible but controversial.

There were at least two expulsions of Jews from Rome before this event. In 139 BC the Jews were expelled after being accused of [Judaizing](#) among the local [Gentiles](#). Then in AD 19 [Tiberius](#) once again expelled Jews (about 4000) from the city for similar reasons.

Why did Claudius order the Jews to leave Rome?

Roman authorities viewed the spread of Judaism as a threat to Rome. Jewish businessmen aroused the resentment of their non-Jewish competitors. Jews were scorned for refusing to burn incense before the emperor's statue (Their exile to Babylon in 586 BC effectively "cured" them from worship of graven images - of course they still had idolatry as we all do for Paul equates "idolatry" with "greed" Col 3:5+ "[greed](#) which amounts to [idolatry](#)", cf Eph 5:3+ "[covetous](#) man...is an [idolator](#)") -- worse than Americans refusing to salute their flag (of course now sadly Americans are burning flags!). Jews, including the Jews who were followers of Jesus, aroused suspicion by their inclination to keep to themselves. Persecution of followers of Jesus came during [Nero's reign](#) as a result of the [great fire in Rome in the year 64 AD \(another discussion\) \(pix\)](#), a fire that raged for many days, that almost destroyed the entire city and was horrendous enough to seem like Armageddon had arrived. Perhaps some Christians in Rome saw the fire as the beginning of the fulfillment of their expectations that the world would be destroyed by fire. Reports of joyous dancing, looks of glee and shouts of hallelujahs would have attracted suspicion, and Christians were an easy target because they were still thought of as Jews. An official investigation concluded that the fire had been started by Jewish fanatics. This put the Jewish community in Rome in danger, and Jewish leaders in Rome may have tried to avert this danger by describing to authorities the difference between themselves and the Christians. The leaders of Jews in Rome could reach the emperor, [Nero](#), through his new wife, [Sabina Poppaea](#). Nero learned of the separate identity of those Jews who were followers of Jesus, and he put blame on them for the fire. [Nero](#) had some Christians executed in the usual way of executing criminals: putting them in the arena against gladiators or wild animals, or as was commonly done to those convicted of arson, having them burned to death ([See picture of Christian's used as Nero's Torches!](#)). It was around this time that the apostles Peter and Paul vanished. According to the historian Tacitus, who wrote decades later, many Romans remained suspicious of Nero. Many believed the rumor that Nero had started the fire to make space for his new great mansion, and they pitied the Christians, believing that instead of being sacrificed for the welfare of the state, the Christians were being sacrificed as Nero's scapegoats.

Tony Merida points that that while Claudius' "edict was never reversed, it evidently was not enforced carefully since many Jews, including this couple, (Aquila and Priscilla) resettled in Rome (cf. Ro 16:3-4) (Ibid)

Commanded (perfect tense = remained in effect)([1299](#))([diatasso](#) from [dia](#) = through + [tasso](#) = order) means literally to arrange thoroughly, to arrange in its proper order, to issue orderly and detailed instructions as to what must be done

Jews ([2453](#))([Ioudaios](#) ultimately derived from Hebrew Yehudi = a member of the tribe of Judah) is an adjective refers to one who belongs to the Jewish race with focus on adherence to Mosaic tradition (Acts 10:28, 22:3, 21:39). A Jew in respect to race or religion (as opposed to Gentiles).

Ioudaios in Acts -

Acts 1:8; Acts 2:5; Acts 2:9; Acts 2:10; Acts 2:14; Acts 8:1; Acts 9:22; Acts 9:23; Acts 9:31; Acts 10:22; Acts 10:28; Acts 10:37; Acts 10:39; Acts 11:1; Acts 11:19; Acts 11:29; Acts 12:3; Acts 12:11; Acts 12:19; Acts 13:5; Acts 13:6; Acts 13:43; Acts 13:45; Acts 13:50; Acts 14:1; Acts 14:2; Acts 14:4; Acts 14:5; Acts 14:19; Acts 15:1; Acts 16:1; Acts 16:3; Acts 16:20; Acts 17:1; Acts 17:5; Acts 17:10; Acts 17:13; Acts 17:17; Acts 18:2; Acts 18:4; Acts 18:5; Acts 18:12; Acts 18:14; Acts 18:19; Acts 18:24; Acts 18:28; Acts 19:10; Acts 19:13; Acts 19:14; Acts 19:17; Acts 19:33; Acts 19:34; Acts 20:3; Acts 20:19; Acts 20:21; Acts 21:10; Acts 21:11; Acts 21:20; Acts 21:21; Acts 21:27; Acts 21:39; Acts 22:3; Acts 22:12; Acts 22:30; Acts 23:12; Acts 23:20; Acts 23:27; Acts 24:5; Acts 24:9; Acts 24:18; Acts 24:24; Acts 24:27; Acts 25:2; Acts 25:7; Acts 25:8; Acts 25:9; Acts 25:10; Acts 25:15; Acts 25:24; Acts 26:2; Acts 26:3; Acts 26:4; Acts 26:7; Acts 26:20; Acts 26:21; Acts

28:17; Acts 28:19; Acts 28:21; Acts 28:29;

To leave (5563)(**chorizo** from **choris** = separately, apart from, from) in the active sense means to cause to separate or divide, to put apart putting a space between. The emphasis of **chorizo** (especially in its literal uses) is on distance. In the passive sense (as in this passage), **chorizo** means to separate oneself or put some space between Rome and themselves.

Rome (4516)(**Rhōmē**) was the capital of the Roman empire. It is used 8x in the NT - Acts 18:2; Acts 19:21; Acts 23:11; Acts 28:14; Acts 28:16; Ro 1:7; Ro 1:15; 2 Ti 1:17. In each instance of these 8 uses Rome refers to the city of Rome located on the **Tiber River** in the central region of the Italian peninsula. Although Rhōmē was used in the Greek of this period to refer to the imperial government as well as the empire itself, it is never used this way in the New Testament. The importance assigned to Paul's ministry in Rome was probably related to the city's position as the political center of the empire.

Zodhiates on Rhōmē - Among the inhabitants were many Jews (Acts 28:17). They had received the liberty of worship and other privileges from Caesar and lived in the district across the Tiber near the Porta Portese. Paul was kept in Rome two whole years, dwelling in his own rented house with a soldier who had charge of him (Acts 28:16, 30). In accordance with the usual Roman custom of treating prisoners, he apparently was bound to the soldier with a chain (Acts 28:20; Eph. 6:20; Phil. 1:16). To those coming to visit him he preached the gospel, and no one forbade him (Acts 28:30, 31). Several of Paul's epistles were believed to have been written from Rome, such as Colossians, Ephesians, Philippians, Philemon, and 2 Timothy, the last shortly before his death on a second and final imprisonment (2 Tim. 4:6). On Paul's approach to Rome he was met by brethren who came out on the Appian Way as far as the little town of Appii Forum (Acts 28:15). In his letter to the Philippians he also refers to the "palace" or Caesar's court (Phil. 1:13). This probably does not refer to the imperial palace, but to the residence of the Praetorian guards or to a military barrack attached to the imperial house. There were Christians also belonging to the imperial household even during the reign of the cruel Nero (Phil. 4:22). (Complete Word Study Dictionary – New Testament)

Related Resources

- [Rome and Roman Empire](#) - Holman Bible Commentary
- [Roman Empire](#) - Wikipedia
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary [Rome](#)
- Baker Evangelical Dictionary [Rome](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Rome](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Rome](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Rome](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Rome](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Rome](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopaedia [Rome](#)
- The Nuttall Encyclopedia [Rome](#)

He came to them ([aorist tense](#), [active voice](#)) - Paul approached Aquila and Priscilla who were also Jews and in the next verse also practiced the same profession. It is interesting that in English the verb **approach** means to speak to someone for the first time about something, typically with a proposal or request.

Came (4334)(**proserchomai** from **prós** = facing + **erchomai** = come) means to come facing toward. To approach, come near, visit. In a religious context it was used figuratively meaning to worship or draw near. Jesus approached individuals to minister to them (Mark 1:31; Luke 7:14), and they approached Him for ministry (e.g., Matthew 9:20). In Acts **proserchomai** has the literal sense seen in the Gospels, but also seems to have a special emphasis and can refer to approaching a person at a moment of great significance. Jews, for example, were not to socialize in any way with Gentiles (Acts 10:28); however, Philip approached the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:29; cf. Acts 9:1; 24:23).

That Paul made took the initiative and made the effort to approach this couple suggests his desire/need for fellowship (Silas and Timothy had not yet joined him) for as he came into Corinth he later wrote "**I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling.**" (1 Cor 2:3). This premise also fits with the first verb [heurisko](#) in this sentence that Paul "**found** a Jew name Aquila," implying he was looking for Jewish companionship. It is interesting that Luke does not say what he does in many of Paul's entrances into cities, that he immediately went to the Jewish synagogue. He soon made his way there, but first he found fellowship and companionship which as God's Spirit would have it budded into their lifelong friendship! How good is God? (Rhetorical of course!)

Edgar Guest in his tribute to laypeople wrote:

Leave it only to the ministers, and soon the church will die;
leave it to the womenfolk—the young will pass it by.

For the church is all that lifts us from the coarse and selfish mob,
and the church that is to prosper needs the laymen on the job.

Now, a layman has his business, and a layman has his joys,
but he also has the training of his little girls and boys;

And I wonder how he'd like it if there were no churches here,
and he had to raise his children in a godless atmosphere.

It's the church's special function to uphold the finer things,
to teach that way of living from which all that's noble springs;

But the minister can't do it single handed and alone,
for the laymen of the country are the church's buildingstones.

When you see a church that's empty,
though its doors are open wide.

It's not the church that's dying—
it's the laymen who have died;

It's not just by song or sermon that the church's work is done,
it's the laymen of the country who for God must carry on.

Acts 18:3 and because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and they were working, for by trade they were tent-makers.

KJV Acts 18:3 And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers.

- **and they were working** Acts 20:34,35; 1 Cor 4:12; 9:6-12; 2 Cor 11:9; 1 Th 2:9; 2 Th 3:8,9
- [Acts 18 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

PAUL'S BI-VOCATIONAL MINISTRY

Vocation means the particular occupation for which you are trained, suited or qualified or to which you are especially drawn. The addition of "**bi**" means "two" but sadly in morally upside down America, the major entry says "**bi**" is one who relates to both sexes. Paul was "**bi**" in the sense that he was a God called apostle and a tent-maker.

And because he was of the same trade- Paul received support for his missionary activity but also supported it with his own labors. There common bonds of Jewish backgrounds and tent making skills forged a friendship which would last for all of Paul's life so that even with some his very last recorded words he acknowledged them exhorting Timothy to "**Greet Prisca and Aquila**, and the household of Onesiphorus." (2 Ti 4:19_±) In Paul's letter to the Romans he called "Prisca (Priscilla) and Aquila **my fellow workers** ([sunergos](#)) in Christ Jesus (THIS IS THE KEY TO ALL FRUITFUL MINISTRY - "in Christ Jesus."), who for my life **risked their own necks**, to whom not only do I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles." (Ro 16:3-4) Clearly this couple graduated from making tents to making disciples! And that is what we should all be aiming toward, the fulfillment of Jesus' last command (Mt 28:19_±). This reminds me of Michael W. Smith's old classic "[Friends are Friends Forever](#)" which aptly describes the special bond between Paul and this godly couple (give it a listen as you think of that close friend God has brought into your life by providence [He did exactly that in my life at the old age of 69!!!] remembering that this couple would not have been in Corinth if they had not been expelled from Rome! **Some of the best friends are those that come to us by God's providential hand** Keep your eyes open if you are in need of or looking for a close Christian friend!)

[And friends are friends forever](#)

If the Lord's the Lord of them
And a friend will not say never
'Cause the welcome will not end
Though it's hard to let you go

In the Father's hands we know
That a lifetime's not too long
To live as friends

[\(Version sung at President Bush's funeral\)](#)

He stayed with them and they were working, for by trade they were tent-makers - This is the only NT use of this Greek word **skenopoiōs** (*skene* = tent + *poieo* = make) translated **tent-makers** (probably out of leather). While this passage is the only mention of his specific trade, it is notable that a number of verses show us that Paul frequently supported him - Acts 20:34; 1 Cor 4:12; 1 Th 2:9; 2 Th 3:7-9; cf. 2 Cor 11:7. Merida adds that "While in his letters to the Corinthians Paul encouraged believers to compensate pastors, he refused to take any support from them. He wanted to avoid any obstacle to the gospel's progress (1 Cor 9:7-14; cf. Gal 6:6)." (Ibid)

Stayed (3306)(**meno**) in the [imperfect tense](#), day after day.

Wycliffe Bible Commentary - It was customary for Jewish rabbis not to receive pay for their teaching, and therefore Paul, who had been reared as a rabbi, had learned the trade of tentmaking.

Robertson - NT Rabbi Judah says: "He that teacheth not his son a trade, doth the same as if he taught him to be a thief."...Paul worked for his support elsewhere, already in Thessalonica (1 Th 2:9; 2 Th 3:8)

Jack Arnold - Paul was a tent-maker by trade. Often on his pioneer missionary journeys he had to support himself because there was no organized mission's program for supporting missionaries. He sometimes worked in order not to be a burden or a stumbling block to those to whom he ministered, even though he had the right to be supported. All through the Roman Empire were itinerant religious teachers and philosophers who earned their livings by the free giving of the people. If the people would pay, they would teach and philosophize. Paul did not want to give these Corinthians the idea that he was preaching the gospel of Christ for their money, so he worked with his hands to support himself. This, however, gave him a natural foothold into his community to preach the gospel where the people were. Paul was a converted rabbi, and every male child in Israel was to learn some trade in order to support himself. Jewish people thought themselves thieves if they did not teach a trade to their sons. According to Jewish law, no scribe or rabbi could receive money for teaching. Rabbis were ordinarily men who worked for a living and taught the Scriptures on the side. This background, of course, prepared Paul well to be a pioneer missionary. ([Sermon](#))

Gilbrant on tent-makers - This term appears in the New Testament only in Acts 18:3. It describes the trade of Paul, Aquila, and Priscilla. Here it is usually translated as "tentmaker." Some believe, however, that tentmaking was too menial a profession for a young Jewish scholar like Paul, because tents were often woven from a coarse fabric made of goat's hair ([cillicium](#)) (Michaelis, "skēnē," Kittel, 7:368). Therefore, some think that they were more probably leather workers. Others believe that many tents were in fact made of leather at that time which afforded Paul the leather worker the title of tentmaker as well (see Harris, "Tent," Colin Brown, 3:812). As such, Paul maintained a marketable trade which helped support his God-given calling to take the gospel to both the Jews and the Gentiles. ([Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary](#))

Barclay - "Paul was a Rabbi, but according to Jewish practice, every Rabbi must have a trade. He must take no money for preaching and teaching and must make his living by his own work and his own efforts. The Jew glorified work. 'Love work,' they said. 'He who does not teach his son a trade teaches him robbery.' 'Excellent,' they said, 'is the study of the law along with a worldly trade; for the practice of them both makes a man forget iniquity; but all law without work must in the end fail and causes iniquity.' So we find Rabbis following every respectable trade."

Related Resource:

- [Why I Choose to Be a Bivocational Pastor](#)
- [Bi-Vocational Ministry | Desiring God](#)
- [What is a Tentmaker? - Worldwide Tentmakers](#)
- [Tentmaking - Wikipedia](#)

Barton - TEAMWORK Some couples know how to make the most of life. They complement each other, capitalize on each other's strengths, and form an effective team. Their united efforts have a profound effect on those around them. Aquila and Priscilla were such a couple. The Bible never mentions them separately. In marriage and ministry, they were together. Working in concert, they made an eternal difference in countless lives. Consider your marriage. Do you and your spouse enjoy an intimacy that overflows into ministry? If not, what prevents you from being a dynamic duo for the Lord? (Life Action Commentary)

Merida - In the world of ministry and mission, so-called tent making or bi-vocational ministry is becoming increasingly important. In fact, the SBC International Mission Board is calling for more business people and retirees to enter the mission field in order to send

more people to the nations without the burden of fully funding them first. This approach is also a blessing as such Christians go overseas equipped to share both the gospel and valuable trades that can aid families facing financial hardships. And Ruth Simmons comments on how people are creatively using their vocations to get the gospel message into hard-to-enter countries:

A tentmaker couple translated the New Testament for five million Muslims while he did university teaching and she tutored English! A science teacher evangelized his students in rural Kenya, and preached every third Sunday in the local church. A symphony violinist in Singapore had Bible studies with fellow musicians. A faculty person and an engineer set up a Christian bookstore in the Arab Gulf region. ("Tentmakers Needed for World Evangelization," quoted in Fernado, Acts, 498–99)

All Christians should consider how they might leverage their vocations for the good of the nations. (Ibid)

Modern Day "Tent-Makers" Jack Arnold

There is nothing wrong about attending seminary and after graduation taking a secular job. Some men are called to study, preach and teach on a full-time paid basis and others are called to work a secular job and study, preach and teach on a part-time basis without pay. Today, evangelicals, having a wrong concept of the ministry, say, when they see a man take a secular job after graduation from seminary, "What a pity. He is wasting all that training. He is a washout!" Not so, if this person is studying the Word, using his spiritual gifts, preaching and teaching and being an elder, he is not wasting his time or talents. He is doing the ministry as God called him to do it.

For Paul, making tents was an honorable, respectable and worthy [vocation](#). This raises the whole question of Christian [vocation](#). Is being a carpenter, plumber, teacher, lawyer or doctor an inferior calling to a missionary, preacher or teacher of the Word? Are Christians in secular jobs wasting their time when they should be out winning the world? First, it must be remembered that Jesus of Nazareth was a carpenter for thirty years before He began His active ministry of three years. Was Jesus wasting His time? Second, Paul made tents when he had to in order to support himself so he could preach the gospel. Was Paul wasting his time? Third, the Apostle Paul strongly implies that one's vocation in life is a calling from God.

"Were you called while a slave? Do not worry about it; but if you are able also to become free, rather do that. For he who was called in the Lord while a slave, is the Lord's freedman; likewise he who was called while free, is Christ's slave. You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of men. Brethren, let each man remain with God in that condition in which he was called" (1 Cor. 7:21-24).

The English word "[vocation](#)" is from the Latin which means calling. This does not mean that we are not free to change our [vocation](#) as we seek the Lord's will but that our occupation, whatever it is, should be viewed as a calling from God. We should believe that God has called us to be good lawyers, doctors, salesmen, merchants, teachers, government workers, truck drivers, plumbers, carpenters, masons or whatever. If we have a secular job, our calling is just as valid as a man called to be a pastor, evangelist or missionary. Most Christian men and women are not called to be paid full-time in the ministry, but all Christians are to see their jobs as a calling and are to minister to God through these jobs for the glory of God. In one sense, we have done a real injustice by speaking of full-time Christian work over against full-time secular work. **Every Christian is serving the Lord full-time in different spheres of service. God expects the gardener and the grocer to perform his labor as a spiritual service unto God just as fully as a man called to be a pastor or missionary.** ([Sermon](#))

ED: Every church should have a sign over the "Exit" door in the Sanctuary that reads...

YOU ARE NOW ENTERING THE MISSION FIELD

Acts 18:4 And he was reasoning in the synagogue every Sabbath and trying to persuade Jews and Greeks.

KJV Acts 18:4 And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.

- **he was reasoning** Acts 13:14-52; 14:1; 17:1-3,11,17; 19:8; Luke 4:16
- **trying to persuade Jews and Greeks** Acts 18:13; 13:43; 19:26; 26:28; 28:23; Genesis 9:27; 2 Chronicles 32:11; Luke 16:31; 2 Cor 5:11

- [Acts 18 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

SATURDAY DIALOGUE IN THE SYNAGOGUE

The English word **dialogue** means an exchange of ideas or views for the purpose of exploring a subject or deciding an issue. Note the word **exchange**. It is not a monologue, like I have occasionally been guilty of when sharing the Gospel, barely taking a breath so that I cannot be interrupted! (Confession time!). Dialogue implies a back and forth, a give and take (e.g., giving them a chance to ask a question) as we speak the Word of truth and men bounce back their responses, rebuttals, and sadly sometimes even reject. The point of dialoguing is that it draws the other person into the conversation, gets them engaged, showing them we are interested in their thoughts and in so doing making them that much more likely to hear our side. God grant me the grace to practice what I preach!

And he was reasoning in the synagogue every Sabbath - As was his practice, if the city had a synagogue, he would go there first to share the Gospel. The big advantage was that these individuals had knowledge of the Old Testament and he could use the OT Scriptures to reason with them. **Reasoning** is in the **imperfect tense** indicating repeated activity by Paul.

It is interesting that "an inscription has been found in the archaeological digs of Corinth dating from the early first century which reads, "*Synagogue of the Hebrews*" and very likely was the place Paul **reasoned** with the **Jews and Greeks**.

Reasoning (1256)(**dialogomai** from **diá** = denoting transition or separation + **légo** = speak) means that Paul engaged in an interchange of speech (English = **dialogue**) using thoughtful Biblically based arguments trying to persuade the Jews and Greeks. Luke used this verb repeatedly to describe Paul's interactions with the Jews -- Thessalonica (Acts 17:2+), Athens (Acts 17:17+), Corinth (Acts 18:4), Ephesus (Acts 18:19+; Acts 19:8, 9+). **Dialogomai** is also used of his reasoning in Troas (Acts 20:7, 9+), and finally, before the Roman governor, Felix, in Caesarea Maritima (Acts 24:25+).

And trying to persuade Jews and Greeks - **Trying to persuade** is in the **imperfect tense** picturing Paul over and over, again and again trying to persuade them that Jesus was the Messiah Who had died for their sins. Paul believed in the **doctrine of election**, but that did not deter him from sharing the Gospel with whoever (see "whoever" in Ro 10:13+) would listen for he did not know who the elect were. And neither do we, so don't use "election" as an excuse to not share the Gospel (reasoning if they are elect God will save them!). No, we need to take the initiative and personally share it with everyone with whom God's Spirit gives us the opportunity (**meditate** on Col 4:5-6+ where "**conduct**" is not a suggestion but a command to make this our lifestyle -**present imperative!**). The fact that Luke mentions **Jews and Greeks** indicates that these **Greeks** were Gentiles who had been attracted to the monotheism of Judaism (in contrast to the incredible plethora of polytheism involved with the pagan religions) and who would attend the Jewish services on the Sabbath (our Saturday). Only those who were circumcised were called full-blown **proselytes**, but here Luke does not give any further description.

Jack Andrews - Paul didn't go there to share his opinion with the Jews, or give them something to think about, but he went there to give them the gospel so that they could turn to God from their sins. Paul's intention was for the Jews to be saved by the grace of God, believe the gospel of God, and receive life from God. (Jack Andrews Expository Studies – Understanding Acts)

Trying to persuade (3982)(**peitho** means literally to persuade or induce by words to believe (Acts 19:26, Mt 27:20, Ro 14:14). In English persuade means "to cause somebody to adopt a certain position, belief, or course of action" and can even mean to "twist one's arm" to accept some truth. Clearly the latter aspect of the definition of persuade is not appropriate in sharing the Gospel. One thinks of the statement Paul made in 1 Thes 1:5 explaining to the saints at Thessalonica who had been chosen (**eklogē**) (see 1 Th 1:4) that "our Gospel did not come to you in **word** only (PAUL SPOKE THE GOSPEL), but also in **power** (SUPERNATURAL POWER) and in the **Holy Spirit** (SUPERNATURAL REGENERATION) and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake."

Greeks (1672)(**Hellen**) refers to a Greek, one who speaks Greek and practices Greek culture (Ro 1:14). Louw-Nida on Ro 1:14 "a person who participates in Greek culture and in so doing would speak the Greek language, but not necessarily a person of Greek ethnic background." And secondly, a person who is a Gentile in view of being a Greek (Gentile, non-Jew) (Acts 11:20.; 20:21; 1 Cor 1:24; Gal 3:28. Of proselytes Jn 12:20. Of 'God-fearers' or people in sympathy with Israel's heritage (Acts 17:4)

BDAG says **Hellen** referred to "cultured Romans affected interest in things Greek and would therefore recognize themselves under this term." opposite barbarian; (2) In a broader sense all persons who came under the influence of Greek, as distinguished from Israel's, culture - Gentile, non-Jew, pagan (Jn 7.35), opposite Ioudaios (Jew).

Hellen - 26x in 25v - Greek(9), Greeks(17).

Acts 20:21; Acts 21:28; Rom. 1:14; Rom. 1:16; Rom. 2:9; Rom. 2:10; Rom. 3:9; Rom. 10:12; 1 Co. 1:22; 1 Co. 1:24; 1 Co. 10:32; 1 Co. 12:13; Gal. 2:3; Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:11

Hellen in **Septuagint** - Isa. 9:12; Dan. 8:21; Dan. 10:20; Dan. 11:2; Joel 3:6; Zech. 9:13

Acts 18:5 But when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul began devoting himself completely to the word, solemnly testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ

KJV Acts 18:5 And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was **pressed in the spirit**, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ.

NET Acts 18:5 Now when Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia, Paul became **wholly absorbed** with proclaiming the word, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ.

NKJ Acts 18:5 When Silas and Timothy had come from Macedonia, Paul was **compelled by the Spirit**, and testified to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ.

- **Silas** Acts 17:14,15; 1 Th 3:2
- **began devoting himself completely** Acts 4:20; 17:16; Job 32:18-20; Jer 6:11; 20:9; Ezek 3:14; Micah 3:8; Luke 12:50; 2 Cor 5:14; Php 1:23
- **solemnly testifying** Acts 18:28; 2:36; 9:22; 10:42; 17:3; 20:21; John 15:27; 1 Peter 5:12
- **was the Christ** Daniel 9:25,26; John 1:41; 3:28; 10:24
- [Acts 18 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Silas and Timothy from Macedonia > Corinth
Click to Enlarge

SILAS AND TIMOTHY ARRIVE WITH GIFTS

God had encouraged Paul with a special couple (Aquila and Priscilla) and now amplifies His encouragement by bringing this dynamic duo of Silas and Timothy, who were like the wise men of old who came bearing gifts, a fact to which Paul later testifies writing to the saints at Corinth...

"And when I was present with you and was in need, I was not a burden to anyone; for when the brethren came from Macedonia they fully supplied my need, and in everything I kept myself from being a burden to you, and will continue to do so." (2 Cor 11:9, cf gift from church at Philippi - Php 4:15-16+)

But when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia - Some think they did not make it to Athens (others think they were there a short time and then sent by Paul to Macedonia). In any event in Corinth Paul was left to confront the intellectual idolaters by himself (of course filled with the Spirit), Luke recording "Now while Paul was waiting for them (Silas and Timothy) at Athens, his spirit was being provoked within him as he was observing the city full of idols." (Acts 17:16 +)

D. Edmond Hiebert writes that "With the coming of **Silas and Timothy** the situation was changed. Timothy brought information about the Thessalonian church and the report caused Paul to write **First Thessalonians** to his harassed converts. A few months later, when additional information concerning the Thessalonians was received, the **Second Epistle** was written. A number of scholars hold that the **Epistle to the Galatians** was also written during the time of this ministry at Corinth; **some scholars place Galatians even before the Thessalonian Letters.**" (An Introduction to the New Testament)

Tony Merida - After Silas and Timothy arrived, probably with funds, Paul would transition into full-time preaching ministry. But during the wait for such support, Paul remained flexible. It appears that his years of service to the church included seasons in which he was fully funded and times when he needed to resort to tent making to stay fed. Paul learned to be content in Christ no matter the season (Phil 4:11-13+). That's a lesson every Christian should embrace. Paul was not effective merely because he was a gifted teacher; by (**ED**: IN "SYNERGY" WITH) God's grace he also worked extremely hard (1 Cor 15:10+). (Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary – Exalting Jesus in Acts)

Herschel Ford said, "Nothing in the world helps a pastor so much as to know that the good men of his church are standing with him. Nothing hurts him so much as to know that some of those who are supposed to help him are out criticizing him and stabbing him in

the back.”

ILLUSTRATION - Jackie Robinson was the first black to play major league baseball. While breaking baseball's color barrier, he faced jeering crowds in every stadium. While playing one day in his home stadium in Brooklyn, he committed an error. His own fans began to ridicule him. He stood at second base, humiliated, while the fans jeered. Then shortstop 'Pee Wee' Reese came over and stood next to him. He put his arm around Jackie Robinson and faced the crowd. The fans grew quiet. Robinson later said that arm around his shoulder saved his career. (Jack Andrews Expository Studies)

Paul began devoting himself completely to the word - The [Textus Receptus](#) (source of **KJV**) is not correct for it has "**Paul was pressed in the spirit.**" The **NKJV** translates it **compelled by the Spirit**, which while undoubtedly true (Paul was Spirit filled - Eph 5:18+), it is not what the best Greek manuscripts state. The **ESV** is too "soft" reading "**Paul was occupied with the word.**" The **NET** is more accurate rendering it "Paul became **wholly absorbed** with proclaiming the word."

What a beautiful picture of Paul's passion to preach the Word! Paul was wholly absorbed in preaching the Word (the Gospel). The [imperfect tense](#) pictures this as his continual activity once Silas and Timothy arrived. Whereas before Paul was proclaiming Jesus mainly on the Sabbath, now he was free and presumably proclaimed Him daily (probably to those who came to the Synagogue during the week). O, to have such a holy devotion wholly devoted to the Holy Word! Yes, Lord do it! Amen!

Robertson writes "The coming of Silas and Timothy with the gifts from Macedonia (1 Th 3:6; 2 Cor. 11:9; Phil. 4:15) set Paul free from tent-making for a while so that he began to devote himself (inchoative imperfect) with fresh consecration to preaching. See the active in 2 Cor. 5:14+. He was now also assisted by **Silas and Timothy** (2 Cor. 1:19 = "For the Son of God, Christ Jesus, who was **preached among you by us—by me and Silvanus and Timothy—**was not yes and no, but is yes in Him.").

Began devoting...completely (4912)([sunecho/synecho](#) from [sun](#) = with + [echo](#) = hold) literally means hold together, press together (crowd in Lk 8:45). **Sunecho** means to be held or gripped by difficult circumstances (Mt 4:24, fever - Lk 4:38, Acts 28:8, fear - Lk 8:37). Figuratively **sunecho** means that Paul was constrained, compelled, held fast, pressed or occupied with proclaiming the truth about Jesus. Paul's attention was "occupied intensely" with this objective. Paul uses **sunecho** in a similar sense in 2 Cor 5:14+ writing that "the love of Christ **controls** ([sunecho](#) - present tense = a continual driving force in his life) us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died." **Robertson** says "Paul held himself together or completely to the preaching." Merida adds that **sunecho** in this context "carries the idea of being "absorbed" or "engrossed" in a work." (Ibid)

The Word (3056) ([logos](#)) with the definitive article in the Greek, "the specific logos," in context surely the Word of the Cross, the Word of the Gospel.

Solemnly testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ - Paul was bearing witness that Jesus of Nazareth was "**the** Christ" the definite article signifying He was **the** specific One, in fact **the** One for Whom the Jews had been looking and waiting, **the** Messiah in the flesh. As an aside this passage is further support that Paul was a Spirit filled man (Eph 5:18+), because the goal of the Spirit is to glorify the Son (Jn 16:14), just as Paul was seeking to do!

The idea of Paul taking a solemn approach signifies his firm belief in the validity of his teaching, along with an earnestness, seriousness and sincerity. Paul knew that souls of men were being weighed in the balance as he spoke, and he took this as a serious, solemn matter, as we all should when we have the opportunity to share the Gospel. That does not mean we are to glum and humorless, but simply that we need to recognize that as we speak the Gospel, we are speaking truth which will determine that individual's eternal destiny depending on whether they receive it or reject it. This same word was used by Spirit filled Peter on Pentecost Luke recording that " with many other words he **solemnly testified** and kept on exhorting them, saying, "**Be saved** ([sozo](#) in the [aorist imperative](#) = This is urgent! Just do it! Don't delay! Don't procrastinate! cf 2 Cor 6:2) from this perverse generation!" (Acts 2:40+)

Solemnly testifying ([present tense](#))(1263)([diamarturomai](#) from [diá](#) = intensifies meaning conveying idea of "thoroughly" + [marturomai](#) = witness, bear witness) means to thoroughly bear witness (give a thorough testimony). Paul was testifying continually ([present tense](#)) with a sense of earnestness and authority regarding the importance of hearing and heeding the Gospel.

Gary Hill points out that [diamarturomai](#) always occurs in the [middle voice](#) which emphasizes "witnessing done with a *high level of self-involvement*, i.e. with strong *personal* interest motivating it." (The Discovery Bible).

To get a sense of the solemn nature of the verb [diamarturomai](#) look at the other uses below. Notice the first use is a request by the rich man who is in Hades and knows what it is like and he now desires to go warn his brothers. You cannot get much more solemn than that!

Luke 16:28 for I have five brothers—in order that he may **warn** them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.'

Acts 2:40 (And with many other words he **solemnly testified** and kept on exhorting them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation!")

Acts 8:25 So, when they had **solemnly testified** and spoken the word of the Lord, they started back to Jerusalem, and were preaching the gospel to many villages of the Samaritans.

Acts 10:42 "And He ordered us to preach to the people, and **solemnly to testify** that this is the One who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead.

Acts 20:21 **solemnly testifying** to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Acts 20:23 except that the Holy Spirit **solemnly testifies** to me in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions await me. 24 "But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, so that I may finish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to **testify solemnly** of the gospel of the grace of God.

Acts 23:11 But on the night immediately following, the Lord stood at his side and said, "Take courage; for as you have **solemnly witnessed** to My cause at Jerusalem, so you must witness at Rome also."

Acts 28:23;) When they had set a day for Paul, they came to him at his lodging in large numbers; and he was explaining to them by **solemnly testifying** about the kingdom of God and trying to persuade them concerning Jesus, from both the Law of Moses and from the Prophets, from morning until evening.

Merida - In addition to delivering financial support, Silas and Timothy probably also brought an encouraging report regarding the Thessalonians (read 1 Th 3:6-7⁺, cf 1 Th 1:8-9⁺). Thus, the fellowship of Silas and Timothy, the news of the Thessalonians, and the generous gifts of the Macedonians strengthened the apostle (Read Php 4:15-16, 2 Cor 11:9).

Christ-Centered Exposition - Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary – Exalting Jesus in Acts.

Barton - HOW TO ENCOURAGE YOUR PASTOR - Silas and Timothy provided a major boost to Paul's sagging spiritual state (18:5). Their mere presence was a great encouragement. The financial gift they brought was a major vote of confidence. Their report of Macedonian believers growing, serving, and persevering warmed his pastoral heart. Contrary to the wide misconception, pastors don't just have to work "one morning a week." They carry a heavy emotional and spiritual burden. If you, as a church member, are faithful—to grow, to attend, to give, to express appreciation—you can help your church leaders be more fruitful. (Ibid)

Acts 18:6 But when they resisted and blasphemed, he shook out his garments and said to them, "Your blood be on your own heads! I am clean. From now on I will go to the Gentiles.

KJV Acts 18:6 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.

- **when they resisted and blasphemed** Acts 13:45; 19:9; 26:11; Luke 22:65; 1 Th 2:14-16; 2 Timothy 2:25; James 2:6,7; 1 Peter 4:4,14
- **he shook out his garments** Acts 13:51; Nehemiah 5:13; Mt 10:14; Luke 9:5; 10:10,11
- **Your blood be on your own heads** Acts 20:26,27; Leviticus 20:9,11,12; 2 Samuel 1:16; Ezek 3:18,19; 18:13; 33:4,8,9; 1 Timothy 5:22
- **From now on I will go to the Gentiles** Acts 13:46,47; 19:9,10; 26:20; 28:28; Mt 8:11; 21:43; 22:10; Ro 3:29; Ro 9:25,26,30-33; 10:12,13; 11:11-15
- [Acts 18 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

JEWISH RESISTANCE LEADS TO PAULINE REBUKE

In English **rebuke** means to express sharp disapproval or criticism of (someone) because of their behavior or actions. As discussed below Paul's "rebuke" was not just verbal but visual! His intent could hard be missed!

As **Warren Wiersbe** said "The enemy gets angry when we invade his territory and liberate his slaves."

But when - Strong term of contrast combined with a time phrase.

They resisted and blasphemed - These Jews (and apparently the Greeks with them) were like the Jews in Acts 13:45+ who saw "the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and began contradicting the things spoken by Paul, and were blaspheming." Both of their

reactions (resisted and blasphemed) are in the present tense describing this as their continual attitude/action. It was not just a momentary resistance to the Gospel but a continual one!

As discussed below **antitasso** is a strong word in Greek and is used in military parlance to describe drawing up in battle array for mortal conflict, surely a picture of the intense spiritual warfare and the "flaming missiles" being directed at Paul by these emissaries (rejecting Jews) of the Evil One (cf Jesus' description in Jn 8:44 and their actions Jn 8:59). Place yourself in Paul's sandals and imagine these fanatical Jews arranging themselves in battle array against you! Once again we know it was not Paul's strength which enabled him to stand firm but the grace of God (cf Ro 5:2+) ministered by the Spirit of grace (Heb 10:29+).

Resisted (opposed, "they arraying themselves in opposition")(498)(**antitasso** from **anti** = against + **tasso** = order, set) means to set an army in array against, to arrange in battle array face to face with. The idea is to resist, to oppose, to be hostile toward. It means to oppose someone, involving a psychological attitude and also corresponding behavior. It means to "to be an enemy of" or "to resist with assembled forces." **Antitasso** was a military term found in the papyri meaning "to range in battle against" and pictured an army arrayed against the enemy forces. Here we see the Jews like a hostile army arrayed against Paul! The irony of **antitasso** is that it describes God's attitude toward the proud, which would be an apt description of these very men who opposed the Gospel proclaimed by Paul (see James 4:6+). (Only 4 uses in the NT - Acts 18:6; Jas. 4:6; Jas. 5:6; 1 Pet. 5:5)

Robertson - Paul's fresh activity roused the rabbis as at Antioch in Pisidia and at Thessalonica in concerted opposition and railing (blasphemy).

Blasphemed (987)(**blasphemeo** from **bláptō** = to hurt, injure + **phēmí** = to speak) means literally **to speak to harm** and in general therefore means to bring into ill repute and so to slander, speak evil of, to rail at (revile, scold in harsh, insolent, or abusive language).

As **Jack Andrews** says "Obviously, these Jews in the synagogue would not speak against Jehovah—Yahweh God! But when they spoke against Jesus they were speaking against Jehovah. When they blasphemed Jesus they blasphemed God....Sometimes we need to show our disgust with the apathy and rebellion against God's word. We need to be clear in our response. Paul was clear in his response." (Ibid)

He shook out his garments - This was Oriental mode of expressing one's determination to be clear of all that belonged to another (even the dust of the land), so that nothing pertaining to them would cling to him! Paul's sermon in Acts 13:16-41+ in the synagogue at Pisidian Antioch elicited a similar reaction (alluded to earlier - Acts 13:45+) and so there was a similar response from Paul and Barnabas who "shook off the dust of their feet in protest against them and went to Iconium." (Acts 13:51+) What Paul was saying by carrying out these apparently well-known gestures (shaking dust or shaking garments) was like using our modern phrase "I wash my hands of it," and was in effect a symbolic way of saying he had done all that can be done and therefore he had no further responsibility for their rejection of the Gospel (saying "I am clean.")

Lenski on shook out his garments - The act of shaking the garments is symbolic in the same way as shaking off the dust of the feet, with this difference that the one takes place indoors while the other is performed on the street. Both are often misunderstood. Ramsay, for instance, writes, "undoubtedly a very exasperating gesture," others, "a sign of contempt," etc. The act denotes that the dust is left behind and not taken along and thus remains as a witness that the gospel messengers had come and duly delivered their message but had not been received in faith. That dust would testify to the Judge, and none of the guilty would be able to deny its testimony. See Acts 13:51. (Lenski New Testament Commentary – The Interpretation of The Acts of the Apostles)

Shook out (1621)(**ektinasso** from **ek** = from, and **tinássō** = to shake) means to shake from or off, as the dust of one's feet (Mt. 10:14; Acts 13:51, Mk 6:11) or dust from garments as in this present passage. Used only 4x - Mt. 10:14; Mk. 6:11; Acts 13:51; Acts 18:6. **Robertson** adds "Vivid and dramatic picture here like that in Neh. 5:13, "undoubtedly a very exasperating gesture" (Ramsay), but Paul was deeply stirred."

Lenski on Your blood be on your own heads - These are not a curse or an imprecation but a disclaimer of guilt on Paul's part. Since they reject Jesus as the Christ, damnation must follow. Whose is the fault? It is that of these Jews alone. To speak of blood coming upon one's head is to say that the guilt for shedding someone's blood rests upon the murderer and cries to God for punishment. Here the blood of these Jews who are destroying themselves rests upon their own heads, they are like men committing spiritual suicide. (Ibid)

Robertson on Your blood be on your own heads - Not as a curse, but "a solemn disclaimer of responsibility" by Paul (Page) as in Acts 20:26+. The Jews used this very phrase in assuming responsibility for the blood of Jesus (Mt 27:25). Cf. Mt 23:35.

Jack Andrews - It was an outward display of disgust and displeasure with the stubbornness and rebellion of the Jews. **John MacArthur** wrote, "*Jews returning from Gentile lands customarily shook the Gentile dust off their sandals, an act which became a symbol of their hatred of non-Jews. Paul's act symbolized his rejection of the Jews—an infuriating act to them by one of their own. It*

also showed his abhorrence of their blasphemy; he did not want any of the dust from the synagogue where that blasphemy had taken place to cling to his clothes." Sometimes we need to show our disgust with the apathy and rebellion against God's word."

And said to them, "Your blood be on your own heads! I am clean- This put into words what was expressed by shaking the garments. By declaring this common epithet Paul was saying he was not responsible for rejecting Jesus as the Messiah. His Jewish audience familiar with the OT would have understood what he was saying and most likely recognized his allusion to passages in Ezekiel

When I say to the wicked, 'You will surely die,' and you do not warn him or speak out to warn the wicked from his wicked way that he may live, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but **his blood I will require at your hand**. 19 "Yet if you have warned the wicked and he does not turn from his wickedness or from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered yourself. (Ezekiel 3:18-19⁺)

"Son of man, speak to the sons of your people and say to them, 'If I bring a sword upon a land, and the people of the land take one man from among them and make him their watchman, 3 and **he sees the sword coming upon the land and blows on the trumpet and warns** (LIKE PAUL HAD SOLEMNLY WARNED THE JEWS) **the people**, 4 then **he who hears the sound of the trumpet and does not take warning** (LIKE THESE RESISTANT, BLASPHEMING JEWS), and a sword comes and takes him away, **his blood will be on his own head**. 5'He heard the sound of the trumpet but did not take warning; **his blood will be on himself**. But had he taken warning, he would have delivered (Lxx = [exaireo](#)) his life (Lxx = [psuche](#))." (Ezekiel 33:2-5 See also Ezek 33:8-9, 2 Sa 1:16, Mt. 27:25 and Ezek. 33:7-16; Ezek 34:10)

God's words to Ezekiel are clear and applicable to the present context in Acts 18 - On one hand, hear (and heed) the warning (warning is inherent in the Good News, because there is "Bad News" if the Good News is rejected) and it effects deliverance of one's soul ("Life" in Ezek 33:5 is [psuche](#) = soul). Reject the warning and receive no deliverance. In the Septuagint the Greek verb for "delivered" in Ezek 33:5 is [exaireo](#), the same verb Paul uses in opening words to the Galatians writing that Jesus Christ "gave Himself for (in our place, our Substitute for) our sins so that He might **rescue** ([exaireo](#)) us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father." (Gal 1:4+). In sum, blood on one's own head is tantamount to NO deliverance of their soul and by "default" their reception of eternal punishment! There is no middle ground! There is no purgatory! There is no second chance. There is either eternal heaven or eternal hell. The choice is yours. Will you have your own blood on your head and perish eternally or will you by grace through faith be covered by the fully atoning, redeeming blood of Jesus and live eternally with Him? Doesn't sound like a hard choice does it! And yet these Jews rejected Jesus as their Messiah as tragically does the majority of mankind!

I am clean - This is an interesting statement given that he had just shaken off the dust (of the synagogues)! He was "free of synagogue dust" so to speak. The adjective for **clean** is [katharos](#) which describes that which is free of dirt and thus **clean**. In the present context Paul is saying he is clean of their blood. In Judaism *katharos* came to mean ceremonially clean as when one avoided contact with an unclean animals, persons, or places that were strictly forbidden. By using this specific word *katharos* Paul seems to imply that while he was "clean" of their blood, these Gospel resisting, Jesus blaspheming Jews themselves were "unclean!" Talk about how to make an orthodox Jew really mad - this would do it!

From now on I will go to the Gentiles- Paul made a similar pronouncement in Acts 13:46+ Luke recording "Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, "It was necessary that the word of God (Gospel) be spoken to you first; since you repudiate (reject - [apothomai](#)) it and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, **behold, we are turning to the Gentiles**." So as in Antioch Pisidian, the turning point is reached again by Paul in Corinth.

Tony Merida - Because the Jews refused to listen, he moved on **to the Gentiles** (a pattern that will continue: Acts 19:8-9+; Acts 28:23-28+). Later Paul told the Ephesian elders he was innocent of the blood of all, for he had proclaimed the whole counsel of God to Jews and Greeks (Acts 20:18-31+, esp. Acts 20:26-27+). (Ibid)

Robertson adds that **from now on I will go to the Gentiles** was a "Turning point reached in Corinth. He will devote himself to the Gentiles, though Jews will be converted there also. Elsewhere as in Ephesus (Acts 19:1-10) and in Rome (Acts 28:23-28) Paul will preach also to Jews."

Alexander Maclaren wrote, "It is a great part of Christian wisdom in evangelical work to recognize the right time to give up efforts which have been fruitless. Much strength is wasted and many hearts depressed by obstinate continuance in such methods or on such fields as have cost much effort and yielded no fruit. We often call it faith, when it is only pride, which prevents the acknowledgment of failure." One is reminded of Jesus' command in the Sermon on the Mount...

"Do not give what is holy to dogs, and do not throw your pearls before swine, or they will trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces.(Mt 7:6)

Comment - Jesus gives us His his principle which governs how one handles the Gospel in the face of

those who hate the truth. And as they always do, Jesus' prophetic words were fulfilled in Acts 18:12!

Related Resource:

- [What does it mean to shake the dust off your feet?](#)

Acts 18:7 Then he left there and went to the house of a man named Titius Justus, a worshiper of God, whose house was next to the synagogue

KJV Acts 18:7 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.

- **Titius Justus** Colossians 4:11
- **a worshiper of God** Acts 10:2,22; 13:42; 16:14; 17:4
- [Acts 18 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

PAUL GOES TO THE GENTILES

Then he left there - From where? From the Jewish synagogue. Paul immediately makes good on his declaration that he would go to the Gentiles! So for the next 18 months of Paul's sojourn in Corinth, Luke never mentions that Paul returned to the Jewish Synagogue! As would soon prove true, though he would not go to them, some of them would come to him being drawn by the Holy Spirit. As Jesus said "No one (Greek pronoun oudeis literally = "but absolutely no one") can ([dunamai](#) - they do not even have the inherent supernatural power to) come to Me unless the Father Who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day." (Jn 6:44, cf same truth in Jn 5:44, Jn 6:65)

And went to the house of a man named Titius Justus, a worshiper of God- **Titius Justus** is a Gentile so clearly not the same as **Justus** in Col 4:11. In fact the verb *sebomai* (see below) as a participle is almost always a technical term for "God fearers" which describe Gentiles who worshiped the God of Israel. They may have every kept the Mosaic Law but did not take the final step to circumcision which characterized a full blown [proselyte](#).

Worshiper (present tense)([4576](#))([sebomai](#) from **sébas** = reverential awe <> stem **seb** originally = "to fall back before", sacred, awe) means to hold in high esteem, show reverence or awe (veneration) by someone who his devout. Always in the middle voice indicating of the personal involvement in the veneration. *Sebomai* stresses the *outward* (religious) expression of inner piety.

Robertson on next to the synagogue - Whether Paul chose this location for his work because it was next to the synagogue, we do not know, but it caught the attendants at the synagogue worship. In Ephesus when Paul had to leave the synagogue he went to the school house of Tyrannus (Acts 19:9-10). The lines are being drawn between the Christians and the Jews, drawn by the Jews themselves.

Whose house was next to the synagogue - So he did not travel far. The fact that he entered **Titius Justus'** home indicates he was welcome and in turn indicates that this Gentile God fearer was receptive to Paul's message. He may have been among the Greeks who were in the synagogue (Acts 18:4). Don't you love God's sense of humor. Paul is in essence kicked out of the Jewish **synagogue** and God provides a Gentile house next door to the Jews! Guess where the Jews have to pass by on their way to the synagogue! And guess who gets saved in the next verse? Crispus, the leader of the Synagogue. And finally, guess what Paul's strategic location does to the anger of the Jews!

Was next to ([4927](#))(**sunmoreo** from **sun** = together + **homoros** = bordering, adjoining from **horos** = border) means to border together, to have joint boundaries, to be right next to. This is the only use in the Bible.

Acts 18:8 Crispus, the leader of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his household, and many of the Corinthians when they heard were believing and being baptized

KJV Acts 18:8 And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Cor hearing believed, and were baptized.

- **Crispus** 1 Cor 1:14
- **the leader of the synagogue** Acts 18:17; 13:15; Mark 5:35
- **believed in the Lord** Acts 10:2; 16:14,15,34; Genesis 17:27; 18:19; Joshua 24:15
- **many of the Corinthians when they heard were believing** Acts 2:37-41; 8:12,35-38; Mt 28:19; Mark 16:15,16; Ro 10:14-17; 1 Cor 1:13-17
- [Acts 18 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

SHOCK WAVES SHOOT THROUGH THE SYNAGOGUE!

Paul had sown the seed of the Gospel, but it was God the Spirit (cf Jn 3:8) Who caused the growth (1 Cor 3:6-7, cf Lk 8:15). As an aside this is God's method of "church growth," not some humanistic plan filled with man-centered methods! The only "**church growth seminar**" we need is "**preach the Word!**" (2 Ti 4:2) As we will see Paul's "method" resulted in the formation of the "First Church of Corinth." God's way worked then and it still works, because God's Word and God's Spirit are sufficient to produce genuine church growth! It is sad to see so many churches today (even "mega" churches) which are physically filled, and yet tragically they are filled with many who are not even saved, and so not part of the real Church, the Body of Christ!

So while apparently the majority of those in the synagogue **resisted and blasphemed** (Acts 18:6), once again we see that the Word of God is living and active (cf Heb 4:12, Acts 6:7, Acts 12:24, Acts 19:20). As God promises regarding His Word in Isaiah 55:11 "So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.

If the Jews in the synagogue were irritated before, now they are about to explode! Their leader has fallen for Paul's Gospel. And not just their Synagogue president but his entire household which would imply his family and any slaves he might have had.

Crispus, the leader of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his household- This is now the third time that we see when the respected leader believes in Jesus, many in the household follow. This was true in my experience when I came to the Lord 39 years ago, for 2 of my 4 children believed and were baptized with myself and my wife. My other two children waited about 20 years, and one of the two is still not 100%, but I am convinced she too will come into the family of God. Here are the passages that described others in the household believing

Acts 10:2 (**Cornelius** a God fearer) a devout man and one who feared God with all his **household**, and gave many alms to the Jewish people and prayed to God continually.

Acts 16:14 A woman named **Lydia**, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple fabrics, a worshiper of God, was listening; and the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul.15 And when she and her **household** had been baptized, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and stay." And she prevailed upon us.

Acts 16:34 And he (**Philippian jailor**) brought them into his house and set food before them, and rejoiced greatly, having believed in God with his whole **household**.

Believed - [see below](#)

How encouraging is God? Paul was run out of the Jewish Synagogue in Corinth, only to see a succession of souls saved - a Gentile, a Jew and his household, and now every **many of the Corinthians**.

Robertson on Crispus - Though a Jew and ruler of the synagogue (cf. Acts 13:15), he had a Latin name. Paul baptized him (1 Cor. 1:14) himself, perhaps because of his prominence, apparently letting Silas and Timothy baptize most of the converts (1 Cor. 1:14-17)

Leader of the synagogue (752) (**archisunagogos** from **archi** - denotes rank or degree + **sunagoge** - synagogue) was president or ruler of the synagogue, a lay person whose duty it was to take care of the physical arrangements for the worship services.

Lenski points out that "The two imperfects (**were believing...were...being baptized**) plus the present participle (**heard**) describe a continuous influx of new members, all of whom were converts from heathenism.

And many of the Corinthians when they heard were believing- Heard is in the present tense - they were continually hearing. The **many...Corinthians** heard the Gospel and the Spirit worked in their hearts, which would have been necessary for them to be converted. Faith comes by hearing the word about Christ. They heard the Word, the Spirit birthed faith in their hearts and they exercised their faith in Christ (Ro 10:17). This does not preclude that the Corinthians also **heard** about the conversion of Crispus and this gave them courage to believe. Ultimately however it is the Gospel that saves, not the news of some famous person's salvation.

This passage reminds me of the impact of **the woman at the well** in John 4 which records that..

From that city many of the Samaritans **believed** (**pisteuo**) in Him **because of the word of the woman who testified**, "He told me all the things that I have done." 40 So when the Samaritans came to Jesus, they were asking Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. 41 **Many more believed** (**pisteuo**) **because of His word**; 42 and they were saying to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves and know that **this One is indeed the Savior of the world.**" (John 4:39-42).

And (were) being baptized - The early church followed conversion with immersion in short order in contrast to many in the modern church, at least in America. There are many who claim to be believers but have never been baptized, but that was not the pattern in the early church. Baptism did not save them, but it was their way of confessing that they had truly been saved.

Believed (**aoist tense active voice indicative mood**)...**were believing** (**imperfect tense**) (4100)(**pisteuo** from **pistis; pistos**; related studies **the faith**, the **obedience of faith**) means to consider something to be true and therefore worthy of one's trust. To accept as true, genuine, or real. To have a firm conviction as to the goodness, efficacy, or ability of something or someone. To consider to be true. To accept the word or evidence of. The respected Greek lexicon author W E Vine defines belief as consisting of (1) a firm conviction which produces full acknowledgment of God's revelation of Truth - (2Thes 2:11 -"in order that they all may be judged who did not **believe**[pisteuo] the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness.") (2) a personal surrender to the Truth (Jn 1:12 "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who **believe** [pisteuo] in His name") and (3) a conduct inspired by and consistent with that surrender."

In Paul's first letter we note that he himself baptized **Crispus**...

I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, 15 so that no one would say you were baptized in my name. 16 Now I did baptize also the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized any other. (1 Cor 1:14-16)

Don Fortner - Paul had seen little response to his message at Athens and had met with great opposition at Corinth, but he was faithful. God always honors faithfulness (1 Sam. 2:30). At the time appointed, God began calling out his elect at Corinth: first Justus; then Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue; then his household; then many of the Corinthians. Notice the order of events in verse 8. It is important. This is God's method of grace. First, the gospel was preached. Second, many who heard believed. Third, those who believed were baptized. According to the pattern and the precept of the New Testament, baptism is for believers only (Acts 7:37). No infants were ever baptized because their parents were believers, only believers themselves. Believers follow Christ in baptism because he commands it (Mk. 16:15–16). By baptism we identify ourselves with Christ and his people, confess our faith in him, and renounce our former religion as darkness and idolatry (Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:4–6). (Christ in Acts)

Merida adds that "The work in Corinth started off rather slowly (especially during the tent-making phase), but over time Paul's ministry produced fruit. This is a great indicator that we need to take the long view in terms of evaluating ministry effectiveness. Though it's sometimes difficult to maintain patience in this fast-food, microwave culture, where we want to see immediate results, we will need to go through slow seasons before seeing fruit. So keep being faithful to the mission, and ask God to bless your efforts. (Ibid)

Were...being baptized (907)(**baptizo** from **bapto** = cover wholly with a fluid; stain or dip as with dye; used of the smith tempering the red-hot steel, used of dyeing the hair; of a ship that "dipped" = sank) has a literal and a figurative meaning in the NT. In this context it refers to literal water baptism which was the outward confession of those who had genuinely been born again by grace through faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Baptizo in Acts -

Acts 1:5; Acts 2:38; Acts 2:41; Acts 8:12; Acts 8:13; Acts 8:16; Acts 8:36; Acts 8:38; Acts 9:18; Acts 10:47; Acts 10:48; Acts 11:16; Acts 16:15; Acts 16:33; Acts 18:8; Acts 19:3; Acts 19:4; Acts 19:5; Acts 22:16

Related Resource:

- [Is baptism necessary for salvation?](#)
- [Does the Bible teach believer's baptism/credobaptism?](#)
- [What is baptismal regeneration?](#)
- [Does Acts 2:38 teach that baptism is necessary for salvation?](#)
- [Does Mark 16:16 teach that baptism is necessary for salvation?](#)

- [Does 1 Peter 3:21 teach that baptism is necessary for salvation?](#)
- [Does John 3:5 teach that baptism is necessary for salvation?](#)
- [Does Acts 22:16 teach that baptism is necessary for salvation?](#)
- [Does Galatians 3:27 teach that baptism is necessary for salvation?](#)

Acts 18:9 And the Lord said to Paul in the night by a vision, 'Do not be afraid any longer, but go on speaking and do not be silent

KJV Acts 18:9 Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace:

- **the Lord said to Paul** Acts 16:9; Acts 22:17-18 - Trance; Acts 23:11; Acts 27:23-25; 2 Cor 12:1-3
- **Do not be afraid any longer** Isaiah 58:1; Jer 1:17; Ezek 2:6-8; 3:9-11; Jonah 3:2; Micah 3:8; Ephesians 6:19,20; 1 Th 2:2
- [Acts 18 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

JESUS' PRESENCE AND PROTECTION OF PAUL

Jesus was always near Paul and as in this passage made that reality even more "up close and personal." And while we may not see a vision of Jesus, He is near us to the end of our life and then throughout eternity. I am reminded of an old song by Wayne Watson called "[Friend of a Wounded Heart](#)" by Wayne Watson (perhaps you need to be reminded that you have a "Friend Who sticks closer than a brother" - Pr 18:24b - listen to this old classic for Jesus will meet you where you are!).

Jesus, He meets you where you are
 Jesus, He heals your secret scars
 All the love you're longing for
 Is Jesus, the friend of a wounded heart

This verse can be "outlined"

The Presence of God
 The Protection of God
 The Purpose of God

A T Robertson gives some context on this night vision - Evidently there were signs of a gathering storm before this vision and message from the Lord Jesus came to Paul one night. Paul knew only too well what Jewish hatred could do as he had learned it at Damascus, Jerusalem, Antioch in Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, Thessalonica, Berea. He had clearly moments of doubt whether he had not better move on or become silent for a while in Corinth. Every pastor knows what it is to have such moods and moments. In 2 Thes. 3:2 (written at this time) we catch Paul's dejection of spirits. He was like Elijah (1 Kings 19:4) and Jeremiah (Jeremiah 15:15ff.).

Warren Wiersbe makes an interesting point - The conversion of Crispus, an important Jewish leader, opened up more opportunities for evangelism and brought more opposition from the enemy! The Jewish community in Corinth was no doubt furious at Paul's success and did everything possible to silence him and get rid of him. Dr. Luke does not give us the details, but I get the impression that between Acts 18:8 and Acts 18:9, the situation became especially difficult and dangerous. Paul may have been thinking about leaving the city when the Lord came to him and gave him the assurance that he needed. (Bible Exposition Commentary – Be Daring - Acts 13-28).

Lenski has an interesting note on the night visions writing that they "show the immediate divine guidance in the spread of the gospel. It is never our work (**ED**: Certainly not our work alone) but always the Lord's even though we are now left to depend only on his providential guidance which opens doors here and closes them elsewhere." (Ibid)

And the Lord said to Paul in the night by a vision- Luke records at least 6 up close, personal encounters of Paul with the Lord Jesus in Acts. The first was for his salvation and the others were to give him instruction and encouragement, telling him no be fearful.

Acts 9:3-8, 12+ As he was traveling, it happened that he was approaching Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him; 4 and he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" 5 And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" And He said, "I am Jesus whom you are

persecuting, 6 but get up and enter the city, and it will be told you what you must do.” 7 The men who traveled with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one. 8 Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; and leading him by the hand, they brought him into Damascus....12 and **he has seen in a vision** a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him, so that he might regain his sight.”

Acts 16:9+ A vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man of Macedonia was standing and appealing to him, and saying, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.”

Acts 22:17-18+ “It happened when I returned to Jerusalem and was praying in the temple, that I fell into a trance, 18 and I saw Him saying to me, ‘Make haste, and get out of Jerusalem quickly, because they will not accept your testimony about Me.’

Acts 23:11+ But on the night immediately following, the Lord stood at his side and said, “Take courage; for as you have solemnly witnessed to My cause at Jerusalem, so you must witness at Rome also.”

Acts 27:23-25+ “For this very night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve stood before me, 24 saying, ‘Do not be afraid, Paul; you must stand before Caesar; and behold, God has granted you all those who are sailing with you.’ 25“Therefore, keep up your courage, men, for I believe God that it will turn out exactly as I have been told.

Vision (3705)(**horama** from **horāō** = to see, behold; English - **panorama**) describes literally that which is seen, as opposed to a figment of one's imagination (Mt 17:9; Ac 7:31; 10:3, 17, 19; 18:9). It is something that is viewed with one's eye. It describes a supernatural vision used to give divine communication and is distinct from a dream. In Matthew's use Jesus refers to His transfiguration, which is interesting for in the present passage Paul sees the Lord Jesus. Luke does not say exactly how the glorified risen Lord appeared.

Do not be afraid *any longer* - The words *any longer* are not in the Greek. Recall that Paul latter wrote "I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling." (1 Cor 2:3) **Do not be afraid** is in the **present imperative with a negative** which means either stop being afraid or do not begin to fear. The Lord's words do support that Paul was fearful.

Jack Andrews - Paul had already been stoned and thought to be dead in Lystra—He had already been beaten with rods and imprisoned in Philippi—He had already been threatened and run out of town in Thessalonica and Berea. He was not immune to persecution and trials, but we also note that he was not immune to fear and trepidation. The Lord commanded His servant not to fear, but to speak the Word of God and not be silent. Every preacher needs to hear this command and heed this command. Every Sunday school teacher, evangelist, and witness must not fear man, but be faithful to the Master. (Ibid)

Be afraid (5399)(**phobeo** from **phobos** = fear from **phobomai** = to flee or to be startled; English "phobia") means to be in an apprehensive state that can range from mild uneasiness to stark terror as when one is frightened, terrified or alarmed. **Phobeo** can be a fear of man (Lk 20:19, Mt 2:22, Mt 21:26, 46) as when Peter feared "the party of the circumcision" (Gal 2:12) which motivated him "to withdraw and hold himself aloof." Pilate experienced fear when he was about to sentence Jesus to death (Jn 19:8). Fear of people kept religious leaders from laying hands on Jesus (Luke 20:19)

But (alla) is a strong **adversative** conjunction or term of contrast. Here the contrast is fear (which might make one hesitant to speak the Gospel) versus in essence boldness to speak (cf 2 Ti 1:7+).

When fear knocks at your door, let faith open it.

Go on speaking (2980)(**laleo**) used originally just of sounds like the chatter of birds, the prattling of children, (but was also used) of the most serious kind of speech. It takes note of the sound and the manner of speaking.

The Lord Jesus commanded Paul to **go on speaking** using the **present imperative**. As we have discussed all of God's commands include His enablement. Neither Paul nor us today can keep any of these supernatural commands in our natural strength. O yes, we might try and might even appear to succeed for a while, but ultimately we will fail. Obedience to the Lord's commands necessitates continual yielding to and dependence upon the filling with and empowering by the Holy Spirit. If you doubt this premise and are a husband just try to keep Eph 5:25+ in your own power during the week! You need to be filled and in that command you notice it is even given in close connection with the command to be filled with the Spirit (Eph 5:18+).

Related Resources:

- [Discussion of the Need for the Holy Spirit to obey NT commands](#) or "How to Keep All 1642 Commandments in the New Testament!"
- [Filled with His Spirit/Richly Indwelt with His Word](#) - Chart Comparing the two fillings

- [How To Handle Fear \(1\)](#)
- [How to Handle Fear \(2\)](#)
- [How To Handle Fear \(3\)](#)
- [How to Handle Fear \(4\)](#)

Larkin sums up the Lord's threefold command which matches a threefold promise. (Compare Deut 31:6; Josh 1:5; Isa 41:10; 43:5; Jer 1:7-9):

Do not be afraid (literally, "Stop being afraid")/I am with you

Keep on speaking/No one is going to attack and harm you

Do not be (literally, "become") *silent/Because I have many people in this city*

For Paul—or for us—to be afraid is to doubt the last promise of the risen Lord (Mt 28:20). (IVP New Testament Commentary Series – Acts)

The fear of man must never stop the mouths of God's servants (Jer. 1:8–10) (Fortner)

And do not be silent - While this is not a command in Greek, it functions much like one. The Lord Jesus desires that Paul would **not be silent** but vocal. And clearly in the context (cf Acts 18:11 "teaching the word of God") the Lord is telling Paul to not shrink back from proclaiming the Gospel because of fear of men. Proverbs 29:25 says "The **fear of man** brings a snare (Heb = [moqesh](#)), But he who trusts in the LORD will be exalted." **NET note** on "**fear of man**" says "*This uses an objective genitive to describe a situation where fearing what people might do or think controls one's life.*" Note also that in this proverb the "fear of man" is in opposition to trust in the LORD. Indeed, **faith** trumps **fear** in the spiritual realm and the Lord Jesus is in essence telling Paul to trust Him in what He is commanding him to carry out. This reminds me of Paul's final testimony regarding the faithfulness of the Lord to strengthen and encourage him as His chosen instrument for the task to which he had been called (Acts 9:15-16+)

At my first defense no one supported me, but all deserted me; may it not be counted against them. 17 But the **Lord stood with me and strengthened me**, so that through me the proclamation might be fully accomplished, and that all the Gentiles might hear; and I was **rescued** ([rhuomai](#)) out of the lion's mouth. 18 The Lord will **rescue** ([rhuomai](#)) me from every evil deed, and will bring me safely to His heavenly kingdom; to Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.(2 Ti 4:16-18+)

In this same letter Paul encouraged Timothy to guard and preach the Gospel Paul reminding him that although he himself (Paul) had experienced "persecutions, and sufferings, such as happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium and at Lystra; what persecutions I endured, and out of them **ALL** the **Lord rescued** ([rhuomai](#) = brought out of severe danger) me!" (2 Ti 3:11+)

Lenski on do not be silent - not to become silent (the aorist subjunctive in a negative command, punctiliar, ingressive, "fall silent"). The idea, of course, is that of relative silence. He is to work quietly so that the vicious Jews would hear little of his work and not be stirred to violence. This was not an order to cast prudence to the winds. This virtue is always in place. (Ibid)

Be silent (4623)([siopao](#) from [siope](#) = silence, a hush, properly, muteness, i.e. involuntary stillness, or inability to speak) means to hold one's peace, to say nothing or to stop speaking. In classic Greek it was a command to "**be silent**" (Iliad 23.568; *Odyssey* 17.513) describing Socrates before a jury. Compare the example of Plato before the popular assembly on Aegina, where he was on trial for his life and "did not say a single word."

Be silent—1. keep silent, say nothing Mt 26:63; Mk 3:4; 9:34; 14:61; Ac 18:9.—2. stop speaking, be or become quiet Mt 20:31; Mk 10:48; Lk 18:39 v.l.; 19:40. Lose the ability to speak Lk 1:20.—Lord's command to the sea - Mk 4:39. [Gives us English word [aposiopesis](#), apo + siopao, breaking off in the expression of a thought]

Siopao - 10x/10v -become silent(1), hush(1), kept silent(4), quiet(2), silent(2). Matt. 20:31; Matt. 26:63; Mk. 3:4; Mk. 4:39; Mk. 9:34; Mk. 10:48; Mk. 14:61; Lk. 1:20; Lk. 19:40; Acts 18:9

Septuagint uses - Num. 30:14; Deut. 27:9; Jdg. 3:19; 1 Ki. 22:3; 2 Ki. 2:3; 2 Ki. 2:5; 2 Ki. 7:9; 2 Chr. 25:16; Neh. 8:11; Job 16:6; Job 18:3; Job 29:21; Job 30:27; Job 41:12; Isa. 36:21; Isa. 42:14; Isa. 62:1; Isa. 62:6; Isa. 64:12; Isa. 65:6; Jer. 4:19; Lam. 2:10; Lam. 2:18; Lam. 3:28; Dan. 10:15; Amos 5:13;

As documented in Acts 18:11 Paul obeyed and did not remain silent!

THOUGHT - Paul's response to Jesus' command reminds me of Jeremiah who declared "But if I say, "I will not remember Him Or speak anymore in His name," Then in my heart it becomes like a burning fire Shut up in my bones; And I am weary of holding it in, And I cannot endure it." (Jer 20:9)

May God's Spirit grant you grace to be willing to pray - "O Lord, may the Good News become like a "burning fire" in my bones, to the point I grow weary of not speaking to those around me about the free gift of God of eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.. Amen" (Ro 6:23⁺)

Acts 18:10 for I am with you, and no man will attack you in order to harm you, for I have many people in this city.

KJV Acts 18:10 For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city.

- **I am with you** Exodus 4:12; Joshua 1:5,9; Judges 2:18; Isaiah 8:10; 41:10; 43:2; Jer 1:18,19; Mt 1:23; 28:20; 2 Cor 12:9; 2 Timothy 4:17,22
- **no man will attack you in order to harm you**, Isaiah 54:17; Jer 15:20,21; Mt 10:30; Luke 21:18; Ro 8:31
- **for I have many people in this city**. Acts 15:14,18; John 10:16; 11:52; Ro 10:20,21; 1 Cor 6:9-11
- [Acts 18 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

IMMANUEL: I AM WITH YOU!

Immanuel is Jesus' great Name described by the angel in Mt 1:23 "THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL," which translated means, "GOD WITH US." Could there be any more encouraging words spoken to us than these of Jesus' presence? Wherever we are, whatever we are doing, He is with us. Notice in this passage first Jesus not only gives Paul the assurance of His presence but also gives him His promises (no man will attack...I have many people).

For (dioti) means because and is a term of explanation. In this context it is easy to see what Jesus is explaining to Paul. He is giving Paul assurance of His presence to motivate him to speak and not shrink back and be silent.

I am with you (cf Ps 23:4, Ps 121:4, Ps 118:6, Ps 56:11, Isa 41:10, Isa 41:13, Neh 4:14, 1 Sa 12:20, 21, 22,) - It is worth noting that statements like this remind us that Paul was not "Superman," but a man just like all of us. Yes he was an apostle and supremely gifted, but he was still a human being and had feelings including fears like we all have, especially when we begin to take a stand for Jesus. Beloved, while Jesus spoke audibly and personally to Paul, He speaks no less audibly and personally to us in His living and active Word. Do not forget that when the Bible speaks, God speaks. That is truth you can stake your life on. Indeed, He Himself promised "**lo, I am with you always even to the end of the age**." (Mt 28:20). He is in us (Col 1:27⁺) and His Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus [Acts 16:7⁺], the Spirit of Christ [Ro 8:9⁺], is in us to enable us and empower us to take a stand for Jesus and not remain silent but speak out (cf the source of boldness in the early church in Acts 4:31⁺). Remember the words of John that "You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He Who is in you than he who is in the world." (1 Jn 4:4⁺) And in Hebrews the Lord promised "'I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU," so that we confidently say, "THE LORD IS MY HELPER, I WILL NOT BE AFRAID. WHAT WILL MAN DO TO ME?" (Heb 13:5-6⁺) Do you believe Him? Then "go on speaking" and "do not be silent" about Jesus. The world is dying and going to an eternal hell and we have the only message that can rescue them into an eternal heaven!

Merida on I am with you - This same promise was made during the callings of **Moses** (Exod 3:2-12), **Joshua** (Josh 1:1-9), and **Jeremiah** (Jer 1:5-10).

Kent Hughes writes "Sometimes I recite to myself the comforting words of Hildebert of Lavardin: *"God is over all things; outside all; within but not enclosed; without but not excluded; above but not raised up; below but not depressed; wholly above, presiding; wholly beneath, sustaining; wholly within, filling."* This truth bears unending practical applications. He is here! He is under me! He is over me! He is inside me! But he is not shut in! God says, "Do not fear—keep going—I am with you!" John Wesley's dying words, his very last words, were: "The best of all is, God is with us!"...In Corinth nothing and no one could do ultimate harm to the Apostle Paul, and it is the same with us. God's protection does not mean we will be free from difficulties, but God will never allow us to face more than we can bear. Not only that, but no eternal damage can befall us. (PTW-Acts)

Warren Wiersbe adds that "It is just like our Lord to speak to us when we need Him the most. His tender "Fear not!" can calm the storm in our hearts regardless of the circumstances around us. This is the way He assured Abraham (Gen. 15:1), Isaac (Gen. 26:24), and Jacob (Gen. 46:3), as well as Jehoshaphat (2 Chr 20:15-17), Daniel (Da 10:12, 19), Mary (Luke 1:30), and Peter (Luke 5:10). The next time you feel alone and defeated, meditate on Hebrews 13:5 and Isaiah 41:10 and Isa 43:1-7, and claim by faith the presence of the Lord. He is with you! When he was a young man, the famous British preacher G. Campbell Morgan used to read the Bible each week to two elderly women. One evening, when he finished reading the closing words of Matthew 28 (Mt 28:20), Morgan

said to the ladies, "Isn't that a wonderful promise!" and one of them replied, "Young man, that is not a promise—it is a certainty!" Jesus had already appeared to Paul on the Damascus road (Acts 9:1-6; 26:12-18) and also in the temple (Acts 22:17-18). Paul would be encouraged by Him again when he was imprisoned in Jerusalem (Acts 23:11) and later in Rome (2 Tim. 4:16-17). Our Lord's angel would also appear to Paul in the midst of the storm and give him a word of assurance for the passengers and crew (Acts 27:23-25). (Ibid)

Paul was getting ready to enter into a full frontal attack on the Kingdom of darkness (cf Acts 26:18, Col 1:13+, 1 Jn 5:19+) and would need to be prepared for all out spiritual warfare. The same is true when we seek to share the Gospel with a lost person. That person is in the Kingdom of darkness which is the domain ([exousia](#)) of Satan and the evil one will not easily give up his subjects. It is therefore incumbent on us to make sure we have put on the full armor of God (Eph 6:10-17+), with emphasis on "**full**." For example, we may have the **Word of truth** (Eph 6:17+, cf Eph 6:14+) and yet we are not walking in holiness, having not put on the breastplate of **righteousness** (cf "breastplate of righteousness" - Eph 6:14b+). As they say we have a [chink](#) in our armor! And the result is that we are very vulnerable to counter attack from the forces of darkness. So make sure you are confessed up, repented up, prayed up (Eph 6:18+) and filled up (Spirit and Word) and then you are ready to "gospelize" the lost.

Jehovah gave Joshua similar encouragement in the OT, knowing that he was getting ready to enter into the promised land, but that warfare would need to be waged (giving us a great picture of the spiritual warfare we will experience when we begin to tell others of the promised land of Heaven!). Listen to Jehovah's promise to Joshua and personalize it in your life regarding the good works which He has prepared for you to walk in (Eph 2:10+) ..

"No man will be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I have been with Moses, **I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you....**9 "Have I not commanded you? **Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.**" (Joshua 1:5; 9, cf Jehovah's promise to Moses - Ex 4:12)

Comment: And all God's people cry "Hallelujah! Thank you Lord!"

And no man will attack you in order to harm you - Luke uses the verb for **attack** which means to assail or assault someone. The implication in the context is that the attack is not just verbal but physical with the intent to harm and even kill. Yes, Paul's life was constantly in danger (1 Cor 15:30, 2 Cor 4:7-12+) so Jesus assures him of His presence and protection.

Attack (2007) ([epitithemi](#) from **epi** = upon + **tithemi** = to place, put) means literally to place or put upon, to lay upon (Mt 23:4; 27:29; Mk 4:21; Luke 15:5; Jn 9:15; Acts 15:10; 28:3; Ge 21:14; Ex 25:21, 30; Jos 10:24). **Epitithemi** was frequently used of laying on of hands (20 of 40 uses), including Jesus laying His hand on to heal (Mk 5:23, 6:5; 7:32; 8:23, 8:25, Mt. 9:18; Mt. 19:13, 15; Mk 8:25; Lk 4:40; 13:13; Acts 9:12; 28:8), of Jesus laying His hand on to bless (Mt 19:13, cf similar sense of benediction/ordination - Acts 8:17, 6:6; 8:19; 13:3; 19:6; 1Ti 5:22), of apostles Peter and John laying on of hands to "impart" the Spirit (Acts 8:17ff), associated with ordination (Acts 6:6), associated with imparting gifts by ordination (1 Ti 4:14).

Figurative to "add" (add upon) in Rev 22:18. As in Acts 18:10 to set upon figuratively describes setting oneself upon or against another (to assail - cf Lxx of Ps 62:3). Specific uses include laying sheep on the shoulder (Lk 15:5), "twisting together a crown of thorns, they **put it on** His head" (Mt 27:29), "above His head they put up the charge against Him" (Mt 27:37), "they stripped him and **beat** (laid on blows on) him" (Lk 10:30), "it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us **to lay upon** you no greater burden" (Acts 15:28), "He **gave** (placed upon him) the name" (Mk 3:16-17; Lxx - Da 1:7, Da 5:12).

In the Septuagint **epitithemi** is used to describe putting on plaster, imposing service or tribute, bringing fire, smearing blood, laying out the showbread, waving the wave offering, weaving a conspiracy, intending something. As in the NT, it was commonly used in the expression "lay on hands," as for consecration to ministry (Nu 8:10), dedication of offerings (Ex 29:10), imparting blessing or spiritual gifts (Nu 27:18; Ge 48:17,18), and on the head of one who has cursed (Lev 24:14).

Epitithemi - 39v - add(1), adds(1), applied(2), attack(1), beat*(1), gave(2), laid(9), lay(10), laying(5), lays(1), placed(1), placing(1), put(4), struck(1), supplied(1).

Matt. 9:18; Matt. 19:13; Matt. 19:15; Matt. 21:7; Matt. 23:4; Matt. 27:29; Matt. 27:37; Mk. 3:16; Mk. 3:17; Mk. 5:23; Mk. 6:5; Mk. 7:32; Mk. 8:23; Mk. 8:25; Mk. 16:18; Lk. 4:40; Lk. 10:30; Lk. 13:13; Lk. 15:5; Lk. 23:26; Jn. 9:6; Jn. 9:15; Jn. 19:2; Acts 6:6; Acts 8:17; Acts 8:19; Acts 9:12; Acts 9:17; Acts 13:3; Acts 15:10; Acts 15:28; Acts 16:23; Acts 18:10; Acts 19:6; Acts 28:3; Acts 28:8; Acts 28:10; 1 Tim. 5:22; Rev. 22:18

Epitithemi in the **Septuagint** -

Gen. 9:23 "Shem and Japheth took a garment and **laid it upon** both their shoulders and walked backward" ; Ge 11:6; 21:14; Ge 22:6= "Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and **laid it on** Isaac his son"; Ge 22:9; 37:34; 42:26; 43:18; 44:13; 48:18; Exod. 3:22; 18:11; 21:14; 22:25; 25:12,18,21,26,30,37; 26:32;

28:14,23,30,37; 29:3,6,10,13,15,17,19-20,24; 34:33; 36:36; 38:4; 39:7,16ff,25,31; 40:4-5,18-19,21,25; Lev. 1:4,7,9-10,13,15,17; 2:1-2,9,15; 3:2,8,13; 4:4,7,15,18,24-25,29-30,33-35; 5:11-12; 6:12; 7:30; 8:7-9,14-15,18,22-24,26-27; 9:9,13-14,17,20; 10:1; 14:14,17-18,24-25,28-29; 16:8,13,18,21; 23:20; 24:6-7,14; Num. 4:6,10,12-14; 5:15,25; 6:18-19,23; 8:2,10,12; 11:11,17,25; 15:38; 16:7,17-18,40,46; 27:18,23; Deut. 7:15; 11:25; 14:1; 22:14,17; 26:6; 28:48; 33:10; 34:9; Jos. 10:24; Jdg. 6:19; 8:31; 9:24,48-49; 16:3; 18:19; Ruth 3:15; 1 Sam. 6:18; 23:27; 27:8,10; 30:1,14; 2 Sam. 13:19; 1 Ki. 13:29; 14:27; 16:28; 18:23,25,33; 20:31; 2 Ki. 4:29,31; 5:11; 11:16; 13:16; 18:14; 20:7; 24:17; 1 Chr. 13:7; 2 Chr. 3:16; 23:13; 24:21,25-26; 25:13,27; 28:17-18; 29:23; 33:24-25; Neh. 9:7; Est. 2:17; 5:2; 8:12; Job 29:9; 31:27; 41:8; Ps. 21:5; 59:3; 62:3; Isa. 1:6; 44:3; Jer. 49:9; 50:24; Lam. 3:53; Ezek. 21:26; 23:5,7,9,12,16,20; 27:30; 40:42; 43:20; Dan. 1:7; 5:12; 6:17; Mic. 7:16; Zech. 3:5; 6:11; Mal. 1:7,12;

Harm ([assault](#)) ([2559](#)) ([kakoo](#) from [kakos](#) = bad, evil) means to harm or do evil to - physically to mistreat. This basic meaning of "affliction" or "mistreatment" is found in five of the six occurrences of kakoō in the NT. In each of these five instances the reference is to actual or potential affliction suffered by God's people, either OT Israel (Acts 7:6,19) or Christians (Acts 12:1; Acts 18:10; 1 Peter 3:13).

Kakoo - 6x - Acts 7:6; Acts 7:19; Acts 12:1; Acts 14:2; Acts 18:10; 1 Pet. 3:13

Jack Arnold on I have many people in this city - Nothing is more comforting to a Christian who is trying faithfully to reach men for Christ when nothing is happening than to realize the words, "I have many people." Christ will move in power to save men whenever we are proclaiming Christ. Yes, some will come if we are faithfully proclaiming Christ. If we are not faithful, Christ will use some other faithful Christian to bring His sheep into the fold (John 10:14-16, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30). Christ will not lose one of His sheep. This verse also tells us something about evangelism. Evangelism is not finding a newer or better method, or getting into the culture of men so they can understand, or politely philosophizing about the gospel. No, evangelism is proclaiming the true gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit so Jesus Christ can reach His people as they respond to Jesus Christ by faith. The gospel saves whoever responds to Christ by faith, but those who respond were numbered among Christ's sheep in the plan of God. Paul preached to all but he never expected all to respond. ([Sermon](#))

Kent Hughes on I have many people in this city - Those were encouraging words. Paul's work would not be fruitless. Some of the Corinthians were tired of Tinsel Town. The fleshly pleasures had lost their attraction. Some were suffering deep guilt and an awful emptiness of soul. They were ready to receive Christ. These people, according to Paul's other writings, included Erastus, Gaius, Stephanos, Fortunatus, and Achaicus. (Ibid)

William Larkin applies the Lord's promise - In light of the vision of Revelation 5:9-10 and Revelation 7:9-10—"a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb"—it is right for us today to claim the promises and obey the commands of Acts 18:9-10 for the **eleven thousand people groups** that have yet to hear the gospel. (IVP New Testament Commentary Series – Acts)

For I have many people in this city - This is fascinating. What does Jesus mean that He has **many people**. Paul had not held a "Paul the Apostle Crusade" in the amphitheater (like a "Billy Graham Crusade"). Jesus is not speaking of those who have already been saved but about those who will be saved presumably over the next 18 months (Acts 18:11). In a nutshell, Jesus is describing His "elect" or "chosen." And as in Acts 18:8 the same adjective is used - many...were believing and here many will believe. Talk about encouraging an evangelist like Paul! Of course, this doctrine immediately ruffles feathers in many people because they see in it an "unfair God." And others say, if this doctrine is true, then why evangelize. God will save them! This is not the place to have a long discussion about election but take a look at 2 Timothy 2:8-10 where Paul tells Timothy

Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, descendant of David, according to my **Gospel**, 9 for which I suffer hardship even to imprisonment as a criminal; but **the word of God** (THE GOSPEL) is not imprisoned. 10 For this reason (SINCE THE WORD IS NOT IMPRISONED) I endure all things (EVEN UNJUST IMPRISONMENT) **for the sake of those who are chosen** (ELECT - [eklektos](#)), so that (PURPOSE OF ENDURING ILL TREATMENT) they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory.

Comment - Paul is in prison. The Gospel is not. Paul does not know who the "elect" are but is still willing to be imprisoned, so that in some way he might share the Gospel with those who are chosen that they might be saved. The cannot be saved if they do not hear the Gospel. Is this mysterious? Of course it is. I accept it by faith. To try to intellectually rationalize the doctrine of election (in my opinion) will lead to frustration because only God's omniscient can fully grasp the breadth and length and height and depth of this profound truth.

And frankly that Jesus has "any" is amazing, for we all deserve Hell but because of His sacrifice we can attain Heaven. Not only that

the "any" is actually "many" which is grace upon grace!

Wiersbe adds "that divine sovereignty in election is not a deterrent to human responsibility in evangelism. Quite the opposite is true! Divine election is one of the greatest encouragements to the preaching of the Gospel. Because Paul knew that God already had people set apart for salvation, he stayed where he was and preached the Gospel with faith and courage. Paul's responsibility was to obey the commission; God's responsibility was to save sinners. If salvation depends on sinful man, then all of our efforts are futile; but if "salvation is of the Lord" (Jonah 2:9), then we can expect Him to bless His Word and save souls....The important thing is that we accept God's truth and act on it. Paul did not spend his time speculating about divine sovereignty and human responsibility, the way some ivory-tower Christians do today. *He got busy and tried to win souls to Christ!* You and I do not know who God's elect are, so we take the Gospel to every creature and let God do the rest. And we certainly do not discuss election with the lost! D.L. Moody once told some unconverted people, "You have no more to do with the doctrine of election than you have with the government of China!" (Ibid)

All of this discussion on divine election begs an important question of you dear reader and that question is "Are you of God's elect?" In other words "Have you been saved by grace through faith?" Read Peter's exhortation (actually a command) regarding making sure you can answer "Yes" to these questions...

Therefore, brethren, **b e** all the more **diligent** ([spoudazo](#) in the [aorist imperative](#) = "Just do it!" "Do not procrastinate!" "The matter is urgent!") to make certain ([bebaios](#)) about His **calling** ([klesis](#)) and **choosing** ([ekloge](#)) you; for as long as you practice ([poieo](#) in the = habitually, not perfection, just direction) these things, you will never stumble; 11for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you. (2 Peter 1:10-11)

Clear Paul's sowing of the Gospel seed yielded much fruit. In his first epistle to Corinth, he wrote...

Or do you not know that the unrighteous **will not inherit the kingdom of God** (BE SAVED)? Do not be deceived (STOP BEING DECEIVED) neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, 10 nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, **will inherit the kingdom of God**. 11 Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God. 12 All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be mastered by anything. (1 Cor 6:9-12)

Kent Hughes sums up this section on the Lord's encouragement of Paul writing that - Some of us may be discouraged and fear an uncertain future. Some of us are seeing encouraging things happen but are afraid they will not last and hard times will return. The Lord has a message for us: "*Do not be afraid. Stop borrowing trouble. Look to me! I love you. Keep ministering. Keep caring. Keep speaking my name. Inactivity will only imprison your fears. Believe that I am with you and that I will give you all the protection you need. Believe that your life will bear fruit—I promise.*" According to an ancient story, when Leonides (Ed: Actually [Leonidas I](#)), the noble hero of the Spartans who defended Greece from the Persians, was in battle against thousands of invaders, one of his men said to him, "*General, when the Persians shoot their arrows, there are so many of them that they darken the sky.*" Leonides replied, "*Then we will fight in the shade.*" Paul continued serving the Lord and fighting the battle, regardless of his feelings, no matter what circumstances he saw on the horizon. We must do the same. (PTW-Acts)

Related Resources:

- [What Is the Doctrine of Divine Election?](#) - Dr Steven Lawson ([Election Articles](#))
- [Who are the elect of God?](#) - Gotquestions
- [How can I know if I am one of the elect?](#) - Gotquestions
- [How are predestination and election connected with foreknowledge?](#) - Gotquestions
- [Five Reasons to Embrace Unconditional Election](#) - Desiringgod.org
- [Pastoral Thoughts on the Doctrine of Election](#) - Dr John Piper
- [Does God Predestine People to Hell? - Ask Pastor John](#)

Spurgeon - For I am with you, and no one will lay a hand on you to hurt you, because I have many people in this city." The apostle Paul was about to be placed in imminent peril. He was to be brought before the Roman governor, Gallio. The Jews were hopeful that they would get him condemned to death. In this threatening crisis the Lord Jesus would give him a word of comfort to strengthen him, that his courage might not fail. The best, the most assuring word the Savior could speak to his servant was this: "I am with you." Nothing in heaven or earth could be more fitted to cheer his tried spirit. To know that Jesus was with him, approving, supporting, defending him, was a safeguard against fear. It implies the Lord's presence. That would not be enough—a person is not with us if he is merely in the same place as a spectator. "I am with you" expresses the Lord's sympathy. He is not here as a stranger, but he is

here feeling for us, acting with compassion. It also has an even deeper significance. It involves support. He is working with us—on the same side—exerting his power in connection with ours.

Every ministry suffers times when they need the Lord's encouragements, even great preachers like Charles Haddon Spurgeon. Here are some quotes from Spurgeon taken for **Zack Eswine's** book "[Spurgeon's Sorrows: Realistic Hope for those who Suffer from Depression](#)"...

- "I am the subject of depressions of spirit so fearful that I hope none of you ever get to such extremes of wretchedness as I go to." (p 15)
- "I wonder every day that there are not more suicides, considering the troubles in this life." (p 119)
- "The Road to sorrow has been well trodden, it is the regular sheep track to heaven, and all the flock of God have had to pass along it." (p 17)

Tony Merida gives some of "Spurgeon's counsel to look to God's promises, providence, and strength:

- An ointment for every wound, a cordial for every faintness, a remedy for every disease. Blessed is he who is skilled in heavenly pharmacy and knows how to lay hold on the healing virtues of the promises of God! ("Obtaining Promises")
- To be cast down is often the best thing that could happen to us. ("Sweet Stimulants for the Fainting Soul")
- It is an unspeakable consolation that our Lord Jesus knows this experience. ("The Roots of Depression") (Ibid)

Acts 18:11 And he settled there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them

KJV Acts 18:11 And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

- **he settled there a year and six months** Acts 14:3; 19:10; 20:31
- [Acts 18 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

PAUL'S 18 MONTH SOJOURN IN CORINTH

And he settled there a year and six months - Clearly Paul obeyed Jesus' instructions and went on speaking (Acts 18:9). This sojourn is second only to his time in Ephesus (Acts 19:10, Acts 20:31).

Settled (2523)(**kathizo** from **kata** = down + **hizo** = to sit) means to sit down, to **tarry**, to set in sense of to appoint, to settle (Ark in Ge 8:4). Of Christ seated (Eph 1:20, Mt 20:21, Mk 10:37, 40, Mk 16:19, Heb 1:3). Sit as a judge - appoint (1 Cor 6:4). Sit upon a throne (Mt 19:28; 25:31; Lu 22:30; Acts 2:30; 1Ki 2:12; 8:20). To sit upon the platform or tribunal of a judge (Jn 19:13; Acts 12:21; 25:6, 17). **Sit** "in the chair of Moses" (Mt 23:2). Of "tongues as of fire" that **rested** on each one (Acts 2:3). Mt 23:22 pictures God sitting upon a throne. As in Acts 18:11 **kathizo** means to stay, to tarry, to remain, not to leave. (cf Lk 24:49+ = **stay** in the city until you are clothed with power from on high") In one incredible use Paul writes that God "raised us up with Him (Christ), and **seated** us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus." (Ep 2:6+).

Most of the uses of **kathizo** in the Septuagint describe physical sitting. Sometimes **Kathizo** signifies authority represented by sitting as when a king sits on his throne, the judge sits to give judgment (Ex 18:13,14), an elder sits while others stand (Job 29:7,8), a teacher sits among his pupils (2 Ki 6:32) and David **sat** before the Lord" (2 Sa 7:18).

In classic Greek **kathizo** was used to indicate work being given or "set" upon a group of people. In the Thucydides (5 B.C.) **kathizō** indicates settling or living in a place. In other ancient literature the term is used in reference to deity "sitting" while followers prayed to them (cf. Bauer). It was the position symbolizing authority and from which judgment and wisdom were given. ([Gilbrant](#))

Gilbrant - The idea of human authorities sitting or being placed upon a seat of distinction or authority is also conveyed. God is pictured in Revelation as the One who sits on the throne (Rev 4:2-10; 5:1-13; etc.). Other examples include Mt 20:21 and Acts 2:30. Texts which describe teachers (e.g., Jesus) in a seated position include Mt 5:1; 13:1; Lk 5:3; and Jn 8:2. The usual position for one giving instruction was to be seated according to the rabbinic custom. **Kathizō** also describes sitting in reference to religious activity, for example Luke 4:20 (Jesus) and Acts 13:14 and 16:13 (Paul sitting in the synagogue). Besides a religious function, sitting can also indicate a devout task such as mourning. Sitting as part of grief is indicated in Matthew 27:61. In addition, sitting on the ground is a sign of humiliation. The devout and religious connections of the act of sitting make it a significant word for describing the physical posture assumed during times of deep human and religious experience. ([Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary](#))

Kathizo - 45v - appoint(1), rested(1), sat(5), sat down(15), seat(1), seated(1), seated themselves(1), settled(1), sit(9), sit down(4), sitting down(1), stay(1), taken...seat(1), takes...seat(1), took...seat(3).

Matt. 5:1; Matt. 13:48; Matt. 19:28; Matt. 20:21; Matt. 20:23; Matt. 23:2; Matt. 25:31; Matt. 26:36; Mk. 9:35; Mk. 10:37; Mk. 10:40; Mk. 11:2; Mk. 11:7; Mk. 12:41; Mk. 14:32; Mk. 16:19; Lk. 4:20; Lk. 5:3; Lk. 14:28; Lk. 14:31; Lk. 16:6; Lk. 19:30; Lk. 24:49; Jn. 8:2; Jn. 12:14; Jn. 19:13; Acts 2:3; Acts 2:30; Acts 8:31; Acts 12:21; Acts 13:14; Acts 16:13; Acts 18:11; Acts 25:6; Acts 25:17; 1 Co. 6:4; 1 Co. 10:7; Eph. 1:20; 2 Thess. 2:4; Heb. 1:3; Heb. 8:1; Heb. 10:12; Heb. 12:2; Rev. 3:21; Rev. 20:4

Kathizo in the Septuagint

Gen. 8:4 = "the ark **rested** upon the mountains of Ararat"; Ge 21:16; 22:5; 27:19; 37:25; 38:14; 43:33; 48:2; Exod. 2:15; 16:3; 32:6; Lev. 15:4,6,22-23,26; Nu 11:4; Dt. 1:45; 17:18; 21:13; 25:2; Jos. 5:2; Jdg. 5:16-17; 6:11,18; 8:29; 9:41; 11:17; 15:8; 19:4,6-7,15; 20:26,47; 21:2,23; Ruth 2:14 = "So she **sat** beside the reapers; and he served her roasted grain" , Ru 2:23; 4:1-2; 1 Sa 1:23; 2:8; 5:11; 13:16; 19:2,18; 20:5,25; 22:5; 23:14,29; 25:13; 26:3; 27:3,7; 28:23; 30:10,21; 2 Sa 1:1; 2:13; 5:9; 6:11; 7:1,18; 10:5; 11:1,12; 13:20; 14:28; 15:29; 19:8,37; 1 Ki. 1:13,46; 2:12,19,38; 8:20; 16:11; 17:5; 19:4; 21:9,12-13; 22:1; 2 Ki. 7:4; 11:19; 13:5,13; 17:28; 25:24; 1 Chr. 11:7; 13:14; 17:16; 19:5; 28:5; 29:23; 2 Chr. 6:10; 23:20; Ezr. 2:70; 8:32; 10:2,9-10,14,17-18; Neh. 1:4; 6:7; 7:73; 8:17; 11:1-4,25; 13:16,23,27; Job 6:29; 29:25; 36:7; Ps. 1:1 = "How blessed is the man who does not...**sit** in the seat of scoffers! "; Ps 9:4; 26:4-5; 113:8; Ps 119:23; 122:5; Ps 132:12; 137:1; 143:3; Prov. 9:14; 20:8; 22:10; 23:1; 31:23; Cant. 2:3; Isa. 14:13; 16:5; 30:8; 47:1,5,8,14; 52:2; Jer. 3:2; 13:18; 15:17; 26:10; 32:5,37; 37:16,21; 38:13,28; 39:3,14; 40:6; 41:17; 42:10,13; 48:18; 49:18,33; Lam. 1:1,3; 2:10; 3:6; Ezek. 3:15; 14:1; 20:1; 36:35; Dan. 4:1; 7:10,26; 11:10; Hos. 14:7; Joel 3:12; Jon. 3:6; 4:5; Mic. 7:8; Zech. 6:13; Mal. 3:3;

Teaching the word of God among them - In obedience to Jesus, Paul did not remain silent but spoke the word of God undoubtedly in the power of the Holy Spirit (cf Acts 1:8+). So for 18 months Paul continued to **preach Christ crucified.**" (1 Cor 1:23, 18) As he would later write to the Corinthians...

And **when I came to you**, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. 2 For I determined to know nothing among you except **Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.** 3 I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling, 4 and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but **in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,** 5 so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God. (1 Cor 2:1-5)

Lloyd Ogilvie writes: I have learned this repeatedly in my own life. When my strength is depleted, when my rhetoric is unpolished by human talent, when I am weary, the Lord has a much better tool for empathetic, sensitive communication. The barriers are down. When I know I can do nothing by myself, my poverty becomes a channel of his power. More than that, often when I feel I have been least efficient, people have been helped most effectively. It has taken me a long time to learn that the lower my resistances are and the less self-consciousness I have, the more the Word of God comes through. (Drumbeat of Love)

Kent Hughes adds "Weakness is the secret strength of God's most effective servants and the indispensable element of potent preaching. If you are feeling weak and fearful, praise God! Now is the time to speak and not be silent, relying on him to make his power perfect in your weakness (see 2 Corinthians 12:9-10). Then whatever you do, whatever is accomplished for Christ, all the glory will go to God." (PTW-Acts)

Teaching ([present tense](#) - his habitual practice) ([1321](#))([didasko](#) from [dáo](#)= know or teach; English = didactic) means to provide instruction or information in a formal or informal setting. It is notable that **didasko** focused on content, with the purpose of discovering the truth-contrary to the forums so popular among Greeks, where discussion and the bantering about of various ideas and opinions was the primary concern (see Acts 17:21+). **Didasko** was the word that is used to refer to a choir director who trains a choir over a long period of rehearsals until they are able to perform. In Scripture to **teach** means to pass on the truth about the **Word of God**, the God of the Word and the faith of the saints, **with the goal of influencing the understanding and stimulating obedience to the truth taught** and resultant Spirit energized transformation and Christ-likeness. The essence of a **disciple** ([mathetes](#)) in fact is that he or she is a **learner**. The teacher teaches and the disciple hears and processes what is heard so that this truth affects his or her innermost being. Ultimately the purpose of **didasko** is to shape the will of the one taught.

In sum, Paul remained in the wicked city of Corinth to make disciples of Jesus, men and women who were first converted by the Gospel and then those who grew in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and who could serve as salt and light in the midst of the crooked and perverse generation in Corinth (cf Mt 5:13-16, Php 2:14-16). In short, Paul was fulfilling the Great Commission of Jesus to "**make disciples**" ([matheteuo](#) in [aorist imperative](#) = "Just Do It!" "No excuses!" "Quit procrastinating!") (Mt 28:19_±).

Don Fortner - Having his orders from God, Paul stayed in Corinth for a year and six months. He remained there seeking the Lord's sheep (John 10:16) and establishing the church in the doctrine of Christ (Eph. 4:11–16). Though he was a resident preacher at Corinth, the Apostle continued to serve the church of God at large. Both I and II Thessalonians were written while Paul was at Corinth. Let all who worship God pray for, support, and be obedient to their faithful, God ordained pastors (Read 1 Thess. 5:12–13 and Heb. 13:7, 17).

John G. Butler said, "One of the most obvious ways we show our commitment to God's work is in steadfastly teaching and preaching God's Word. This was Paul's practice as we noted at the beginning of this section. But it is not an easy thing to do, for God's Word is not readily received today even in many of our churches. Hence, the tendency is to not preach the Word faithfully or to deemphasize it in one's work. But that is unfaithfulness to one's calling. We are to preach and teach the Word whether people want it or not."

Jack Andrews quotes Tony Evans who said that "People want salvation but **don't want to put in the time to be strong disciples of Jesus Christ**. What many Christians want to do is to audit the Christian life. An audit is where a person goes to class to get information, but is not required to do any of the work. They don't have to take a test or do any homework. They are only attending for informational purposes. They want the data without the responsibility. That's an audit. That's what some folks do every Sunday. They audit Jesus." (**Ed**: That is a somewhat **disconcerting analogy** as those who go through just auditing do not graduate! In the spiritual context graduation is called glorification. Do you see the potential problem?)

The word of God - In context ultimately this refers to the Gospel. All the NT uses of this phrase. Note prominence in Acts.

Matt. 15:6; Mk. 7:13; Lk. 3:2; Lk. 5:1; Lk. 8:11; Lk. 8:21; Lk. 11:28; Jn. 10:35; Acts 4:31; Acts 6:2; Acts 6:7; Acts 8:14; Acts 11:1; Acts 13:5; Acts 13:7; Acts 13:46; Acts 17:13; Acts 18:11; Rom. 9:6; 1 Co. 14:36; 2 Co. 2:17; 2 Co. 4:2; Eph. 6:17; Phil. 1:14; Col. 1:25; 1 Thess. 2:13; 1 Tim. 4:5; 2 Tim. 2:9; Tit. 2:5; Heb. 4:12; Heb. 6:5; Heb. 11:3; Heb. 13:7; 1 Pet. 1:23; 2 Pet. 3:5; 1 Jn. 2:14; Rev. 1:2; Rev. 1:9; Rev. 6:9; Rev. 19:13; Rev. 20:4

Word (message, utterance) ([3056](#)) (**logos** from **légō** = to speak with words; English = logic, logical) means something said and describes a communication whereby the mind finds expression in words. In this context it speaks of God's direct communication with men, His [special revelation](#)!

Paul was faithful with the result he was fruitful. (cf "**many people**" - Acts 18:10) Jesus is calling you and I dear reader to be faithful to give our the Word of God, not words about the Word or words of our only clever imagination, but the pure Word of God, for it is only to the giving out of the Word of God that God Himself gives the following promise...

So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it. (Isaiah 55:11)

Related Resources:

- [What is general revelation and special revelation?](#)
- [What is natural revelation?](#)
- [How did people know about God before the Bible?](#)

Acts 18:12 But while Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews with one accord rose up against Paul and brought him before the judgment seat

KJV Acts 18:12 And when Gallio was the deputy of Achaia, the Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought him to the judgment seat,

- **allio was proconsul** Acts 13:7,12
- **Achaia** Acts 18:27; Ro 15:26; 16:5; 1 Cor 16:15; 2 Cor 1:1; 9:2; 11:10; 1 Th 1:7,8
- **the Jews with one accord rose up against Paul** Acts 13:50; 14:2,19; 17:5,13; 21:27-36
- **brought him before the judgment seat** Acts 16,17; 25:10; Mt 27:19; John 19:13; James 2:6

- [Acts 18 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

THE ATTACK AGAINST PAUL

But (de) introduces a contrast, but in another sense it is more of a result than a contrast. In other words, Luke has just recorded that Paul was teaching the **Word of God**. And now he records the antagonistic reaction to the one who is teaching the Word of God. The attack is ostensibly against a man (Paul), but ultimately in reality it is an attack against the Word of God (and the God of the Word!) Beloved, times have not changed. If you preach the Word, the pure Word and nothing but the Word, you are swimming upstream against the flow of most of humanity which is floating downstream toward hell and they resent your preaching about hell and even resent your narrow minded message of how to escape eternal punishment. In short, preach the Word and "Duck!" The attack is coming in some form. So do not be surprised when it comes!

While Gallio was proconsul of Achaia - Gallio's full name is Lucius Junius Gallio Annaeanus (see below). Gallio's name, as proconsul of Achaia, has actually been found on an inscription at Delphi in Central Greece. Beloved, archaeology does not confirm the historicity of the Bible, the Bible confirms archaeology, for it is God's Word of Truth about this world from Genesis 1:1 to Revelation 22:21. You can stake your life on it!

Longenecker points out that the specific detail "**while Gallio was proconsul of Achaia**" underscores the accuracy of his record - That Luke distinguishes correctly between **senatorial** and **imperial** provinces and has the **former governed by a proconsul on behalf of the senate** and the **latter governed by a propraetor representing the emperor** says much for his accuracy, for the status of provinces changed with the times. **Achaia** was a senatorial province from 27 B.C. to A.D. 15 and then again from A.D. 44 onwards (as were Cyprus from 22 B.C. and Asia from 84 B.C.; cf. comments on Acts 13:4+ and on Acts 19:1+). It was therefore governed by a proconsul (as were also Cyprus and Asia during this time; cf. comments on 13:7 and on 19:38).

Macedonia, however, was an imperial province, and therefore Luke rightly called the magistrates at Philippi **praetors** (*praetores* or *stratego*; cf. Acts 16:12+, and on Acts 16:22-24+) while he called those at Thessalonica by the special designation of **politarchs** (cf. Acts 17:6+). (The Expositor's Bible Commentary – Volume 9: John and Acts)

Gallio in Wikipedia -

the son of the rhetorician [Seneca the Elder](#) and the elder brother of [Seneca the Younger](#), was born in [Corduba](#) (Cordova) c. 5 BC. He was adopted by Lucius Junius Gallio, a [rhetorician](#) of some repute, from whom he took the name of Junius Gallio. His brother Seneca, who dedicated to him the treatises [De Ira](#) and [De Vita Beata](#), speaks of the charm of his disposition, also alluded to by the poet [Statius](#) (*Silvae*, ii.7, 32). It is probable that he was banished to [Corsica](#) with his brother, and that they returned together to Rome when [Agrippina](#) selected Seneca to be tutor to [Nero](#). Towards the close of the reign of [Claudius](#), Gallio was [proconsul](#) of the newly-constituted senatorial province of [Achaia](#), but seems to have been compelled by [ill-health](#) to resign the post within a few years. He was referred to by Claudius as "my friend and proconsul" in the [Delphi Inscription](#), circa 52.

Gallio was a suffect consul in the mid-50s^[1] and Cassius Dio records that he introduced Nero's performances.^[2] Not long after the death of his brother, Seneca, Gallio (according to Tacitus, *Ann.* 15.73) was attacked in the Senate by [Salienus Clemens](#), who accused him of being a "[parricide](#) and [public enemy](#)", though the Senate unanimously appealed to Salienus not to profit "from public misfortunes to satisfy a private animosity".^[3] He did not survive this reprieve long. When his second brother, Annaeus Mela, opened his veins after being accused of involvement in a conspiracy (Tacitus, *Ann.* 16.17), Gallio seems to have committed [suicide](#), perhaps under instruction in 65 AD at the age of 64.^[4]

Ryrie - **Gallio** was proconsul of Achaia in A.D. 51. He was characterized by contemporaries as an amiable, witty, and lovable person. Gallio's name, as proconsul of Achaia, has actually been found on an inscription at Delphi in Central Greece. He was a son of the famous rhetorician Lucius Junius Gallio and brother of the equally famous philosopher [Seneca](#), and was appointed proconsul of Achaia by the emperor Claudius about A.D. 51. Corinth was the capital of Achaia, which included southern Greece, south of Macedonia.

Kistemaker on **Gallio** - Gallio was born in Cordoba, Spain, the son of Seneca, whose eldest son bore the same name. Gallio's given name was Marcus Annaeus Novatus, but when he eventually arrived in Rome, he was adopted by Lucius Junius Gallio and thus assumed the latter's family name. Gallio soon entered government service and served first as praeter for a period of five years. He then went to Achaia as proconsul for one year, and afterward attained the rank of consul. When his brother Seneca, who was the tutor and adviser of Nero, committed suicide by order of the emperor, Gallio asked that his own life might be spared. Yet a short time

later he, too, was killed. Seneca mentions Gallio a number of times. He notes that Gallio had health problems, was an intelligent person who hated flattery, and was blessed with an "unaffectedly pleasant personality." (Baker New Testament Commentary – Exposition of the Acts of the Apostles)

MacArthur notes that "Luke's use of the title **proconsul** is another important testimony to his painstaking accuracy as an historian, as Richard N. Longenecker explains:

That Luke distinguishes correctly between senatorial and imperial provinces and has the former governed by a proconsul on behalf of the senate and the latter governed by a *propraetor* representing the emperor says much for his accuracy, for the status of provinces changed with the times. Achaia was a senatorial province from 27 b.c. to a.d. 15 and then again from a.d. 44 onwards... It was therefore governed by a proconsul... Macedonia, however, was an imperial province, and therefore Luke rightly called the magistrates at Philippi praetors. ("The Acts of the Apostles," in Frank E. Gaebelin, ed., *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981], 9:485) (MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Acts)

Proconsul (deputy)(446)(**anthupatos** from **anti** = instead of + **hupatos** = highest, supreme, consul) literally means instead of a **consul**. A **proconsul** was a governor of a senatorial province in the Roman Empire. The Greeks used to word consul because after the expulsion of the kings, the consuls had the supreme or highest authority in the Roman government. "A **proconsul**, a person sent as governor into a Roman province with consular power which was very intensive. Augustus, at the beginning of his reign, divided the provinces into two parts; one of which he gave wholly over to the people, and the other which he reserved for himself. After this, the governors who were sent into the first division bore the name of proconsuls though they were denied the whole military power, and so fell short of the old proconsuls." (Complete Word Study Dictionary)

Wikipedia on proconsul - Latin word *prōconsul* is a shortened form of *prō consule*, meaning "(one acting) for the consul."¹² It appears on inscriptions beginning in 135 BC. A **proconsul** was an official of **ancient Rome** who acted on behalf of a **consul**. A proconsul was typically a former consul.

All uses of **anthupatos** in NT - Acts 13:7; Acts 13:8; Acts 13:12; Acts 18:12; Acts 19:38

The Jews with one accord rose up against Paul - Even as the Holy Spirit creates unity among believers (Eph 4:3+), the evil one creates unity among non-believers. So while many of the uses of **homothumadon** refer to the unity of the early church, sadly the adversaries were also unified against the early church (Acts 7:57+, Acts 12:20+, Acts 18:12+, Acts 19:29+). These Jews were unanimous in their hatred of Paul and his gospel of Jesus.

THOUGHT - And beloved, that opposition has not dissipated in America (but is actually accelerating). Thus, if the enemies of the church are of **one accord**, how important is it for the body of Christ to be of **one accord**? (That's a rhetorical question!). You can mark it down that where there is **homothumadon** among believers, the Holy Spirit is present and active! (Cp Eph 4:4+, compare also Acts 15:25+ with Acts 15:28+ where being of one mind is associated with the Spirit) And the converse also applies - without the Holy Spirit energizing saints, uniting hearts, there is the potential for discord and disharmony because of our fallen flesh. "Harmonious" saints are surely Spirit filled saints!

One accord (3661)(**homothumadon** from **homos** = same + **thumos** = temperament or mind) means with one mind, unity of mind, with one purpose, with unanimous consent, of one accord. In a word it means **together**. One lexicon says **homothumadon** means "to be of one soul" It speaks of an action agreed upon unanimously (with one impulse) or by common consent. **Homothumadon** was frequently used in secular settings to describe the unanimity of a synod, of creditors, of a husband and wife, of brother (TLNT, Moulton and Milligan)

Homothumadon - 11x -mainly in Acts.

Acts 1:14; Acts 2:46; Acts 4:24; Acts 5:12; Acts 7:57; Acts 8:6; Acts 12:20; Acts 15:25; Acts 18:12; Acts 19:29;
Ro 15:6

Homothumadon is a **key word** in the Acts of the Apostles, where it has both positive (Acts 1:14; 2:46; 4:24; 5:12; 8:6; 15:25) and negative (Acts 7:57, 12:20, 18:12, 19:29) connotations. **Lawrence Richards** comments on this word that "The image is almost musical; a number of notes are sounded which, while different, harmonize in pitch and tone. As the instruments of a great orchestra blend under the direction of a concertmaster, so the Holy Spirit blends together the lives of members of Christ's church." (The Teacher's Commentary)

THOUGHT - This word **homothumadon** begs the question -- Would you say your church exhibits **homothumadon**? While clearly the power of the early church was the Holy Word and the Holy Spirit, the catalyst of "homothumadon" was important!

Rise up against (2721)(**katephistemi** from **kata** = against+ **ephistemi** = come upon) means to rise up against, to rush against implying in a hostile sense. **Louw-Nida** says it means "to use sudden physical force against someone as the outgrowth of a hostile attitude." (Only here in the NT and none in Lxx). The **aurist tense** in this context depicts the decisiveness of the uprising against Paul.

How perfect is God's timing? The Lord Jesus had just personally promised Paul **"I am with you and no man will attack you in order to harm you!"** (Acts 18:10). Paul had been forearmed with the immutable promise of God!

And brought him before the judgment seat - While Jesus did not prevent the Jewish crowd from taking Paul to the Judgment Seat, there is no evidence that they harmed him physically. The **Judgment Seat** was in the agora (see [picture of Corinth above](#)).

Longenecker writes that "The **Bema**" at Corinth, however, was a large, raised platform that stood in the agora (marketplace) in front of the residence of the proconsul and served as a forum where he tried cases." (Expositor's Bible Commentary – Volume 9: John and Acts)

Judgment seat (968)(**bema** from **bainō**, "to step, ascend"; see also [Wikipedia](#)) (see also [Judgment Seat powerpoint by Andy Woods](#)) ([picture of ancient bema](#)). in its most common NT use refers to a raised platform on which an official is seated when rendering judgment on certain legal cases or athletic events. It is a platform before which someone would walk up to receive judgment; (figuratively) the administration of justice, given from "a tribunal-chair" (throne) at which there is a meting out rewards and punishments. **Pilate** sat on a judgment seat (**bēma**) in Christ's trial (Mt 27:19; Jn 19:13). **Gallio** sat on a judgment seat (Acts 18:12-17).

THOUGHT - All believers must stand before the judgment seat of God/Christ (Ro 14:10₊; 2Cor 5:10₊). This divine judgment will reward our works – not judge our sins, for that judgment occurred 2000 years ago on the mighty Cross when the humble Lamb bore ALL our sins, His temporal death giving us eternal life! However, it is a mistake to assume God "doesn't care" about the small matters (decisions) of life. Far from it! Each and every scene of life is a "partnership invitation" from God to live with Him – not just for Him! (Cp Lk 16:10+ with Eccl 12:14, 1Cor 4:5) The quality of every deed ("work") done by believers will be tested at the judgment-seat (**bēma**) of Christ (See what constitutes [Good Deeds](#)). He will judge and reward the redeemed – concerning every scene of their lives to appropriately fit them with their glorified body. Our reward is not earned, but it will fit (Rev 19:8)! Each glorified body will have capacities that match the individual believer so they can enjoy the Lord throughout the aeons of eternity. That is, each glorified body seems to reflect the extent the believer hungered for righteousness (God's approval) in this life (cf. Mt 5:6₊ with Phil 3:11-21₊).

All 12 uses of **Bema** in NT -

Matt. 27:19; Jn. 19:13; Acts 7:5; Acts 12:21; Acts 18:12; Acts 18:16; Acts 18:17; Acts 25:6; Acts 25:10; Acts 25:17; Ro 14:10; 2 Co. 5:10.

Two uses of **Bema** in Septuagint - Dt 2:5, Neh 8:4 ("Ezra the scribe stood at a wooden **podium**").

An actual marble **bēma** was discovered in ancient Corinth, located in the center of the marketplace (**agora**) ([Bema at Corinth photograph](#) or [Images of Bema](#)). This **bēma** "judgment seat" was discovered about a century ago in Corinth's **agora** and is composed of blue and white marble slabs. This high platform was flanked by two waiting rooms and may be the very one Paul was tried on by **Gallio** (Acts 18:12-17+). A columned street (leading to the agora) with a row of 16 shops was also uncovered. One shop has the inscription, "meat market." See 1Cor 10:25 and Ro 14:21 which address the role of a believer's conscience in the eating of meat previously sacrificed at the temple of Apollo ([temple of Apollo](#)). Both Jesus (Jn 19:13) and the apostle Paul (Acts 18:12) appeared before an earthly judgment-seat (**bēma**) where they were judged unjustly. This worldly judgment (praise God) stands in utter contrast to what believers will experience at the judgment seat of Christ (2Cor 5:10₊)!

Robert Moffat - "We shall have all eternity in which to celebrate our victories, but we have only one swift hour before the sunset in which to win them." (Another source cites Amy Carmichael).

C. S. Lewis - "If you read history you will find out that the Christians who did most for the present world were precisely those who thought most of the next."

Related Resources -

- [The Judgment Seat of Christ by S Lewis Johnson](#)
- [What is the Judgment Seat of Christ / Bema Seat of Christ?](#)
- [What is the Great White Throne Judgment?](#)

- [What are all the different judgments in the Bible?](#)
- [What does the Bible say about when God will judge us?](#)
- [What happens at the final judgment?](#)
- [Judgment Seat of Christ - Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology](#)
- [Judgment Seat - Easton's Bible Dictionary](#)
- [Judgment Seat - Holman Bible Dictionary](#)
- [Judgment Seat - Vine's Expository Dictionary of NT Words](#)
- [Judgment Seat - International Standard Bible Encyclopedia](#)
- [Judgment Seat - Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature](#)
- [Bema - Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature](#)
- [Bema - 1911 Encyclopedia Britannica](#)
- [Judgment Seat Of Christ - ABC's of Prophecy](#)
- Sermon by Leonard Ravenhill = [The Judgment Seat of Christ](#)
- Radio Bible Class booklet = [The Judgment Seat of Christ](#).
- [Click](#) for a picture of the remains of the bema at the ruin in Corinth.

Acts 18:13 saying, "This man persuades men to worship God contrary to the law.

KJV Acts 18:13 Saying, This fellow persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law.

- Acts 18:4; 6:13; 21:28; 24:5,6; 25:8
- [Acts 18 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

THE PEJORATIVE "THIS MAN"

Pejorative means expressing contempt or disapproval and is intended to disparage or belittle. That was certainly the tactic of these evil Jews! The KJV has "**this fellow.**" As **Jack Andrews** says "They didn't show enough respect for Paul to mention his name. That is the way the Lord Jesus was treated by His accusers—Paul was in good company! We better not show contempt for the man of God or the message of God."

Basically the contention of the Jews was that Rome acknowledged Judaism but they wanted Gallio to condemn Christianity.

Saying "This man persuades men to worship God contrary to the law - "persuading people to worship God in ways that are contrary to our law." In fact Paul was doing nothing contrary to the Roman law. He was leading men to be able to truly worship God in spirit and in truth through the only Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus. (1 Ti 2:5) He was teaching that "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved.." (Acts 4:12). He was teaching that Jesus the Messiah is "the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through" Jesus. (Jn 14:6)

MacArthur explains to what "**law**" the Jews are referring - They were talking about **Roman law**, because they were trying to get this Roman to convict Paul of a crime. Christianity officially was viewed as a sect of Judaism. The Romans saw it as a sect of Judaism, therefore, it came under what the Romans called [religio licita](#), ("approved religion"). The Romans had a category called "permitted religions." Although they believed in emperor worship, they had category of permitted religions. Judaism was one of the permitted ones and Christianity was seen as a sect of Judaism. What these Jews were trying to do was to get Gallio to acknowledge that Paul's brand of religion was not [religio licita](#) but **religio illicita**, and that it should be excluded, because it was not Judaism. They wanted to convict him. Gallio was no dumbbell. He was cool, and I'm sure he'd heard Paul preach. He knew enough about the Jewish religion assuredly to know that the Jews had this and that and the other kind of standard, and they believed in a Messiah, and they were looking for their Messiah. All that Paul was announcing was that Jesus is that Messiah. Therefore, Gallio could see that Paul's brand of Christianity was, in fact, just a form of Judaism in his own mind. ([Sermon](#))

Lenski explains it slightly different noting that "No political crime is charged against him. The Jewish religion was regarded as a [religio licita](#), ("approved religion") it could be freely practiced and had the privilege of making converts, although not among Roman citizens. The charge against Paul was not that he practiced a religio illicita ([see note](#)) but that he contravened Roman law by the way in which he practiced the Jewish religion, namely by persuading them to worship God in a way which they as orthodox Jews had to repudiate. They, of course, do not explain that this was done by preaching that Jesus was the Jewish Messiah, a claim which they utterly rejected. Their point is that by deviating from the regular Jewish way of worshipping God, which was sanctioned by Roman

law, Paul transgressed that law and its sanction, was acting **contrary to the law** . (Ibid)

Persuades (374)(**anapeitho** from **ana** - emphatic + **peitho** = persuade) means to persuade in a bad sense, to induce, to incite, to persuade a different opinion.

Gilbrant - In classical Greek **anapeithō** means "to persuade or convince." However, it is also used in the negative sense of seducing or misleading someone, sometimes appearing in the context of bribery. The papyri retain this negative sense and employ **anapeithō** to convey the sense of fraudulent or deceitful persuasion.

There is one use in the **Septuagint**

"For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, 'Do not let your prophets who are in your midst and your diviners **deceive** (Lxx = **anapeitho** - present imperative) you, and do not listen to the dreams which they dream.(Jer 29:8)

Comment - The Septuagint uses **anapeithō** to translate **nāshā'**, which in Jeremiah 29:8 means to "be deceived." Jeremiah warned Israel not to be deceived (i.e., carried away into error) by the false prophets.

Worship (4576)(**sebomai** from **sébas** = reverential awe <> stem **seb** originally = "to fall back before", sacred, awe) means to hold in high esteem, show reverence or awe (veneration) by someone who his devout. Always in the middle voice indicating of the personal involvement in the veneration. **Sebomai** stresses the *outward* (religious) expression of inner piety.

Contrary is **para**, a conjunction which in this context is a marker of that which is contrary to what should be or to expectation. The Jews saw Paul's preaching as turning men away from the keeping of the Law. And their use of the verb **anapeitho** supports that Paul's preaching was persuasive and was having an impact. If there had been no response to Paul's teaching the Word of God, the Jews would not have been so incensed and insistent that he was going against the OT laws of Moses.

Acts 18:14 But when Paul was about to open his mouth, Gallio said to the Jews, "If it were a matter of wrong or of vicious crime, O Jews, it would be reasonable for me to put up with you

KJV Acts 18:14 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:

NET Acts 18:14 But just as Paul was about to speak, Gallio said to the Jews, "If it were a matter of some crime or serious piece of villainy, I would have been justified in accepting the complaint of you Jews,

CSB Acts 18:14 As Paul was about to open his mouth, Gallio said to the Jews, "If it were a matter of a crime or of moral evil, it would be reasonable for me to put up with you Jews.

- **when Paul was about to open his mouth**, Acts 21:39,40; 22:1,2; 26:1,2; Luke 21:12-15; 1 Peter 3:14,15
- **If it were a matter of wrong or of vicious crime** Acts 23:27-29; 25:11,18-20,26
- **it would be reasonable for me to put up with you** Acts 13:18; Mark 9:19; Ro 13:3; 2 Cor 11:1,4; Hebrews 5:2
- [Acts 18 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

But when Paul was about to open his mouth - Paul was just at the point of offering his side of the story and undoubtedly preparing to share the Gospel with Gallio.

Gallio said to the Jews - Gallio immediately recognized that the complaint of the Jewish mob had nothing to do with the Roman law and so he stepped in before Paul could speak.

Alexander Maclaren wrote of Gallio's preventing Paul to speak the truth of the Word of God -- "The offer of salvation in Christ is ever a **crisis** (Webster = a time or state of affairs requiring prompt or decisive action). It may never be repeated. Was Gallio ever again brought into contact with Paul or Paul's Lord? We know not. He passes out of sight, the searchlight is turned in another direction, and we lose him in the darkness." Compare the Athenian's "**crisis**" in Acts 17:32+ (did they ever hear again? We will discover in Heaven!) Gallio's "crisis" reminds us also of that of Felix, Luke recording

"But as he was discussing righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come, Felix became frightened and said, "Go away for the present, and when I find **time** (**kairos** = opportunity, opportune time; KJV = "convenient season") I will summon you."" (Acts 24:25)

THOUGHT - A "convenient season" never came for Felix (as far as we know). He would enter a Christ-

less eternity, fully responsible for his eternal punishment, having had the "opportunity of a lifetime!" Shakespeare's famous line from Julius Caesar conveys the same thought of "time" or a "convenient season" - "*There is a tide in the affairs of men, Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune; Omitted, all the voyage of their life is bound in shallows and in miseries. On such a full sea are we now afloat; And we must take the current when it serves, Or lose our ventures.*" In short, KAIROS conveys the sense of an "opportune time," a "window of opportunity". (See also [Redeem the Time](#))

John Broadus said "Opportunity is like a fleet horse that pauses for a moment at one's side. If you fail to mount him in that moment, you can hear the clatter of his hoofs down the corridors of time. That opportunity is gone forever."

Dear reader are you putting off Jesus' free gift of salvation until tomorrow! Beware for tomorrow may never come, for God "says, "AT THE ACCEPTABLE TIME I LISTENED TO YOU, AND ON THE DAY OF SALVATION I HELPED YOU." Behold, now is "THE ACCEPTABLE TIME," behold, now is "THE DAY OF SALVATION". (2 Cor 6:2)

If it were a matter of wrong or of vicious crime, O Jews - Gallio is using his judicial logic. He begins by saying there is nothing in what the Jews have said against Paul that supports he had broken any Roman laws or committed some heinous crime.

Longnecker makes an important point - "If Gallio had accepted the Jewish charge and found Paul guilty of the alleged offense, provincial governors everywhere would have had a precedent, and Paul's ministry would have been severely restricted. As it was, Gallio's refusal to act in the matter was tantamount to the recognition of Christianity as a [religio licita](#)"

Wrong (92)(**adikema** from **a** = without + **dike** = justice) describes an injustice, a crime or criminal act. Here in Acts 18:14 the meaning of **adikema** includes the idea of a willful criminal violation of Roman law. There are only 3 uses in NT - Acts 18:14; Acts 24:20 = "let these men themselves tell what misdeed they found" ; Rev. 18:5 = "God has remembered her iniquities."

Gilbrant - In classical Greek **adikēma** primarily denotes an intentional wrong, or that which is acquired by wrong. It is frequently used for the misdeeds of undisciplined troops, mistreatment of a wife, acts of violence, fraud, and embezzlement (see Schrenk, "adikos," Kittel, 1:162). The Septuagint's usage of **adikēma** mostly implies "breach of the law" or "misdeeds against God" (ibid.). It is often translated from the Hebrew word 'āwōn, meaning "misdeed," with the context having a prominent reference to God (Isaiah 59:12; Jeremiah 16:17; Ezekiel 14:10; cf. Zephaniah 3:15, mishpāt). **Adikēma** is also found parallel with sin (Genesis 31:36; Leviticus 16:16). (Ibid)

Adikema in **Septuagint** - Gen. 31:36; Exod. 22:9; Lev. 6:4; Lev. 16:16; 1 Sam. 20:1; 1 Sam. 26:18; 2 Sam. 22:49; Prov. 17:9; Isa. 56:2; Isa. 59:12; Jer. 16:17; Jer. 22:17; Ezek. 14:10; Ezek. 28:15; Zeph. 3:15;

Wicked (4190)(**poneros** from **poneo** = work or toil, Robertson says the idea is that labor is an annoyance, bad, evil; Noun **poneria** derived from **poneros**) means evil including malignant character, pernicious, that which is morally or socially worthless, base, bad, degenerate.

Crime (4467)(**rhadiourgema** from **rhadiourgēō** = to be ready to commit wickedness; **Rhadios** = easy + **ergon** = work - one who does a thing with ease, "a slick citizen") means a thoughtless, reckless action, prank, regarded as a serious offense against law. **Zodhiates** adds "The suffix **-ma** indicates the result of the action. Literally that which is done easily, without consideration for ethics or propriety, hence a plot, scheme, act of intrigue and deceit." (Ibid)

It would be reasonable for me to put up with you - Had there been any genuine judicial merit to the accusations of the Jews, Gallio would have let them continue their tirade. He was at his limit and was not going to put up with them any longer. **BDAG** says that Gallio actually was using a legal technical term (kata logon anechomen homon) meaning something like "I would have been justified in accepting your complaint."

Put up with (430)(**anechomai** from **aná** = in, up + **echomai**, the [middle voice](#) of **echo** = to have, to hold) means literally to hold one's self up upright and by extension to be firm against a person or thing. Thus the idea was to put up with, bear with, forbear or to be patient with. The picture in the present context is of Gallio enduring discomfort of the Jewish accusations and doing so with tolerance.

Jack Andrews illustration - In St. Louis in 1984 a unemployed cleaning lady noticed a few bees buzzing around the attic of her home. Since there were only a few she made no real effort to deal with them. Over the summer the bees continued to fly in and out the attic vent while the woman remained unconcerned, unaware of the growing city of bees. The whole attic became a hive, and the ceiling of the second floor bedroom finally caved in under the weight of hundreds of pounds of honey and thousands of angry bees. While the woman escaped serious injury, she was unable to repair the damage of her accumulated neglect. If Gallio died in his sins and went to hell there is no way to get back the opportunity he had that day to hear the gospel and be saved, but he did not want to

Acts 18:15 but if there are questions about words and names and your own law, look after it yourselves; I am unwilling to be a judge of these matters.

KJV Acts 18:15 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.

- **if there are questions about** Acts 23:29; 25:11,19; 26:3; 1 Ti 1:4; 6:4; 2 Ti 2:23; Titus 3:9
- **look after it yourselves** Mt 27:4,24
- **I am unwilling to be a judge of these matters** Acts 24:6-8; John 18:31
- [Acts 18 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

But if there are questions about words and names and your own law - Using the introduction "but if" Gallio seems not to have recognized, that this is exactly what their dispute was about. Assuming that by **Your own law** Gallio was alluding to the Mosaic law, the Jews had angry questions to Paul's assertion that one could never be made righteous by keeping the Law but by believing in the Messiah Who kept the Law and fulfilled all of the OT types and shadows of the Jewish rituals and feasts, thus making the law obsolete (Heb 8:13), an assertion by Paul that infuriated the Jews!

Unbeknownst to Gallio he made an interesting wordplay with his statement **questions about words**. Why so? Because the Greek word for **words** is [logos](#) the very word John used to describe Jesus, writing "In the beginning was the **Logos**" (Jn 1:1) and that same **Logos** became flesh (Jn 1:14). Indeed their angry reaction toward Paul was over the identity of **The Word**, Jesus Christ, for Paul claimed the **Logos** was the Messiah Who died on the Cross to pay for sins of men.

Phillips comments that "Gallio, as a man, lost his soul by not being interested in those things." (Exploring Acts: An Expository Commentary)

Larkin comments on **about words and names and your own law** - The Jews have brought him (Gallio) controversial questions (Acts 15:2; Acts 26:3) about **words** (literally, "a word"—the gospel message, Acts 18:11) and not deeds, about **names** (messianic titles and Jesus' identity as the Christ, v. Acts 18:5) and about [their] **own law** (a law-free gospel for the Gentiles, vv. Acts 18:6-8). I will not be a judge of such things. (Ibid)

Robertson on **about...names** - As to whether "Jesus" should also be called "Christ" or "Messiah." The Jews, Gallio knew, split hairs over words and names.

Questions (2213) ([zetema](#) from [zeteo](#) = to seek) refers to something sought, questioned or inquired about, especially controversial questions. In the NT only in Acts and is used for a controversial issue such as the "question" of whether circumcision was necessary to salvation (Acts 15:1,2), questions about the Law (Acts 23:29), and questions with respect to whether or not Jesus was raised from the dead (Acts 25:19).

Zetema - 5x - issue(1), points of disagreement(1), questions(3). Acts 15:2; Acts 18:15; Acts 23:29; Acts 25:19; Acts 26:3

Look after it yourselves - In effect, settle this among yourselves. This is not a matter of breaking Roman law.

I am unwilling to be a judge of these matters - "I do not wish" representing an absolute refusal to allow a Jewish religious question to be brought before a Roman civil court. Gallio had no desire to engage in their petty religious squabbles.

Unwilling (ou = negation + willing) (1014) ([boulomai](#)) refers to a settled desire, one born of or springing from **reason** and not from **emotion**. Gallio is saying it is not reasonable to decide on your religious squabbles.

Judge (2923) ([krites](#) from [krino](#) = to judge) is one who decides, the one who makes decisions based on examination and evaluation. **Krites** is used of human beings (Mt 5:25; Lk 12:14, 58; 18:2.Ac 24:10). **Krites** is used of God (Heb 12:23; Jas 4:12; 2 Ti 4:8; Acts 10:42; Jas 5:9) **Krites** was a leader of the people in the period of the Judges (Acts 13:20).

BDAG - (1) one who has the right to render a decision in legal matters (2) one who rules in a special sense in the accounts of Israel's theocratic period-

William Larkin sums up the considerable significance of Gallio's remarks - Here Gallio articulates two principles of church-state relations that, when lived out in any political structure, will pave the way for the gospel's unhindered progress. First, by saying that Paul is not accused of a *misdemeanor* or *serious crime*, Gallio declares Christianity's innocence before the state. Missionary activity

is not illegal (contrast the Jewish leaders' assessment: Acts 4:18, Acts 4:21; Acts 5:28). Second, by refusing to adjudicate an intramural religious dispute, Gallio declares that religious questions do not fall within the competence of secular state powers (Lk 20:25). For the fifties of the first century this was truly a precedent-setting decision. The decision of so eminent a proconsul would carry weight wherever such issues arose throughout the Empire (Longenecker 1981:486). (Ibid)

Rome's policy of toleration toward both Judaism and Christianity would be reversed. This change occurred about 64 A.D. when Nero blamed the Christians for burning Rome. And so there was about 10 years or so when the Gospel of Jesus Christ could be proclaimed in the provinces of the Roman empire without fear of coming into conflict with Roman law and most observers give thanks largely to Gallio's decision for this decade of toleration.

Acts 18:16 And he drove them away from the judgment seat

KJV Acts 18:16 And he drave them from the judgment seat.

NET Acts 18:16 Then he had them forced away from the judgment seat.

- Ps 76:10; Ro 13:3,4; Revelation 12:16
- [Acts 18 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

JEWISH CASE THROWN OUT OF COURT

And he drove them away from the judgment seat ([bema](#)) - Why did he drive them out? The simple answer is that they remained! There could be other motivations - Perhaps he was irritated at being called to adjudicate in a clearly religious matter. It is possible that they protested his tossing their case out of court. We simply cannot be sure. In any event he categorically rejected their complaint. In modern [vernacular](#) he "threw the case out of court!" And not only did he "throw" their case out, but he threw them out of his court! Of course it is unlikely that Gallio personally escorted them out of his court, but more likely that he ordered aides or court officers ([lictors](#)) to remove these petty Jewish [plaintiffs](#). Phillips comments "Thus the Jews were driven out on to the street by the [flails of the officers](#), who doubtless were glad for an opportunity to express an incipient anti-Semitism with some measure of official sanction." (Ibid)

Drove away (forced away) ([556](#)) ([apelauno](#) from [apo](#) = from + [elauno](#) = to drive) means "causing to move away from a point of reference by threat or force drive off or away, send away, expel" (Friberg). **Apelauno** is used only here in the NT (Lxx - 1 Sa 6:8, Ezek 34:12).

Robertson is probably correct when he says "The Jews were stunned by this sudden blow from the mild proconsul and wanted to linger to argue the case further, but they had to go."

Gilbrant - In classical Greek [apelaunō](#) means "drive away, expel, exclude, keep at a distance, ward off or avert." In the Septuagint [apelaunō](#) means "drive away a flock" (Ezekiel 34:12), but in the good sense, drive them from danger to safety (used figuratively of God's people). In the New Testament [apelaunō](#) is used only once; it refers to Gallio harshly driving the Jews away from the civil judgment seat at Corinth (Acts 18:16).

Liddell-Scott - -to drive away, expel from a place, to drive away, banish, expel, Soph., Xen. 2. to lead away an army, Hdt.: then to march or go away, depart, to ride away, Xen. II. Pass. to be driven away, Hdt., Att.: to be excluded from a thing, Hdt., etc.

Acts 18:17 And they all took hold of Sosthenes, the leader of the synagogue, and began beating him in front of the judgment seat. But Gallio was not concerned about any of these things

KJV Acts 18:17 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.

NET Acts 18:17 So they all seized Sosthenes, the president of the synagogue, and began to beat him in front of the judgment seat. Yet none of these things were of any concern to Gallio.

- **Sosthenes** 1 Cor 1:1

- **the leader of the synagogue** Acts 17:32; Amos 6:6; 1 Cor 1:23
- [Acts 18 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

SOSTHENES BEATEN

And they all took hold of Sosthenes, the leader of the synagogue - To whom **they** refers is not certain. Longenecker, Bruce and Stott feel these are anti-Semitic Gentile onlookers. Others favor the **they** as **Jews** but one cannot be dogmatic. In any event the verb (**took hold of**) is rather aggressive indicating they did not just casually take his hand but that they seized him. It was mob violence in motion whether Jewish or Gentile in origin.

Sosthenes (4988)(**Sosthenes** from **sozo** = save + **sthenos** = strength) means 'of safe strength' or "safe in strength." As discussed below this man with a name derived from the great verb **sozo** (save, rescue, deliver) appears to have been saved and that rescue by a supernatural strength outside of himself, the "strength" of the Gospel. Even the first three letters of his name are intriguing "S.O.S.!" A reasonable assumption is that Sosthenes became a believer in Messiah for as Paul later writes to the Corinthians he describes a man named Sosthenes...

"Paul, called as an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and **Sosthenes** our brother." (1 Cor 1:1)

Related Resource:

- [Who was Sosthenes in the Bible?](#)

Leader of the synagogue (752)(**archisunagogos** from **archi** - denotes rank or degree + **sunagoge** - synagogue) was leader or president of a synagogue, a lay person whose duty it was to take care of the physical arrangements for the worship services.

Took hold of (seized) (1949) (**epilambano** from **epi** = upon + **lambano** = take hold of) means to lay hold of, get a good grip on, take possession of. All NT uses are in the [middle voice](#).

And began beating him in front of the judgment seat(**bema**) - **Beating** is in the [imperfect tense](#) depicting **Sosthenes** receiving one blow after another! S

Beating (5180)(**tupto/typto**) means literally to smite, strike, beat or otherwise inflict a blow as when Paul was beaten in Acts (Acts 21:32, Acts 23:2 = "The high priest Ananias commanded those standing beside him to **strike** him on the mouth.") Tupto means to smite in enmity with a stick, club, or fist (Mt. 24:49; Lk 12:45); on the cheek (Lk 6:29); on the head (of Jesus - Mt 27:30; Mk 15:19) and the face (of Jesus - Lk 22:64).

But Gallio was not concerned about any of these things - Literally, "no one of these things was a care to Gallio." You can almost picture Gallio yawning (and saying "Pass me another grape!") as these religious zealots flail away on one of their fellow Jew. Gallio is not phased by their violence, which is somewhat surprising for now these Jews are at least ostensibly committing a crime in beating an innocent man. Gallio has no interest. The implication could also be that he was totally apathetic about spiritual matters.

Jack Arnold comments that **Gallio** "was a great humanitarian but he was lost, showing no interest whatsoever in Christ. Gallio did not care. He thought religion to be irrelevant, so he went through life a rejecter of Christ even though he was one of the great men of his time. How sad! A brilliant, sensitive governor who was totally insensitive to spiritual issues. Are you like Gallio? Are you indifferent to spiritual realities? Are you unconcerned about the eternal destiny of your soul? Do you not care whether you go to heaven or hell? Gallio did not even bother to inquire into Christianity? Are you like Gallio?"

Gallio's indifference to the "religious" disputes of the Jews reminds me of the response of natural men to spiritual truth...

But a natural ([psuchikos](#)) man does not accept ([dechomai](#) = welcome) the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness ([moria](#) ~ "moronic") to him; and he cannot understand ([ginosko](#)) them, because they are spiritually appraised ([anakrino](#)).(1 Cor 2:14+).

Concerned (3199)(**melo**) means to concern oneself, to be of interest to. To care for, take an interest in. It is a care or concern to someone, i.e. someone cares. To be an object of care.

Gilbrant - In the New Testament **melō** is found ten times, occurring only in the active voice (Matthew 22:16; Mark 4:38; 12:14; Luke 10:40; John 10:13; 12:6; Acts 18:17; 1 Corinthians 7:21; 9:9; 1 Peter 5:7). In all but two of these passages (1 Corinthians 9:9; 1 Peter 5:7), melō is used with a negative particle. An example of this may be seen at Matthew 22:16: "And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man" (kai ou meleis soi peri oudenos; cf. its parallel, Mark 12:14). One of melō's only uses without a negative particle

reads, "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (hoti auto melei peri humon, literally, "for to Him it is an object of care concerning you" [1 Peter 5:7]). First Corinthians 7:21 provides the only occurrence of this verb in the imperative mood: "Art thou called being a servant? care not for it" (mē soi meletō). In **classical Greek** literature it is used either (1) in the middle voice, with the meaning "to be an object of care" or "to be an object of thought," or (2) in the active voice, with the meaning "to care for" or "to take an interest in." Homer says "It was not an **object of care** to me, to ask these things" (*Odyssey* 16.465). Melo is found in the sentence "mega ploutio memēlōs, **having had care** for great riches." ([Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary](#))

Melo - 10v - care(2), cares(1), concerned(4), defer(2), worry(1).

Matt. 22:16; Mk. 4:38; Mk. 12:14; Lk. 10:40; Jn. 10:13; Jn. 12:6; Acts 18:17; 1 Co. 7:21; 1 Co. 9:9; 1 Pet. 5:7

Acts 18:18 Paul, having remained many days longer, took leave of the brethren and put out to sea for Syria, and with him were Priscilla and Aquila. In Cenchrea he had his hair cut, for he was keeping a vow

KJV Acts 18:18 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.

NET Acts 18:18 Paul, after staying many more days in Corinth, said farewell to the brothers and sailed away to Syria accompanied by Priscilla and Aquila. He had his hair cut off at Cenchrea because he had made a vow.

NLT Acts 18:18 Paul stayed in Corinth for some time after that, then said good-bye to the brothers and sisters and went to nearby Cenchrea. There he shaved his head according to Jewish custom, marking the end of a vow. Then he set sail for Syria, taking Priscilla and Aquila with him.

- **put out to sea for Syria** Acts 15:23,41; 21:3; Gal 1:21
- **he was keeping a vow** Acts 21:24; Numbers 6:5-9,18; 1 Cor 9:20
- [Cenchrea](#) port of Corinth, on the east side of the isthmus, and about nine miles from the city. Ro 16:1
- [Acts 18 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

19 = Cenchrea >20 = Ephesus > 21 = Caesarea > 22 = Jerusalem

PAUL SAYS FAREWELL AND KEEPS A VOW

In this section not all agree on the type of vow Paul had taken. Most favor a Nazirite vow. **J Vernon McGee** comments that ""There are a great many folk who find fault with Paul because he made a vow. They say that this is the man who preached that we are not under Law but we are under grace, and so he should not have made a vow. Anyone who says this about Paul is actually making a little law for Paul. Such folk are saying that Paul is to do things their way. Under grace, friend, if you want to make a vow, you can make it. And if you do not want to make a vow, you don't have to. Paul didn't force anyone else to make a vow. In fact, he said emphatically that no one has to do that. But if Paul wants to make a vow, that is his business. That is the marvelous freedom"

Paul, having remained many days longer - "Paul stayed in Corinth for some time after that." (NLT) As we learned earlier the entire length of Paul's sojourn in Corinth was 18 months.

Having remained (continued)([4357](#))(**prosmeno** from **pros** = + **meno** = abide, remain) means to stay on, remain, "to stay on at a place beyond some point of time" (BDAG) (Acts 18:18, 1 Ti 1:3).

Longenecker dates this event - In the spring of 52, however, Paul left Corinth to return to Jerusalem and then to Syrian Antioch—principally to complete a vow at Jerusalem he had taken earlier, probably while at Corinth. (Ibid)

Took leave of the brethren and put out to sea for Syria- Paul said farewell to the believing **brethren** that composed the Corinthian church and went only 7 miles away to Cenchrea.

Took leave ([657](#))(**apotasso** from **apo** = from + **tasso** = to place in order) means to assign to different place, to allot. Paul "separated himself" from the brethren. However in the NT it is only found in the middle voice and has the meaning of to part from, to take leave of, to say good-bye. Used only 6x in NT - Mk. 6:46; Lk. 9:61; Lk. 14:33; Acts 18:18; Acts 18:21; 2 Co. 2:13

Put out to sea ([1602](#))(**ekpleo** from **ek** = out + **pleo** = to sail) means to sail out, to weigh anchor, to sail away from a port of harbor,

depart by ship and only used literally . **Ekpleo** is used only 3x - Acts 15:39; Acts 18:18; Acts 20:6.

And with him were Priscilla and Aquila - These secular co-laborers had now become spiritual co-laborers (see [sunergos](#) in Ro 16:3) Presumably Silas and Timothy remained at Corinth at this time where they would have overseen the church plant (may have been more than one because there was a church in nearby Cenchrea).

MacArthur comments that **Priscilla and Aquila** "had become two of Paul's closest friends. That he felt the freedom to invite them to accompany him shows that other leaders had already emerged within the Corinthian church, such as [Gaius](#), [Sosthenes](#), [Stephanas](#), and Crispus. And the fact that Priscilla and Aquila would leave their business to go with Paul indicates their loyalty and devotion to him." (MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Acts)

In Cenchrea he had his hair cut, for he was keeping a vow - Cenchrea ([Wikipedia](#)) was the eastern seaport of Corinth about 7 miles from the giving ships access to the [Aegean Sea](#) ([map](#)). We learn about a church in Cenchrea from Romans 16:1 where Paul writes "I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a servant of the **church** which is at Cenchrea."

Tony Merida - Paul must have intended to go to Jerusalem before going to Cenchreae because he shaved his hair to conclude a Nazirite vow (cf. Num 6:2,5,9,18). Doing so may have been Paul's expression of thanks to God for protecting him at Corinth. The ritual would include offering a sacrifice at the temple and burning hair devoted to God on the altar (Johnson, Let's Study Acts, 230). The action shows that Paul never disregarded the law's relevance to Jews, contrary to false charges from others (ibid.; cf. Acts 18:13; 21:21-26; 1 Cor 9:20). **John Stott** comments, "Once Paul had been liberated from the attempt to be justified by the law, his conscience was free to take part in practices which, being ceremonial or cultural, belonged to the "matters indifferent," perhaps on this occasion in order to conciliate the Jewish Christian leaders he was going to see in Jerusalem (cf. 21:23). (Message of Acts, 301)" (Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary – Exalting Jesus in Acts)

Barton - The vow Paul took at Cenchrea (the seaport for the city of Corinth) may have been a temporary Nazirite vow ([read Nu 6:2,5,9,18](#)), which would end with shaving the head and offering the hair as a sacrifice (Numbers 6:18). Or it could have been a personal vow of thanksgiving, offered in light of God's providential protection while in Corinth. (LAC)

Larkin has this note on Paul's vow "Paul cuts his hair, signaling the beginning of the end of a Nazirite vow (Nu 6; m. Nazir). Evidently he had begun this vow after either the Macedonian or Corinthian vision, as a sign of earnest beseeching of the Lord for success in the mission to which Paul had been called (Acts 16:9-10; 18:9-10). Now in thanksgiving Paul ends the vow and thus recognizes that the Lord made good on his promises. In our life of faith we too may be confident that what God calls us to do he will enable us to complete (Phil 1:6)...Josephus Jewish Wars 2.313-14 give evidence that a Nazirite vow could be undertaken outside Palestine. Bruce (1988:355) disagrees and sees the vow as a private one. What is new in Luke's account is the commencement of the vow's completion, the cutting of the hair, outside Palestine." (Ibid)

MacArthur - After he became a Christian, Paul realized the worthlessness of all the efforts at self-salvation by ritual, tradition, legalism, sincerity, and external goodness compared to the true righteousness and knowledge of God that came through knowing Christ (Phil. 3:7-9). But he had a genuine love for God's law in Scripture (cf. Rom. 7:12, 14) and was still influenced by his Jewish heritage. And when he wanted to show his deep thanks for God's marvelous encouragement during the difficult times in Corinth (cf. chapter 11 of this volume), he naturally thought of a typically Jewish way of doing so. The vow Paul made was a Nazirite vow—a special pledge of separation and devotion to God (cf. 2 Cor. 6:17). It was usually made in gratitude to the Almighty for gracious blessing or deliverance. (Nu 6:2-5)...The vow was for a specific period (usually a month, although Samson [Judg. 16:17], Samuel [1 Sam. 1:11], and John the Baptist [Luke 1:15] were Nazirites for life). At the end of that time there was an elaborate ceremony (Nu 6:13-21) In Paul's day, provision was made for those away from Jerusalem at the termination of their vow to shave their heads, as Paul did, then within thirty days present the hair at the Temple (cf. Josephus Wars, 2.15.1). The phrase he was keeping a vow indicates a process not yet completed. That required his arrival in Jerusalem. (MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Acts)

Toussaint - When Paul made this vow is unstated. He may have made it when he left Troas for Macedonia, or at the beginning of his ministry at Corinth, or more likely, before the Lord gave him the vision (vv. 9-10). During the vow Paul would have let his hair grow. Now the time of the Nazirite vow was over (after about a year and a half), and Paul got a haircut at Cenchrea (cf. Num. 6:1-21). (The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty.

Longenecker - that Paul cut his hair at Cenchrea shows that he had earlier taken a Nazirite vow for a particular period of time that had now ended. Such a vow had to be fulfilled at Jerusalem, where the hair would be presented to God and sacrifices offered (cf. Num 6:1-21; M Nazir 1:1-9:5; Jos. War II, 313 [xv.1]). Some have proposed that Paul cut off his hair at the beginning of his vow. But there is no evidence for this, and much in the literature about Nazirite vows speaks directly against it. Others have called this a "Nazirite-like" vow, feeling somewhat uneasy that Paul at any time in his Christian ministry took a Jewish vow. But for one who thought of himself as a Jewish Christian (2Cor 11:22; cf. Rom 9-11) and who at the conclusion of three missionary journeys to the

Gentile world could still insist that he was "a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee" (Acts 23:6; cf. 26:5), such an action should not be thought strange. (Ibid)

NET Note - It is debated whether this vow is a private vow of thanksgiving or the Nazirite vow, because it is not clear whether the Nazirite vow could be taken outside Jerusalem. Some have cited the Mishnah (m. Nazir 3:6, 5:4) to argue that the shaving of the hair can occur outside Jerusalem, and Josephus, J. W. 2.15.1 (2.313) is sometimes suggested as a parallel, but these references are not clear. H. Greeven, TDNT 2:777, is certain that this refers to the Nazirite vow. Regardless, it is clear that Paul reflected his pious dependence on God.

Related Resources:

- [What is the Nazirite/Nazarite vow?](#)
- [What does the Bible say about keeping your vows / oaths?](#)
- [Should a Christian make a promise?](#)

Barton - THE TOGETHER TEAM

Priscilla and Aquila were marriage and ministry partners (18:18). Four timeless qualities enabled Priscilla and Aquila to have a marriage that resulted in major ministry:

1. They were steeped in the Truth of God's Word. (Remember that Priscilla and Aquila spent a great deal of time with Paul making tents together. Obviously, they had heard him teach and preach many, many times. This explains the reason they were able to pull Apollos aside and explain the gospel to him. They were competent in handling the Scriptures.)
2. They had an eye on Eternity. (Though they were tentmakers by trade, they were focused on something far more significant. They were investing in people and seeking first and foremost to build Christ's church!)
3. They had an attitude of Availability. (Always their home was open; always they were willing to pull up stakes and go where they were needed.)
4. They were radically committed to Ministry. (Everywhere they went, lives were touched. Because they were active, sensitive, faithful, and steady, they ended up having an impact on three of the most influential Christian leaders of their day—Paul, Apollos, and Timothy!)

How much ministry takes place in your marriage? (LAC)

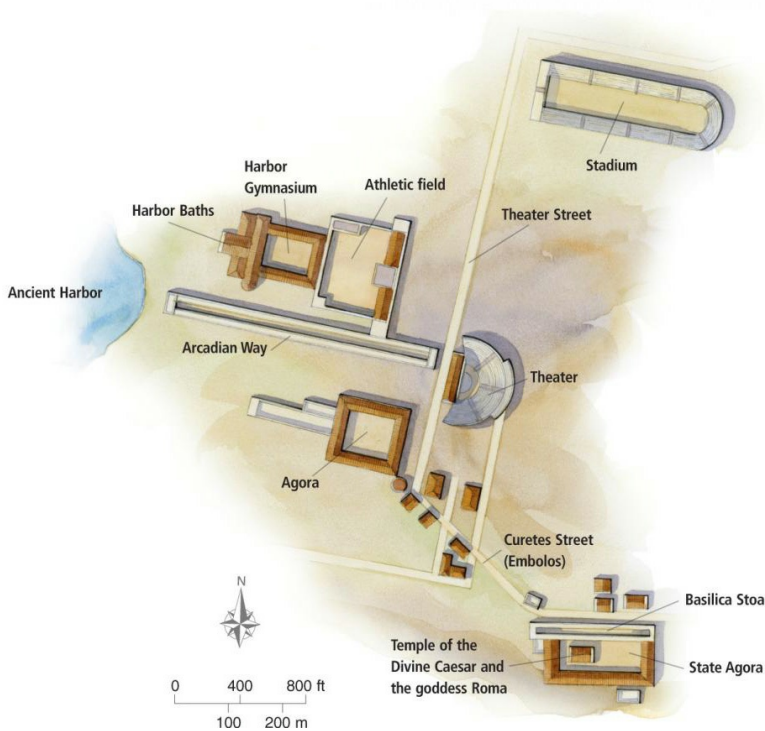
Acts 18:19 They came to Ephesus, and he left them there. Now he himself entered the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews.

KJV Acts 18:19 And he came to Ephesus, and left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews.

NET Acts 18:19 When they reached Ephesus, Paul left Priscilla and Aquila behind there, but he himself went into the synagogue and addressed the Jews.

Acts 18:19 They stopped first at the port of Ephesus, where Paul left the others behind. While he was there, he went to the synagogue to reason with the Jews.

- [Ephesus](#) Acts 18:24; 19:1,17,26; 20:16; 1 Cor 16:8; Ephesians 1:1; 1 Timothy 1:3; 2 Timothy 1:18; 4:12; Revelation 1:11; 2:1
- **but** Acts 18:4; 17:2,3
- [Acts 18 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



Ephesus in the Time of Paul (c. A.D. 60) (ESV.org)

PAUL'S SHORT SOJOURN AT EPHEBUS

They came to Ephesus, and he left them there - Paul left Priscilla and Aquila in **Ephesus**. This visit by Paul would be short (Acts 18:19-21) but he would later return and spend 3 years in Ephesus (compare Acts 19:10 with Acts 20:31), his longest recorded stay in any city.

Robertson on **came** - Came down, as usual in speaking of coming to land (Acts 16:1).

MacArthur comments that **Priscilla and Aquila** "apparently remained in Ephesus for a few years, had a church meet in their home (1 Cor. 16:19), and eventually returned to Rome (Ro 16:3-5)." (Ibid)

Longenecker - On arriving at Ephesus, **Aquila and Priscilla** set about their business in the city. There they were to remain for four or five years, hosting a congregation of believers in their home and sending their greetings back to their Corinthian friends in one of Paul's letters (cf. 1Cor 16:19). They were probably there during Demetrius's riot (cf. Acts 19:23-41), even risking their lives to protect Paul (cf. Rom 16:4). Sometime after Claudius's death in A.D. 54 (perhaps 56), they probably returned to Rome (cf. Rom 16:3). Paul, however, having wanted earlier to minister at Ephesus (cf. Acts 16:6), went to the synagogue and "reasoned" (dielexato) with the Jews gathered there. Though it was not the Sabbath, he knew he could find an audience in the synagogue and probably desired to "test the waters" in anticipation of his later return. (Expositor's Bible Commentary – Volume 9: John and Acts)

Ephesus (2181)(**Ephesos**) is a famous seaport city, the most important Roman commercial city in Asia Minor and the capital of **Ionia** (see [location on eastern side of modern Turkey](#)). Ephesus was surrounded on three sides by mountains and on the west by the Icarian Sea. The **Cayster River** ran across the plain. (See more detailed discussion of Ephesus in Acts 19:1+).

Marshall adds that "It was a free city with its own assembly (19:39), and had a famous temple of the goddess Artemis. The port is now silted up and the site abandoned, but impressive ruins have been uncovered, including the theatre. The town was a meeting place of various cultural influences, and it had a large Jewish population who enjoyed special privileges." (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries – Acts)

Ephesos is used 17x in the NT -

Acts 18:19; Acts 18:21; Acts 18:24; Acts 19:1; Acts 19:17; Acts 19:26; Acts 19:35; Acts 20:16; Acts 20:17; 1 Co. 15:32; 1 Co. 16:8; Eph. 1:1; 1 Tim. 1:3; 2 Tim. 1:18; 2 Tim. 4:12; Rev. 1:11; Rev. 2:1

John Polhill - Located on the main highway connecting the Aegean with the rich trade routes in the east, Ephesus was the main commercial center of Asia. It had a natural harbor with access to the Aegean by way of the Cayster River. According to Pliny, the original city was built on the sea; but because of silting from the Cayster, the city lay several miles inland up the river in the first

century. The ruins of the city are some five miles inland today. To the north of Ephesus lay the city of Smyrna at the mouth of the Hermus River, and to the south was Miletus at the mouth of the Maeander River. The coastal plain connected Ephesus with both these cities and the commerce that traveled through them. In fact, no better site could have been picked for the evangelization of all of Asia Minor than Ephesus. The seven churches of Rev 2–3 may well have owed their origin to Paul's Ephesian ministry. (New American Commentary – Volume 26: Acts)

Zodhiates - The city is in complete desolation. Many ruins remain, including the stadium and theater. On the same plain is a little Turkish village called Ayasalouk, a corrupted form of "Ayios Theologos": "Saint [holy] Theologue," i.e., Saint John. Saint John is supposed to have ended his days at Ephesus. The ancient city often changed its name and its site. In apostolic times, Ephesus contained three remarkable buildings:

Timeline & Location of the Seven Wonders
Click to Enlarge

Model of Temple of Diana/Artemis
Click to Enlarge

(I) The [temple of Diana](#), one of the seven wonders of the world, was erected at the joint cost of all Asia and was 220 years in building. In the center of the court was an image of the goddess Diana, which superstitious people believed fell down from heaven (Acts 19:35). Ephesus fell prey to the Goths in a.d. 262, and the remains of its magnificent temple were hidden from the world until they were brought to light in 1869 by J. T. Wood who spent eleven years (1863-1874) in exploration of the ancient city.

Theater & Harbour Street on Right
Click to Enlarge

(II) The theater (Acts 19:29) was the largest structure of its kind built by the Greeks and was claimed to be capable of seating 50,000 spectators. J.T. Wood, however, estimated its seating capacity at 24,500 persons.

(III) The stadium or circus, an arena in which the Ephesian people witnessed foot races, wrestling matches, and fights with wild beasts. The competitors were usually condemned criminals who were sent naked into the arena to be torn to pieces by wild beasts (1 Cor. 15:32). The remains of the victims were sometimes exposed at the end of the combat which gives great vividness to the apostle's reference in 1 Cor. 4:9. Some of these games were held in honor of Diana, and the silver shrines of the goddess made by Demetrius <G1216> and his fellow craftsmen were eagerly purchased for household idols by visitors (Acts 19:24). (Complete Word Study Dictionary – New Testament)

Related Resources:

- Wikipedia - [Ephesus](#)
- American Tract Society [Ephesus](#)
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary [Ephesus](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Ephesus](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Ephesus](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Ephesus](#)
- Hitchcock Bible Names [Ephesus](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Ephesus](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Ephesus](#)
- 1911 Encyclopedia Britannica [Ephesus](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Ephesus](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Ephesus](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Ephesus](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Ephesus](#)

Left (2641) ([kataleipo](#) from **kata** = intensifies or strengthens the meaning + **leipo** = to leave behind) literally means to leave behind or leave remaining.

Now he himself - The fact that Luke says **he left them** suggests that Paul ventured into the Jewish synagogue by himself. The NLT says "They stopped first at the port of Ephesus, where Paul left the others behind. While he was there, he went to the synagogue to reason with the Jews."

Entered the synagogue ([sunagoge](#)) and reasoned with the Jews - This was Paul's usual pattern he would take the Gospel first to the Jews (Ro 1:16, (cf. Acts 9:20; 13:5, 14; 14:1; 17:2, 10, 17; 18:4; 19:8).) So even though he declared in Acts 18:6+ that "from now on I shall go to the Gentiles," he continued to go first to the Jews. (cf Paul's heart for his Jewish brethren to be saved = Ro 9:1-3, Ro 10:1. See Acts 19:8-9+)

Reasoned (1256) ([dialegomai](#) from **diá** = denoting transition or separation + **légo** = speak; English = [dialogue](#)) means to engage in an interchange of speech, thinking different things with oneself, to mingling thought with thought. And so it meant Paul reasoned with the Jews using thoughtful arguments (almost certainly based on the OT) in an attempt to persuade the Jews. Dialegomai is used repeatedly by Luke to describe Paul's proclamation and defense of the Gospel in Thessalonica (Acts 17:2), Athens (Acts 17:17), Corinth (Acts 18:4), Ephesus (Acts 18:19; Acts 19:8, 9), Troas (Acts 20:7, 9), and finally, before the Roman governor, Felix, in Caesarea Maritima (Acts 24:25).

Acts 18:20 When they asked him to stay for a longer time, he did not consent,

KJV Acts 18:20 When they desired him to tarry longer time with them, he consented not;

- **he did not consent**, Acts 20:16; 21:13,14; Mark 1:37,38; 1 Cor 16:12
- [Acts 18 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

JEWS REQUEST PAUL TO STAY

When they asked him to stay (meno) for a longer time, he did not consent - Who is **they**? The nearest antecedent is the Jews, so the **they** is unlikely to refer to Priscilla and Aquila. These Jews were more receptive to Paul's reasoning (they were more like the Jews at Berea - Acts 17:11) than the obstinate Jews in synagogues like the one at Corinth. This is quite a different reception in this synagogue compared to some of his previous experiences (Acts 17:5, etc)

Asked (requested)(present tense - continually asking)(2065)([erotao](#) from **éromai** = ask, inquire) means to ask for, usually with implication of an underlying question. The verb does not carry the note of an authoritative command but rather that of a friend making an urgent appeal to a friend. The term suggests that those making the request stand in a position of familiarity with those being treated.

NET Note - Paul probably refused because he wanted to reach Jerusalem for the festival season (ED: PROBABLY PASSOVER) before the seas became impassable during the winter.

MacArthur suggests that Paul's response to turn down an "open door" in a Jewish Synagogue shows how seriously he took his vow.

Toussaint notes that "Some Greek manuscripts add that Paul's desire to go to Jerusalem in haste was to keep a feast. If this is accurate, probably Paul wanted to observe the Passover." (Ibid)

Consent (1962)([epineuo](#) from **epi** = upon + **neuo** = to nod, beckon) means to give consent (as by a nod). Used only here in the NT with one use in Lxx of Pr 26:24.

Liddell-Scott - to nod, in token of approval, to nod assent, ll.; to approve, sanction, promise, Eur.; *he nodded in sign that it was true*, Aeschin. 2. to make a sign to another to do a thing, to order him to do, Hom. 3. to nod forwards, *he nodded with his helmet*, i.e. it nodded, ll. 4. to incline towards

Acts 18:21 but taking leave of, them and saying, "I will return to you again if God wills," he set sail from Ephesus.

KJV Acts 18:21 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.

- **but taking leave of them** Acts 15:29; Luke 9:61; 2 Cor 13:11
- **I will return to you again** Acts 20:16; Deuteronomy 16:1
- **if God wills** Acts 19:21; 21:14; Mt 26:39; Ro 1:10; 15:32; 1 Cor 4:19; Php 2:19-24; Hebrews 6:3; James 4:15

- [Acts 18 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

But **taking leave of them** - See note above [apotasso](#)) which means to assign to different place, to allot. However in the NT it is only found in the middle voice and has the meaning to bid farewell. This same verb is used in Acts 18:18. Of course as the context shows, Paul did not leave these "hungry" Jews in a lurch, for he left his trusted fellow laborers Priscilla and Aquila, and they would soon receive

I will return to you again if God wills - Paul sought God's will in all matters. He was a God-dependent man, a good pattern for all of God's children to emulate! As Robertson says "Such phrases were common among Jews, Greeks, and Romans, and are today. It is simply a recognition that we are in God's hands."

Robertson - The Textus Receptus has here a sentence not in the best MSS.: "I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem." This addition by D and other documents may have been due to a desire to give a reason for the language in Acts 18:22 about "going up" to Jerusalem. Whether Paul said it or not, it was in the spring when he made this journey with a company of pilgrims probably going to the feast of Pentecost in Jerusalem. We know that later Paul did try to reach Jerusalem for Pentecost (Acts 20:16) and succeeded. As the ship was leaving, Paul had to go, but with the hope of returning soon to Ephesus as he did.

I will return (344) ([anakampto](#) from **aná** = back again + **kámpto** = bend) means literally to bend back or turn back and so to return. The idea in this passage is that Paul would "bend back" his course to Ephesus.

He set sail from Ephesus - From Ephesus he sailed to Caesarea Maritima (see [map above](#))

Set sail (put out to sea) (321) ([anago](#) from **ana** = again, away + **ago** = to lead) literally speaks of movement from a lower to a higher point (Lk 4:5 = Satan "**led Him up** and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.", Mt 17:1 = "led them up on a high mountain", Lk 2:22 = "they **brought Him up** to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord," , Mt 4:1 "Jesus was **led up** by the Spirit"). In the present context in the passive voice the meaning of anago was a nautical technical term meaning to put out to sea (Lk 8:22; Acts 13:13; 16:11; 18:21; 20:3, 13; 21:1, 2; 27:2, 4, 12, 21; 28:10, 11).

Acts 18:22 When he had landed at Caesarea, he went up and greeted the church, and went down to Antioch.

KJV Acts 18:22 And when he had landed at Caesarea, and gone up, and saluted the church, he went down to Antioch.

NLT Acts 18:22 The next stop was at the port of Caesarea. From there he went up and visited the church at Jerusalem and then went back to Antioch.

- [Caesarea](#) Acts 8:40; 10:1,24; 11:11; 18:22; 23:23
- gone Acts 25:1,9 [Jerusalem](#)
- the church Acts 18:21; 11:22; 15:4; 21:17-19
- **went down to Antioch** Acts 11:19-27; 13:1; 14:26; 15:23,30,35
- [Acts 18 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

EPHESUS TO CAESAREA MARITIMA

When he had landed at Caesarea - This was [Caesarea by the Sea](#) which in that day was the [port of call](#) for travelers going to Jerusalem. The distance from Corinth to Jerusalem was about 800+ miles (from Ephesus to Jerusalem it was about 500 miles).

He had landed (2718) ([katerchomai](#) from **kata** = down + **erchomai** = to come) literally means to come or go down as from a higher to a lower place come or go down, descend (Lk 4.31). In the present context **katerchomai** is a nautical technical term for ships and those who sailed in them to 'come down from the high seas' or arrive into harbor (cf Acts 21.3 = "**landed** at Tyre", Acts 27:5 "**landed** at Myra in Lycia").

He went up and greeted the church ([ekklesia](#)) - NLT paraphrase interprets it as "he went up and visited the church at Jerusalem." While the text does not specifically state it, from the context it is clear that Paul **went up** (always the direction when "ascended" the hill into Jerusalem - see "came up" = Acts 11:2, "on our way up to Jerusalem" = Acts 21:15) to **the church** in Jerusalem. Jerusalem is located on [Mount Zion](#), which is 2510 feet above sea level ([see picture](#)).

Toussaint comments that ""**Going up**" and "**going down**" are almost technical terms that refer to going to and leaving Jerusalem's

higher elevation."

Greeted (782) (**aspazomai** from **a** + **spao** = draw out as a sword, pull, breathe) means to enfold in arms, to welcome, to embrace. To salute one (not in a military sense), greet, bid, wish well to. In classical literature **aspazomai** can also be used of physical expressions of welcome, such as "embrace" and "kiss."

Aspazomai in Acts - Acts 18:22; Acts 20:1; Acts 21:7; Acts 21:19; Acts 25:13;

NET Note agrees adding that "The words "at Jerusalem" are not in the Greek text, but are implied by the participle (anabas). The expression "go up" refers almost exclusively to the direction of Jerusalem, while the corresponding "go down" (katebe) refers to directions away from Jerusalem. Both expressions are based on a Hebrew idiom. Assuming Jerusalem is meant, this is another indication of keeping that key church informed. If Jerusalem is not referred to here, then Caesarea is in view. Paul was trying to honor a vow, which also implies a visit to Jerusalem."

[Click to Enlarge](#)

And went down to Antioch - The journey to Antioch is about 308 miles from Jerusalem. [Antioch on the Orontes](#) - see [city map](#). (see also [Orontes River](#) and [map](#)). **Went down** reflects the phrase used when one left Jerusalem which was relatively elevated (cf Acts 8:5, Acts 25:1, 6) . Paul was returning to his home church, the church that had sent him on his first two missionary journeys. Paul has now gone "full circle" on the Second Missionary Journey, for this is the home church from which he and Silas were sent out Luke recording that "After some days Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us return and visit the brethren in every city in which we proclaimed the word of the Lord, and see how they are."(Acts 15:36+)

William Barclay makes an interesting point noting that "We may see very clearly here how much we do not know about Paul. Acts 18:23-19:1 describe a journey of no less than 1,500 miles and it is dismissed with barely a reference. There are untold tales of heroism of Paul which we will never know" ([Acts 18 Commentary](#)) What a fascinating comment but I would add that indeed we may in fact one day know when we can speak with Paul in Heaven (if the Lord wills us to know - certainly there is a suggestion that He does in 1 Cor 13:12 Paul writing "For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known."

Went down (2597) (**katabaino** from **kata** = down + **baino** = go, step) literally means to step down and so to move down or descend. Come down, go down, climb down (Mt 8:1; Mk 1:10; 9:9; 15:30, 32; Lk 19:5f; Acts 25:7; Jn 2:12; 4:47, 49, 51; Ro 10:7; Eph 4:10; James 1:17; Rev 12:12). Get out Mt 14:29. Fall 7:25, 27. Fig. be brought down Mt 11:23. The opposite of **katabaino** is **anabaino** to ascend, come up and both are used in Mt 3:16 when "Jesus **came up** immediately from the water" and "the Spirit of God **descending** (coming down) as a dove and lighting on Him."

Friberg - (1) **literally**; (a) of persons come down, go down, climb down, descend (Mt 27:40); from a boat get out, disembark (Mt 14:29); (b) of things come down (Acts 10:11); of a storm come down, descend on (Lk 8:23); of a fire fall down, come down (Lk 9:54); of a road lead down, go down (Acts 8:26); (2) **figuratively**, of a ruinous downfall fall; passive be brought down (Mt 11:23)

Gilbrant - The primary thrust of **katabainō** is directional and generally depends on the perspective of the writer or of the action described, hence either "go down" or "come down." It is used by classical authors as early as in the writings of Homer (ca. Eighth Century B.C.). In classical Greek there are many uses of **katabainō**. It can mean to come down from upstairs, dismount a horse, to go from the inland parts of the sea, to fall in value, etc. (cf. Bauer; Moulton-Milligan). In the Septuagint **katabainō** occurs nearly 300 times, mostly denoting motion "downward from" or "down to" a certain place, e.g., Jerusalem. The place from which or to which one descends is understood either geographically or spatially, as in Numbers 16:30 and Psalm 55:15 (LXX 54:15). Likewise, natural phenomena such as rain, hail, or storms "come down" from heaven (e.g., Isaiah 55:10). Hence **katabainō** is equivalent to the Hebrew word **yāradh**. New Testament usage of **katabainō** continues the meanings found in classical and Septuagintal literature (e.g., Luke 8:23; Acts 8:26). But the verb also clearly has spiritual and eschatological dimensions. Thus the Holy Spirit "comes down" upon Jesus at His baptism (Matthew 3:16; John 1:32), and every good and perfect gift "cometh down from the Father of lights" (James 1:17). Jesus "came down from heaven" to do the will of His Father who sent Him (John 6:38). The eschatological significance of **katabainō** is found primarily in Revelation where it signals the devil's ultimate destiny (12:12) and the descent of the New Jerusalem (21:2,10). It also describes Christ's parousia in 1 Thessalonians 4:16. ([Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary](#))

Katabaino - 81v in NT - brought down(1), came down(12), come down(15), comes down(4), coming(1), coming down(9), descend(3), descended(6), descending(5), descends(1), falling down(1), fell(1), go(1), go down(4), go downstairs(1), going down(3), got(1), steps down(1), went(1), went down(11).

Matt. 3:16; Matt. 7:25; Matt. 8:1; Matt. 11:23; Matt. 14:29; Matt. 17:9; Matt. 24:17; Matt. 27:40; Matt. 27:42;

Matt. 28:2; Mk. 1:10; Mk. 3:22; Mk. 9:9; Mk. 13:15; Mk. 15:30; Mk. 15:32; Lk. 2:51; Lk. 3:22; Lk. 6:17; Lk. 8:23; Lk. 9:54; Lk. 10:15; Lk. 10:30; Lk. 10:31; Lk. 17:31; Lk. 18:14; Lk. 19:5; Lk. 19:6; Lk. 22:44; Jn. 1:32; Jn. 1:33; Jn. 1:51; Jn. 2:12; Jn. 3:13; Jn. 4:47; Jn. 4:49; Jn. 4:51; Jn. 5:4; Jn. 5:7; Jn. 6:16; Jn. 6:33; Jn. 6:38; Jn. 6:41; Jn. 6:42; Jn. 6:50; Jn. 6:51; Jn. 6:58; Acts 7:15; Acts 7:34; Acts 8:15; Acts 8:26; Acts 8:38; Acts 10:11; Acts 10:20; Acts 10:21; Acts 11:5; Acts 14:11; Acts 14:25; Acts 16:8; Acts 18:22; Acts 20:10; Acts 23:10; Acts 24:1; Acts 24:22; Acts 25:6; Acts 25:7; Rom. 10:7; Eph. 4:9; Eph. 4:10; 1 Thess. 4:16; Jas. 1:17; Rev. 3:12; Rev. 10:1; Rev. 12:12; Rev. 13:13; Rev. 16:21; Rev. 18:1; Rev. 20:1; Rev. 20:9; Rev. 21:2; Rev. 21:10

Over 300 uses of **katabaino** in the Septuagint -

Gen. 11:5 = "LORD came down to see the city " Ge 11:7; Ge 12:10 = "Abram went down to Egypt"; Ge 15:11; 18:21; 24:16,45; 26:2; 28:12; 37:35; 38:1; 42:2-3,38; 43:4,13,15,20; 44:23,26; 45:9; 46:3-4; Exod. 2:5; 3:8; 11:8; 19:10-11,14,18,20-21,24-25; 24:16; 32:1,7,15,34; 33:9; 34:5,29; Lev. 9:22; Num. 11:9,17,25; 12:5; 14:45; 16:30,33; 20:15,28; 34:11-12; Deut. 9:12,15,21; 10:5,22; 26:5; 28:24,43; 31:15; 32:2; Jos. 2:23; 3:13,16; 15:7,10; 17:9; 18:13,16-18; 19:47; 24:4; Jdg. 1:9,34; 3:27-28; 4:14-15; 5:10,13-14; 7:9-11,24; 9:36-37; 11:37; 14:1,5,7,10,19; 15:8,11-12; 16:31; 20:45; Ruth 3:6; 1 Sam. 6:21; 9:25,27; 10:5,8; 13:12,20; 14:36-37; 15:12; 17:8; 22:1; 23:4,6,8,11,20,25; 24:7; 25:1,20; 26:2,10; 30:24; 2 Sam. 1:21; 5:17,24; 11:8-10,13; 17:18; 19:16,20,24,31; 21:15; 22:10; 23:13,20-21; 1 Ki. 1:25,38; 2:8,35; 6:32; 18:44; 21:16,18; 22:2; 2 Ki. 1:4,6,9-12,14-16; 3:12; 5:14; 6:18,33; 7:17; 8:29; 9:16,32; 10:13; 13:14; 1 Chr. 7:21; 11:15,22-23; 2 Chr. 7:1,3; 18:2; 20:16; 22:6; Neh. 3:15; 6:3; 9:13; Job 7:9; 17:16; 36:16; 38:30; Ps. 7:16; 18:9; 22:29; 28:1; 30:3,9; 55:15; 72:6; 88:4; 104:8; 107:23,26; 115:17; 119:136; 133:2-3; 139:8; 143:7; 144:5; Prov. 30:4; Eccl. 3:21; Cant. 4:16; 6:2,11; Isa. 5:14; 14:11,15,19; 25:12; 30:2; 31:1,4; 32:19; 34:5; 38:8; 42:10; 47:1; 52:4; 55:10; 63:14; Jer. 18:2-3; 22:1; 36:12,14; 48:15,18; 50:27; 51:14; Ezek. 26:16,20; 27:29; 30:6; 31:12,14ff; 32:18,21,24,27,29-30; 47:1,8,15; Dan. 4:13,23; Amos 6:2; 8:8; 9:5; Obad. 1:16; Jon. 1:3,5; 2:6; Mic. 1:3,12; Hag. 2:22

Acts 18:23 And having spent some time there, he left and passed successively through the Galatian region and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.

KJV Acts 18:23 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.

- **through the Galatian region and Phrygia** Acts 16:6; 1 Cor 16:1; Gal 1:2; 4:14
- **strengthening** Acts 14:22; 15:32,41; 16:40; Deuteronomy 3:28; Ezra 1:6; Isaiah 35:3,4; Daniel 11:1; Luke 22:32,43; 1 Th 3:2; 4:18; 5:14; Hebrews 12:12,13
- [Acts 18 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



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THE THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY BEGINS

Missionary journeys are summarized below Click for the maps of each journey.

Paul's First Missionary Journey	Acts 13:4-14:28
Paul's Second Missionary Journey	Acts 15:36-18:22
Paul's Third Missionary Journey	Acts 18:23-21:26

And having spent some time there - This would be like a modern missionary coming home for a "furlough," before returning to the field. How long "**some time**" indicates would only be vain speculation, except to say that Luke does not say he spent a long time there as did say in Acts 14:27 when Paul and Barnabas had returned to Antioch after the first missionary journey. So Paul's sojourn in Antioch would appear to be somewhere between "**some time**" and "**a long time!**" Wiersbe suggests "We don't know how long Paul remained in Antioch before leaving on his third missionary journey, but perhaps it was as long as a year." (That seems a little long, but that is a detail regarding which we can only be dogmatic in Heaven when we speak with Paul!)

Wiersbe comments "Arriving at Caesarea, Paul went up to Jerusalem and greeted the believers there. He then went to Antioch and reported to his home church all that God had done on this second missionary journey. He had been gone from Antioch perhaps two years or more, and the saints were no doubt overjoyed to see him and hear about the work of God among the Gentiles. There's no proof, but likely Paul kept reminding the believers in Antioch, "It's always too soon to quit!" That's a good reminder for us to heed today." (Bible Exposition Commentary)

He left and passed successively through the Galatian region and Phrygia - [Open this map](#) and note [Galatia](#) and [Phrygia](#). This trek by Paul is almost identical to that at the beginning of his Second Missionary Journey (see [map of Second Missionary Journey](#)). Paul's final destination was his return to Ephesus (which Luke picks up on again in Acts 19:1ff+), having been forbidden to speak the word there in Acts 16:6. Luke describes the Second Journey in similar terms...

Acts 15:41+ (FROM ANTIOCH) he was traveling through Syria and Cilicia, **strengthening** ([episterizo](#) in [present tense](#)) **the churches** (THE VERY THING HE IS DOING IN Acts 18:23) . (Acts 16:1+) Paul came also to Derbe and to Lystra....4 Now while they (PAUL, SILAS, TIMOTHY) were passing through the cities, they were delivering the decrees which had been decided upon by the apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem, for them to observe. 5 So the **churches were being strengthened** in the faith, and **were increasing in number daily**. 6 They passed through the **Phrygian** and **Galatian** region, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia (Acts 16:1-8+)

Comment - Note that here in Acts 18:23 they are strengthening the disciples in **Galatia and Phrygia**, the very regions the Holy Spirit had forbidden them to speak the word (the Gospel) on their Second Missionary journey (Acts 16:6+). And yet now we see there seem to be established churches in those regions! Assuming this is the case, the most reasonable explanation is that disciples from Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe had taken the Gospel to these regions and God grew up the churches!

Strengthening all the disciples - Luke gives an identical description of Paul's purpose at the beginning of the Second Missionary Journey = **strengthening the** ([episterizo](#)) **churches**. Paul was the consummate disciple maker. He was not content with getting "scalps on his belt" of converts to Christ. He sought to fulfill Jesus' command to **make disciples** ([matheteuo](#) in the aorist imperative = "Just Do It!" - Mt 28:19+) and in order to do so he "re-traced" his steps in order to strengthen all the disciples. Notice "**all**" not some that were especially gifted to preach or teach but "**all**" for Paul knew they were all of potential value to the local body of Christ for each had his or her spiritual gift (or gifts) needed by the body.

Writing to the disciples at Thessalonica Paul used **sterizo** reminding them "we sent Timothy, our brother and God's fellow worker in the gospel of Christ, to **strengthen** (sterizo) and encourage you as to your **faith**." **Faith** can be strengthened! In Romans 10:17+; Paul tells us one way faith can be strengthened declaring "**faith** comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." (1 Th 3:2+)

Polhill points out that "A journey to Ephesus by sea would have been much easier. The foot journey from Antioch to Ephesus was well in excess of 1,000 miles. **Paul set a notable example of the importance of continued nurture of new converts.**" (NAC)(Bold added)

THOUGHT - Does your church have an dynamic program to identify new converts and introduce them to an older, mature saint (Pauls and Paulettes, so to speak)? I am not speaking of getting them into small groups (where the teaching is often questionable). I am talking about introducing them to a man or woman who knows the Scriptures, and who has walked with Jesus, and can walk with them intentionally and intensively for at least 12-24 months, with the goal of preparing the new convert to pass the baton on to a new convert of their own. The church has largely jettisoned Jesus' great commission to make disciples (it has become the "great

omission") and also neglected the first century Pauline pattern of 2 Timothy 2:2. As a result there are many young converts who are lacking in the knowledge of the basic Christian doctrines such as how to read the [Bible inductively](#), why [memorization](#) and [meditation](#) should be ongoing, lifelong disciplines, why we need the Holy Spirit to enable a "supernatural life," (see [Resources on Holy Spirit](#)) Biblical eschatology (based [preferably on a literal interpretation of the Scriptures](#), not an allegorical or spiritualized interpretation - my experience has been many churches have greatly minimized instruction in eschatology saying it is "too confusing" while the cults tend to "major" in their brand of "eschatology"), and I could add to this list but it gives you the idea. (See [Make Disciples 1](#))

Strengthening (4741)([sterizo](#) from [histemi](#) = to stand ; Textus Receptus uses [episterizo](#). The idea of both verbs is relatively similar.) means to make firm or solid, to set fast, to fix firmly in a place, to establish (make firm or stable), to cause to be inwardly firm or committed, to strengthen. The basic idea is that of stabilizing something by providing a support, so that it will not totter, a beautiful metaphorical description of Paul's purpose among these disciples. His desire was that their **faith** would be stabilized, firmly grounded and established so as to support them (e.g., in "the stormy winds of life" including that related to spiritual warfare) and thus eliminate vacillation in those testing times. While Paul was the human instrument God's Spirit used to stabilize these relatively new disciples, ultimately it would be God Himself Who would do the inner work as indicated by Paul's use of the same verb **sterizo** in Romans 16:25+ "Now to Him who is **able** (SPEAKS OF GOD'S SUPERNATURAL DUNAMIS - VERB IS [DUNAMAI](#)- AS "QUANTIFIED" IN Eph 3:20 WHERE PAUL WRITES "TO HIM WHO IS ABLE - AGAIN [DUNAMAI](#) - CP USE IN Jude 1:24+ = "able [[DUNAMAI](#)] to keep you from stumbling"!) to establish (STERIZO) you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past." (See similar divine stabilizing in 1 Th 3:13+; in 2 Th 2:16-17 = there associated with prayer). Finally Paul wrote the "tried" saints in Thessalonica that "the Lord is faithful, and He will **strengthen** ([sterizo](#)) and protect you from the evil one.(2 Th. 3:3)

Sterizo in NT - confirm(1), determined(1), establish(2), established(2), fixed(1), strengthen(6), strengthening(1).

Lk. 9:51; Lk. 16:26; Lk. 22:32 = "when once you have turned again, **strengthen** ([aorist imperative](#) = "Just do it!" "It is urgent!") the things that remain."your brothers."; Acts 18:23; Rom. 1:11; Rom. 16:25; 1 Th. 3:2; 1 Th 3:13; 2 Th 2:17; 2 Th. 3:3; Jas. 5:8; 1 Pet. 5:10; 2 Pet. 1:12; Rev. 3:2 = "Wake up, and **strengthen** ([aorist imperative](#) = "Just do it!" "It is urgent!") the things that remain."

Disciples (3101)([mathetes](#)) the learners, the followers of Jesus. Paul had been used as God's instrument to win them to Christ and now was being used to grow them in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Paul was not just interested in seeing souls converted to Christ but in souls growing in Christ, for he knew that in this way they would in turn become "reproducers."

THOUGHT - I fear that the church has lost sight of this basic Biblical pattern - making disciples. Without meaning to sound too critical, the term I hear far more than **make disciples** is to **mentor**. While there is certainly nothing wrong with mentoring, could we not simply use the term Jesus used and **make disciples**? In fairness, the verb **to mentor** means "to serve as a teacher or trusted counselor." That is wonderful. I would only add that the central axis of this "mentoring wheel" must be the Holy Scriptures and the Holy Spirit (THE MOST TRUSTED COUNSELOR!) So if you are in an accountability group, beware of sharing just your experiences. I have a godly young friend who I recently asked about his spiritual life and he told me he was meeting with a group of young men every Friday morning for accountability. When I asked him if the Word of God was a central part of their meeting time, he said "No, not really. We share a few verses." Beloved, this is not making disciples. By definition disciples are learners and we must give them pure milk and solid food in order to grow spiritually. They should be daily in the Word of God so that it is able to get into them. If you are meeting with one or more saints each week, let me challenge you to at least begin to memorize one verse of Scripture each week! Surely that is not asking too much! And at the end of one year you would have 52 verses in your head and heart. (See [Memorizing His Word](#) and [Memory Verses by Topic](#)) (And don't tell me you are too old to memorize - I am 73 and still seeking to memorize, albeit now much of my memory work involves re-remembering the verses I have memorized over the past 39 years!) But if you do a simple discipline like this in your small group, you will have 52 verses of the Word of Truth that you can then use as the sword of the Spirit (Eph 6:17). And remember the ONLY OFFENSIVE weapon in your spiritual warfare arsenal is the Word of Truth (although I do consider prayer as "offensive," but a not everyone does).

The Apostle Peter makes it very clear that if your mentoring relationship or accountability group are not intentionally and predominantly living in the living and active Word of God, then the chances are very slim that the members of the group are experiencing significant growth in Christ-likeness. One major reason is that the Word is what the Holy Spirit uses to transform us from glory to glory - no intake, no transformation (Read the [commentary notes](#) on 2 Cor 3:18). Here is Peter's passage...

"Like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation." (1 Peter 2:2+)

One of the most gifted teachers I have ever been around was **Dr Howard Hendricks** (I used his video series **Living by the Book** many times in the past). Here is what he had to say about Peter's words. Notice Dr Hendrick's last words **So the first reason for studying Scripture is that it is a means of spiritual growth. There is none apart from the Word. It is God's primary tool to develop you as an individual.**"

Let me give you three words to unpack the truth contained here. Write them in the margin of your Bible, next to this verse. The first one is **attitude**. Peter is describing the attitude of a newborn baby. Just as the baby grabs for the bottle, so you grab for the Book. The baby has to have milk to sustain its life physically; you have to have the Scriptures to sustain your life spiritually.

Jeanne and I had four children, and when they were babies we learned early on that about every three or four hours a timer goes off inside an infant—and you'd better not ignore it. You'd better get a bottle of milk there fast. As soon as you do, there's a great calm. Peter picks up that expressive figure and says that's to be your attitude toward Scripture.

But he also says a word about your **appetite** for the Word. You should "long" for it, he says. You're to crave the spiritual milk of God's Word.

Now to be honest, that's a cultivated taste. Every now and then somebody will say to me, "You know, Professor Hendricks, I'm really not getting very much out of the Bible." But that's a greater commentary on the person than it is on the Book.

Psalms 19:10 says that Scripture is sweeter than honey, but you'd never know that judging by some believers. You see, there are three basic kinds of Bible students. There is the "nasty medicine" type. To them the Word is bitter—yech!—but it's good for what ails them. Then there is the "shredded wheat" kind. To them Scripture is nourishing but dry. It's like eating a bale of hay.

But the third kind is what I call the "strawberries-and-cream" folks. They just can't get enough of the stuff. How did they acquire that taste? By feasting on the Word. They've cultivated what Peter describes here—an insatiable appetite for spiritual truth. Which of these three types are you?

There's a purpose to all of this, which brings us to the third word, **aim**. What is the aim of the Bible? The text tells us: in order that you might grow. Please note—it is not only that you may know. Certainly you can't grow without knowing. But you can know and not grow. The Bible was written not to satisfy your curiosity but to help you conform to Christ's image. Not to make you a smarter sinner but to make you like the Savior. Not to fill your head with a collection of biblical facts but to transform your life.

When our kids were youngsters growing up, we set up a growth chart on the back of a closet door. As they grew, they begged us to measure how tall they had gotten and record it on the chart. It didn't matter how small the increments were; they bounced up and down with excitement to see their progress.

One time after I measured one of my daughters, she asked me the sort of question you wish kids wouldn't ask: "Daddy, why do big people stop growing?"

How could I explain that big people don't stop growing—we just grow in a different direction. I don't know what I told her, but to this day the Lord is still asking me, "Hendricks, are you growing old, or are you growing up?"

How about you? How long have you been a Christian? Nine months? Seven or eight years? Thirty-nine years? The real issue is, how much have you grown up? Step up to God's growth chart and measure your progress. That's what this passage is teaching.

So the first reason for studying Scripture is that it is a means of spiritual growth. There is none apart from the Word. It is God's primary tool to develop you as an individual. (Living by the Book)

Howard Hendricks says "One of the regrets I have as I reflect back on my spiritual journey is that I did not memorize more Scripture as a young person. Eventually, though, I got into the "Topical Memory System," (see [Memory Verses by Topic](#)) a set of memory cards produced by the Navigators. It's available in the King James, the NIV, the New American Standard, any translation you want. The program helps you memorize two verses a week. That's really not much. But stop to think: do that for fifty weeks during a year and you'll have one hundred verses of Scriptures under your belt. Not long after I began a program of Bible memorization, I had to have surgery. The surgery went fine, but I contracted an infection afterward. And it was the type of thing where I wasn't sure whether

I was going to live or die, but I almost wanted to pass on. I found that there was only one thing that sustained me during that period—the Word of God that I had committed to memory. That experience convinced me that memory is the key to meditation. And meditation is the key to changing my outlook." (Living by the Book - page 326)

To encourage you to begin to memorize, let me give you one passage and then a comment (from C H Spurgeon). Before you read the comment ponder the passage asking **what** is the subject, **where** is the subject, and **why** is this subject important? And to apply the passage ask "**Who** would benefit from this passage?" Notice that you are [interrogating with the 5W/H questions](#) (Who, What, When, Where, Why, How?). This discipline takes some training but the benefits are "out of this world!" Another saying I like to use when studying a passage is "Consider the **"5P's"** - **P**ause to **P**onder the **P**assage then **P**ractise it in the **P**ower of the Spirit." Here is the passage...

Psalm 37:31 The law of his God is in his heart; His steps do not slip.

Comment - [See bottom of this page.](#)

Barton - BUILDING UP PEOPLE Paul seemed to view everyone as either a lost soul in need of being evangelized or a Christian in need of being edified and encouraged. His perspective was "I am here to serve others." His every encounter with another individual was a chance to do so in one way or the other. Imagine if your church members made it their daily goal to do this. Because life is often so discouraging, we need others who will come alongside us and help make us stronger and provide the motivation we need to press on. Be someone who builds others up—through acts of kindness, by passing on lessons learned, by admitting failures, by being real.

Acts 18:24 Now a Jew named Apollos, an Alexandrian by birth, an eloquent man, came to Ephesus; and he was mighty in the Scriptures.

KJV Acts 18:24 And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus.

- **Apollos** Acts 19:1; 1 Cor 1:12; 3:5,6; 4:6; 16:12; Titus 3:13
- **Alexandrian** Acts 6:9; 27:6
- **An eloquent man** - Exodus 4:10; Isaiah 3:3; 1 Cor 2:1,2; 2 Cor 10:10
- **mighty** Acts 18:28; 7:22; Ezra 7:6,12; Mt 13:52; Luke 24:19; Colossians 3:16
- [Acts 18 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

APOLLOS A MAN MIGHTY IN THE SCRIPTURES

And so in Luke's historical narrative takes a pause after he "launches" Paul into his Third Missionary Journey. So before giving us detail of Paul's journey he takes a moment to go back to recount what transpired in Ephesus (and Corinth) after Paul departed Priscilla and Aquila, leaving them in Ephesus. It is a fascinating story of a man (Apollos) in "transition" from partial revelation about Jesus to full revelation about Jesus. As they say in the restaurant when a good meal is served "Enjoy!"

Toussaint adds that "What took place in Acts 18:24-28 occurred after Paul left Ephesus (Acts 18:21) and before he returned (Acts 19:1). During this interval a church had been started, probably under the influence of Aquila and Priscilla." (Bible Knowledge Commentary)

Now a Jew named Apollos, an Alexandrian by birth- Apollos' name means "destroyer," ([Holman Bible Dictionary](#)) a name which would prove apropos as he grew to be a man who was **mighty in the Scriptures** (Acts 18:24). And then when he was taught **the way of God more accurately** by Priscilla and Aquila (Acts 18:26) he began to reach his full potential as destroyer of Jewish arguments against Jesus. And so filled with the Holy Word and the Holy Spirit he **powerfully refuted the Jews in public demonstrating by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ** (the Messiah). (Acts 18:28).

THOUGHT - What a beautiful description of Apollos as mighty in the Scriptures. God would you enable myself and all who read this note, to become more and more like Apollos, so that when we come to die they might say about us (for Your glory) that this man or this woman was mighty in the Scriptures. In Jesus' mighty Name.
Amen

An Alexandrian by birth - So like Paul (Saul of Tarsus), Apollos is another Jew not raised in Israel per se. In fact he was raised in a

city that had a large Jewish population and so he was fully exposed to Judaism.

Robertson on Alexandria - Alexander the Great founded this city B.C. 332 and placed a colony of Jews there which flourished greatly, one-third of the population at this time. There was a great university and library there. The Jewish-Alexandrian philosophy developed here of which Philo was the chief exponent who was still living. Apollos was undoubtedly a man of the schools and a man of parts.

Alexandria was the principal port of Egypt located on the western edge of the Nile delta and had a substantial Jewish quarter, the Royal area, the Neapolis, and a necropolis to the far west. Alexandria was known for its cultural and academic pursuits, housing the finest library in the ancient world with over 500,000 volumes. Alexandria became the most important center of Judaism outside of Jerusalem. It was in Alexandria that the Jewish rabbis gathered in to produce the Septuagint (LXX), the Greek translation of the Old Testament completed in about 132 BC. Greek philosophers and mathematicians such as Euclid, Aristarchus, and Eratosthenes worked here. Octavian incorporated it into the Roman empire about 30 B.C. It quickly became second in importance to Rome. Its importance declined about 100 A.D. The fact that the Septuagint had its origin in Alexandria may help explain why Apollos was so mighty in the Scriptures.

An eloquent man - Eloquent (logios) actually can mean either learned or eloquent. **Robertson** says the idea is that he was "either a man of words...or a man of ideas since **logos** was used either for reason or speech." Indeed, it appears Apollos was a man both learned and eloquent. He spoke with skillful logic and convincing delivery and had stores of 'learning' which he could use convincingly.

Eloquent (3052)(logios from **logos**) is found only here in the Bible, describes one who has attractive and convincing speech. **Logios** was used among the Greeks of one who was erudite more than of one who was skilled in words. "Herodotus...says that the Heliopolitans are the *most learned in history* (*lógios*) of all the Egyptians. It was an epithet of Hermes or Mercury, as the god of speech and eloquence and was used of a *learned* person generally.

Gilbrant on **logios** - From the time of Pindar (ca. 518 B.C.) logios appears in classical Greek writings. Sometimes it describes someone who is knowledgeable in a specific subject: "a storyteller," "a narrator," or "a professional" such as a physician. On other occasions it refers to an individual's skill with words (logois) and is used to mean "eloquent." (Ibid)

Liddell-Scott on **logios** - Versed in tales or stories: as Subst. a chronicler, annalist, Hdt. 2. generally learned, erudite, Arist., etc. II. skilled in words, eloquent, Eur., Plut.

Came to Ephesus - In God's **providence** He brought Apollos to this great commercial center, for a special meeting with Priscilla and Aquila. There are no accidents in God's plans for our life beloved!

Robertson on **mighty in the Scriptures** - There is no excuse for ignorance of the Scriptures on the part of preachers, the professed interpreters of the word of God. The last lecture made to the New Testament English class in Southern Baptist Theological Seminary by John A. Broadus was on this passage with a plea for his students to be mighty in the Scriptures. In Alexandria Clement of Alexandria and Origen taught in the Christian theological school.

Apollos is like a NT version of the great OT scribe **Ezra**

This Ezra went up from Babylon, and he was a **scribe skilled** (Lxx = tachus = "quick, swift" Liddell-Scott says "of thought and purpose" quick, rapid) **in the law of Moses**, which the LORD God of Israel had given; and the king granted him all he requested because the hand of the LORD his God was upon him. (Ezra 7:6, see Ezra 7:10+)

And he was mighty in the Scriptures- Far more important than the description of **eloquent** is that **he was mighty in the Scriptures!** What an incredible description! Would it be that all God's preachers (and all disciples for that matter) could be said to be "**mighty in the Scriptures**" irrespective of whether they were "eloquent!" Demosthenes was considered one of the greatest, if not the greatest, Greek orators but he was not mighty in the Scriptures! A many can be eloquent in the flesh and yet have no spiritual power, for Jesus made it very clear "It is the Spirit Who gives life; the flesh profits **nothing**" (Jn 6:63), that is, **nothing** of eternal value! I am always reminded of D L Moody about whom Daniel Akin wrote "**D. L. Moody**, the famed evangelist of the nineteenth century, reportedly had such poor enunciation that he pronounced "Jerusalem" as a two-syllable word. While that story is probably true, Moody's effectiveness as a preacher certainly did not come from his sloppy articulation." (Engaging Exposition).

David Jeremiah adds "**God can use the foolish of this world, those who are not well educated or intelligent.** I think of **D. L. Moody**, a man with little education or polish. He had no degrees after his name, yet in addition to making him a great evangelist, God used him to establish Moody Press, Moody Bible Institute, and Moody radio stations. **D. L. Moody serves as a good example that God's power for a passionate life is not dependent upon human intelligence, wisdom, or education.**" (Life Wide Open)

Jon Courson tells the following story about Mr Moody - One of the great evangelists of all time and founder of the YMCA, D.L. Moody was very impacting but not very polished. A woman came to him after one service and said, "Mr. Moody, I noticed in your message that you made eighteen grammatical mistakes." "Ma'am," Moody replied, "I'm using all the grammar I got for the Lord. What are you doing with yours?" God loves to use the foolish things of the world to confound the wise. He loves to use those who stutter spiritually, who don't have perhaps the greatest skills or the most talent because that way, He gets the glory (1 Corinthians 2:1).

THOUGHT - I give these anecdotal stories on Moody to encourage anyone reading these notes. God is far more interested in your being filled with His Word (and Spirit), then filled with eloquent words! This recalls Paul's own testimony that "my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." (1 Cor 2:4) So dearer reader spend your short sojourn on earth taking in the Word of God and you can rest assured that God will not waste your intake of His precious Word. And as I usually do in this context, I will repeat that there has been no spiritual discipline that has been more fruitful in my life than the discipline of regular internalization of His Holy, eternal Word - See [Memorizing His Word](#) <> [Memory Verses by Topic](#) and [Meditate](#) <> [Primer on Biblical Meditation](#). See also [Filled with His Spirit/Richly Indwelt with His Word](#)

The Greek word for **mighty** is [dunatos](#) the root of which gives us our words "dynamic," "dynamo," and "dynamite," all apt descriptions of Apollos' ability to wield the Scriptures like a spiritual sword (cf Eph 6:17+!) Remember also that when the word **Scriptures** is used in the NT, virtually every use refers to the Old Testament **Scriptures**.

Mighty (able, strong) ([1415](#))([dunatos](#) from **dunamai** = referring to power one has by virtue of inherent ability and resources; see study of [dunamis](#)) means powerful, able, strong. **TDNT** notes that all words deriving from the stem **duna-** have the basic meaning of "being able," of "capacity" in virtue of an ability) pertains to being **capable**, **able** (having the ability to perform some function; having sufficient power, skill, or resources to accomplish an objective), **adept** (highly skilled or well-trained implying aptitude as well as proficiency) or **competent** (being what is necessary; having requisite or adequate ability or qualities).

Dunatos - 32v -

Matt. 19:26; Matt. 24:24; Matt. 26:39; Mk. 9:23; Mk. 10:27; Mk. 13:22; Mk. 14:35; Mk. 14:36; Lk. 1:49; Lk. 14:31; Lk. 18:27; Lk. 24:19; Acts 2:24; Acts 7:22; Acts 11:17; Acts 18:24; Acts 20:16; Acts 25:5; Rom. 4:21; Rom. 9:22; Rom. 11:23; Rom. 12:18; Rom. 15:1; 1 Co. 1:26; 2 Co. 10:4; 2 Co. 12:10; 2 Co. 13:9; Gal. 4:15; 2 Tim. 1:12; Tit. 1:9; Heb. 11:19; Jas. 3:2

Scriptures ([1124](#))([graphie](#) from [grapho](#) = to write; English = graphite - the lead in a pencil!) means first a writing or thing written, a document. As noted above the majority of the NT uses refer to the Old Testament writings, in a general sense of the whole collection when the **plural** (= Scriptures - Mt. 21:42; 22:29; 26:54; Mk. 12:24; 14:49; Lk. 24:27, 32, 45; Jn. 5:39; Acts 17:2, 11; 18:24, 28; Ro 15:4; 2Pe 3:16) is used and other times of a particular passage when the **singular** is used (= the Scripture - Mk. 12:10; 15:28; Lk. 4:21; Jn. 13:18; 19:24, 36f; Acts 1:16; 8:35; Ro 11:2; Jas. 2:8, 23) and is used in such a way that quoting Scripture is understood to be the same as quoting God! When Scripture speaks, God speaks!

Related Resources:

- [Who was Apollos?](#) - Gotquestions
- Whyte's Dictionary of Bible Characters - [Apollos](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Apollos](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Apollos](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Apollos](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Apollos](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Apollos](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Apollos](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Apollos](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Apollos](#)
- The Nuttall Encyclopedia [Apollo](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Apollos](#)

Jack Arnold summarizes Apollos ([click details](#))...

- A Jewish Man (18:24a)

- A Brilliant Man (18:24b)
- An Eloquent Man (18:24c)
- A Scriptural Man (18:24d)
- A Zealous Man (18:25a)
- An Uninformed Man (18:25b)
- A Bold Man (18:26a)
- A Teachable Man (18:26b)
- A Helpful Man (18:27)

Acts 18:25 This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he was speaking and teaching accurately the things concerning Jesus, being acquainted only with the baptism of John;

KJV Acts 18:25 This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.

NET Acts 18:25 He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and with great enthusiasm he spoke and taught accurately the facts about Jesus, although he knew only the baptism of John.

- **This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord** Acts 13:10; 16:17; 19:9,23; Genesis 18:19; Judges 2:22; 1 Samuel 12:23; Ps 25:8,9; Ps 119:1; Isaiah 40:3; Jer 6:16; Hosea 14:9; Mt 3:3; Mark 1:3; 12:14; Luke 3:4; John 1:23
- **being fervent in spirit** Ro 12:11; Colossians 1:28,29; 2 Timothy 2:4; James 5:16
- **being acquainted only with the baptism of John** Acts 19:3; Mt 3:1-17; Luke 3:1-38; John 1:19-36 Mark 1:4-11
- [Acts 18 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

FILLED WITH THE WORD FERVENT IN SPIRIT

As noted below in the present context **spirit** here is not a reference to the Holy Spirit but to the spirit of Apollos.

This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord- Had been instructed is in the [perfect tense](#) indicating this instruction had occurred at some point in time in the past and resulted in an enduring effect on the heart and mind of Apollos. Instructed is in the [passive voice](#) indicating Apollos' instruction came about from an external source (another Jewish teacher? the Spirit?).

Homer Kent - "Before the encounter with Aquila and Priscilla, it is best to regard Apollos in the same class as OT saints. They too hoped for salvation in Messiah and had not rejected him. The entire Book of Acts depicts the transition from Judaism to Christianity. It is not surprising, therefore, to find imperfect forms of faith during those epochal days." ([Jerusalem to Rome - Studies in the Book of Acts](#))

Note that a number of commentators think that Apollos was saved, but was ignorant of some facets of Christianity, a so-called "half-way" Christian. One reason they believe that he was already saved at the outset in Ephesus is because Luke never specifically definitively describes his conversion. That is a good point.

Toussaint comments that "This episode (Acts 18:24-28) and the following (Acts 19:1-7) underscore the transitional nature of this phase of church history. It may be assumed from Acts 19:1-7 that Apollos had not received Christian baptism and probably had not received the Holy Spirit. This section of Acts also indicates that Christianity is the logical outgrowth of the Old Testament and of John the Baptist's ministry. In fact, the message of Paul is superior to that of the spiritual giant John the Baptist. Though John's message had reached as far as Alexandria and Ephesus, John's work was brought to fruition only in Christ.(Bible Knowledge Commentary)

Instructed (2727) ([katecheo](#) from **katá** = down or intensive + **echeo** = sound, our English "echo") (see related word [sounded forth = execheo](#)) means to literally to sound down on or into the ears. From this the derived meaning is "to inform" or "to instruct orally." The idea is to re-sound, to re-echo, to teach by by insistent repetition into the ears as the Arabs do when learning the Koran (learning aloud)(Robertson). **Apollos** had been systematically instructed through catechetical and synagogue instruction. This formal instruction in **the way of the Lord** was the basis of the critical discrimination or discernment. **Katecheo** is the source of our English word "[catechism](#)" and those doing the teaching who were called **catechists** and those receiving it were called **catechumens**.

Catechized is idea of oral instruction especially associated with teaching by repetition. Both at home and in the synagogues, Jewish boys in particular were systematically and thoroughly instructed out of the Law. The Law was read and explained every Sabbath. Not only rabbis but also many other Jewish men memorized large

portions of the OT, which they often recited in public as a demonstration of piety. It is interesting to see the distinction between the ancient Jews who considered wisdom to consist of acting according to the knowledge one had, whereas the Greeks equated wisdom with knowledge. By New Testament times, however, many Jews, especially the religious leaders, had in practice accepted the Greek view of wisdom. Whether they did so intentionally or not, the consequence was that they felt content with merely knowing God's law and had little desire or motivation to obey it. **They knew much but obeyed little.** Lord, by Thy Spirit, so instruct and enable us that this statement might not be true of us (writer or readers), in Jesus' Name. Amen

The phrase **way of the Lord** occurs 15x in the **NAS** -

Gen. 18:19; Jdg. 2:22; 2 Ki. 21:22; Prov. 10:29; Jer. 5:4; Jer. 5:5; Ezek. 18:25; Ezek. 18:29; Ezek. 33:17; Ezek. 33:20; Matt. 3:3; Mk. 1:3; Lk. 3:4; Jn. 1:23; Acts 18:25. See the synonymous phrase **the way of God** in Acts 18:26.

And being fervent in spirit - "Enthusiastic spirit" (NLT) , "with great enthusiasm" (NET). Apollos was so to speak "boiling" in his spirit (not the Holy Spirit but his human spirit). The [present tense](#) describe Apollos as continually "bubbling over" with spiritual fervor, great eagerness and burning zeal to speak of Jesus, the sweetest Name there is. In the only other NT use of this same verb Paul describes believers as those who should be "**fervent** (zeo in [present tense](#)) in spirit." (Ro 12:11⁺)

THOUGHT - Apollos' enthusiasm regarding the Scriptures and **the things concerning Jesus** begs the question of all God's children - **Am I fervent and enthusiastic in spirit to tell others about Jesus? Or am I apathetic, indifferent, lackadaisical about telling others?** Beloved, if the latter describes you, take a moment and ask God to send the wind of His Spirit to re-ignite afresh the fire in your heart (2 Ti 1:6^{NLT+}) like you experienced in those early days when you first fell in love with Jesus! God will answer affirmatively your sincere, heart-felt request (because of 1 Jn 5:14, 15⁺). But then go forth filled with (Eph 5:18⁺) and thus enabled by His Spirit to redeem the time (Eph 5:16⁺) and to speak boldly of the **things concerning Jesus**. Souls around us are dying and going to an eternal separation from God (2 Th 1:8-9) and we have the "[life preserver](#)" (the Gospel) but are [reticent](#) and hesitant to throw it out to them. Whether they reach out by faith to take hold of the life preserver is not up to us, but at least we have give them an opportunity! Father awaken slumbering saints and give us church bodies that are "boiling" in spirit and zealous to share the things concerning Jesus! Amen.

Fervent (2204)(zeo) means literally well up, bubble, boil; seethe, from the sound of boiling water. Figuratively, zeo referred to spiritual fervor describing one who is very eager, showing enthusiasm, with burning zeal. Only 2 uses (Acts 18:25; Ro 12:11 = "fervent in spirit").

Liddell-Scott - to boil, seethe, of water, Hom.; le,bhj zei/ the kettle boils, Il. 2. metaphorically. to boil or bubble up, of the sea, Hdt.; of passion, like Lat. *fervere*, Aesch., Soph. 3. c. gen. to boil up or over with a thing, Il. Causal, to make to boil

Gilbrant - Emotions such as love, anger, etc., are described in this way. Its connection with the Holy Spirit is a specifically Christian use of the term. In Romans 12:11 Paul used the term to describe those who were "fervent in spirit; serving the Lord." (Ibid)

He was speaking and teaching accurately the things concerning Jesus - **Speaking and teaching** are both in the [imperfect tense](#) indicating that Apollos repeated spoke and taught about Jesus. "He taught accurately what he knew, a fine gift for any preacher." (Robertson)

Accurately (199)(akribos) means characterized by exactness, thoroughness, precision, accuracy in addition to the associated idea of looking, examining, and investigating something with great care and alertness. **Akribos** pertains to strict conformity to a norm or standard, involving both detail and completeness, with focus on careful attention. In context **akribos** refers to ethical behavior with a focus on careful attention especially regarding the dangers and deceptions that continually assault us from our mortal enemies, the world, the flesh and the devil.

Akribos - 8v - accurately(1), careful*(1), carefully(2), full well(1), more accurately(1), more exact(1), more thorough investigation(1), more thoroughly(1).

Matt. 2:8; Lk. 1:3; Acts 18:25; Acts 18:26; Acts 23:15; Acts 23:20; Acts 24:22; Eph. 5:15; 1 Thess. 5:2

Being acquainted only with the baptism of John - John's baptism was one of preparation for Jesus' coming. In other words, Apollos understood God's Old Covenant revelation up to the time of John the Baptist, but was ignorant of the baptism of the Spirit (compare Jesus' promise in Acts 1:5+ with Acts 2:2-3+) which marked the coming of the New Covenant and the birth of the Church, the body of Christ. It is worth noting that Jesus taught His Jewish disciples who were steeped in the Old Covenant that there was something else coming which was greater and better than the Old Covenant. Luke records some of Jesus' last words with His

disciples before His ascension (and remember last words are ALWAYS important, especially if the speaker is Jesus! Last words should always be lasting words!)...

Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised (THE HOLY SPIRIT - Read Lk 24:49+), "Which," He said, "you heard of from Me; for John baptized with water (THE OLD COVENANT WAS STILL IN EFFECT), but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now (THE NEW COVENANT WOULD BE INAUGURATED BY THE BAPTISM OF THE DISCIPLES BY THE SPIRIT AT THE FEAST OF PENTECOST)." (Acts 1:4-5+)

And so these passages beg the question - Was Apollos saved at this point? We know he was teaching accurately the things concerning Jesus, but this could refer to his teaching of the Messianic Prophecies which were fulfilled in Jesus the Messiah. John MacArthur is one who believes that Apollos was not yet truly regenerate and was not born again until Priscilla and Aquila **took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.**

Toussaint - His doctrine regarding Jesus was accurate but deficient. Probably this means Apollos did not know about the Holy Spirit's baptism. John's baptism symbolized cleansing by God because of repentance toward God (cf. Acts 19:4). But Christian baptism pictures union with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection by means of Spirit baptism (cf. Ro 6:3-10; 1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:27; Col. 2:12). (Bible Knowledge Commentary)

Robertson - Apollos knew only what the Baptist knew when he died, but John had preached the coming of the Messiah, had baptized him, had identified him as the Son of God, had proclaimed the baptism of the Holy Spirit, but had not seen the Cross, the Resurrection of Jesus, nor the great Day of Pentecost.

John MacArthur writes "That Apollos **had been instructed in the way of the Lord** does not mean he was already a Christian (cf. v. 26). The phrase **the way of the Lord** is an Old Testament term for instruction in the things of God. God said of Abraham in Genesis 18:19: "I have chosen him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing righteousness and justice; in order that the Lord may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken about him." Judges 2:22 describes God's intent "to test Israel" to see "whether they will keep the way of the Lord to walk in it as their fathers did, or not." In Psalm 25:8-9 the psalmist declares, "Good and upright is the Lord; therefore He instructs sinners in the way. He leads the humble in justice, and He teaches the humble His way." The way of the Lord, then, was the path of spiritual and moral standards God expected His people to follow (cf. 1 Sa 12:23; 2 Ki 21:22; Pr 10:29; Jer. 5:4-5)....**Apollos accepted John the Baptist's message that Messiah was coming.** He even believed that Jesus was that Lamb of God (John 1:29) and Messiah. He surely expounded with force and persuasion the Scriptures that pointed to Jesus. But he did not understand the significance of Christ's death and resurrection. Nor was he acquainted with the coming of the Spirit and the birth of the church on the Day of Pentecost. In short, he was a redeemed Old Testament saint; he was saved but was not able to be called a Christian yet. (MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Acts)

Darrell Bock on John's **baptism** - John's baptism is unique to him and is grounded in his prophetic office. It is a call to commitment and includes a recognition that God is coming. It is neither the washing of a separated covenant community (Qumran) nor an initiatory rite (Gentile [proselytes](#)). Unlike traditional Judaism, it is not a religious act related to bringing sacrifices. Rather, it is an affirmation, a washing that looks with hope for God's (**Ed**: Messiah's) coming and lives in light of one's relationship to Him (regarding this future looking and living see Bock's note below on meaning of **forgiveness of sins** associated with John's baptism as recorded in Luke 3:3+). This attitude is much like the NT emphasis on a life of faith. ([Baker Exegetical Commentary - Luke](#)).

So John's baptism is a prophetic eschatological washing; that is, it is a baptism of promise that looks to the greater baptism of the Spirit (Schürmann 1969: 158–60). It points forward to the cleansing that comes to those who respond to Messiah's offer with faith. This association of Spirit and cleansing was mentioned in the OT (Ezek. 36:25–27[±]; Zech. 13:1[±]).....In short, **John's baptism was a step on the way to the Promised One's forgiveness.** The repentance in view here will not only make one alter the way one lives, but also will cause one to see "the Mightier One to come" as the promise of God. To submit to this baptism is to confess one's commitment to this perspective. **This is the essence of John's baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.** ([See Bock's complete note](#) from the [Baker Exegetical Commentary-Luke](#))

I agree with Dr Bock's excellent analysis and it helps one understand Dr MacArthur's premise that while Apollos was mighty in the Scriptures, he was not yet actually saved by grace through faith. What a formidable advocate Apollos was to become once He received the empowering Holy Spirit Who would enable him to take his incredible knowledge of **the Word of Truth** and use it as **the sword of the Spirit** (Eph 6:17[±])!

Barton - ON FIRE FOR GOD Apollos taught with great fervor (18:25). How can we capture and maintain Apollos's zeal? The key is conviction. When beliefs move from our heads down into our hearts, when we are overpowered by truth and we become convinced

in our souls that a thing is true and that it matters, then we become passionate. This is not a plea for us to try to conjure up feelings or attempt to live on an emotional high. But it is a warning for us to monitor our spiritual temperature. We must do the things that will increase our passion for God and avoid things that tend to sap us of our spiritual enthusiasm. If we don't worship or witness, if we don't experience God or spend time with new believers who are joyful and exuberant about their newfound relationship with God, we can very easily become stagnant and cold

THE BAPTISM OF JOHN

The following article is from Gotquestions.org, a trustworthy site for sound doctrine.

Question: "What was the meaning and importance of the baptism of John the Baptist?"

Answer: Though today the word *baptism* generally evokes thoughts of identifying with Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, baptism did not begin with Christians. For years before Christ, the Jews had used baptism in ritual cleansing ceremonies of Gentile proselytes. John the Baptist took baptism and applied it to the Jews themselves—it wasn't just the Gentiles who needed cleansing. **Many believed John's message and were baptized by him** (Matthew 3:5–6) (**ED: I WOULD QUESTION THIS STATEMENT THAT "MANY BELIEVED" - TWO REASONS - JOHN SAYS HE CAME TO HIS OWN AND HIS OWN DID NOT RECEIVE HIM in John 1:11+. SECONDLY IF "MANY BELIEVED" IN HIM WHY DID SO MANY REJECT HIM AND CRUCIFY HIM? I WOULD AGREE THAT SOME UNDOUBTEDLY BELIEVED BUT QUESTION IF IT WAS TRULY "MANY." SEE MACARTHUR'S COMMENTS BELOW**). The baptisms John performed had a specific purpose.

In Matthew 3:11, John the Baptist mentions the purpose of his baptisms: "I baptize you with water for repentance." Paul affirms this in Acts 19:4: "John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the One coming after him, that is, in Jesus." John's baptism had to do with repentance—it was a symbolic representation of changing one's mind and going a new direction. "Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River" (Matthew 3:6). Being baptized by John demonstrated a recognition of one's sin, a desire for spiritual cleansing, and a commitment to follow God's law in anticipation of the Messiah's arrival.

There were some, like the Pharisees, who came to the Jordan to observe John's ministry but who had no desire to step into the water themselves. John rebuked them sternly: "When he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: 'You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance'" (Matthew 3:7–8). Even the religious leaders needed to repent of their sin, although they saw no need of it.

[Christian baptism today](#) also symbolizes repentance, cleansing, and commitment, but Jesus has given it a different emphasis. Christian baptism is a mark of one's identification with the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. It is representative of a cleansing that is complete and a commitment that is the natural response of one who has been made new. Jesus' sacrifice on the cross completely washes away our sins, and we are raised to new life empowered by the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 5:17–21; Romans 6:1–11). With John's baptism, a person repented of sin and was therefore ready to place his faith in Jesus Christ. John's baptism foreshadowed what Jesus would accomplish, much as the Old Testament sacrificial system did.

John prepared the way for Christ by calling people to acknowledge their sin and their need for salvation. His baptism was a purification ceremony meant to ready the peoples' hearts to receive their Savior. (Gotquestions.org)

John MacArthur that "while there were various ceremonial washings in Judaism (cf. Heb. 6:2+), there was no baptism of Jews. But while there was no baptism of Jews in Judaism, the Jews did baptize Gentile converts to Judaism (Gentile [proselytes](#)). Thus, those who "were being baptized by [John] in the Jordan River, as they confessed their sins" (Mt. 3:6), were publicly acknowledging that they were no better than the Gentiles. Their sins had separated them from the true and living God (cf. Isa 59:2) and cut them off from covenant blessings. For Jewish people to place themselves on the same level as the despised Gentiles was astonishing, and demonstrates the power of John's preaching. **Unfortunately, few being baptized by John were truly repentant.** The nation would later reject Jesus when He failed to meet their expectations of a political Messiah, who would deliver them from the Romans. Others were superficial from the start....**But those few (Mt 7:13–14+) who acknowledged their sinful condition and alienation from God and turned to Him in repentant faith were saved.** ([Luke Commentary](#)) (Bolding added)

MacArthur on Mark 1:4 - Multitudes from **Jerusalem**, Jericho, and **all the country of Judea** came to hear John, to confess their sins, and to be baptized by him. By **confessing their sins**, the people agreed with God that they had broken His law and needed to be forgiven. But in the end, this revival proved to be largely superficial Sadly, the nation that flocked to John at the peak of his

popularity would later reject the Messiah to Whom his whole ministry pointed. (MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Mark 1-8) (Underlining added).

Related Resource:

- Darrell Bock's discussion of John's baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins
- [What are the seven baptisms mentioned in the Bible, and what do they mean?](#)

Acts 18:26 and he began to speak out 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.

KJV Acts 18:26 And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.

NET Acts 18:26 He began to speak out fearlessly in the synagogue, but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained the way of God to him more accurately.

- **he began to speak out boldly in the synagogue.** Acts 14:3; Isaiah 58:1; Ephesians 6:19,20
- **Priscilla and Aquila heard him,** Acts 18:2,3
- **explained to him the way of God more accurately.** Acts 8:31; 28:23; Proverbs 1:5; 9:9; 22:17,18; 25:12; Mt 18:3,4; Mark 10:15; Luke 19:26; 24:27; John 7:17; 1 Cor 3:18; 8:2; 12:21; Hebrews 6:1; 2 Peter 3:18
- [Acts 18 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

APOLLOS' BOLD SPEECH IN THE SYNAGOGUE

And he began to speak out boldly in the synagogue- Luke characterizes Apollos' speaking as bold which clearly indicates he was speaking truths that might "ruffle the feathers" of some of the Jews in the synagogue. In short, he was speaking about Jesus as the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies. His bold speech was based on his firm conviction and confidence in the veracity or truth of the Scriptures which pointed to Jesus as the long awaited Jewish Messiah.

Boldly (boldness) (3955) (**parrhesiazomai** from **parrhesia** = freedom or frankness in speaking or confident in spirit and demeanor <> **pas** = all + **rheis** = speech) means literally speaking out of every word and conveys the idea idea of freedom to say all and thus means to speak freely, openly, boldly, fearlessly, without constraint. The Greeks used this word for speaking in a democratic assembly. This verb is always used in the NT of speaking. It means to be bold and courageous in one's speech reflecting an attitude of openness that comes from freedom and lack of fear.

Gilbrant say **parrhesiazomai** "refers to fearless and frank speaking with the freedom to speak openly even in the face of opposition. A full citizen (though not a slave) in the Greek city-states had the right to express any opinion freely in the public assembly. The word is also used to express the openness of intimate conversation with a friend. Later, the philosophical school of Cynicism used the word to denote the freedom of speech that someone who is morally pure has; he need not fear the public scrutiny of his life which his words might incite." (Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary)

As **Morris** adds that **parrhesiazomai** "denotes the state of mind when the words flow freely, the attitude of feeling quite at home with no sense of stress or strain. This attitude includes both boldness and confidence."

But (de) is a term of contrast which often marks a "change of direction." Indeed, the already powerful ministry of Apollos was about to change directions from emphasis of the Old Covenant passages to emphasis on the New Covenant entered into by grace through faith in Messiah with receipt of the Holy Spirit and the beginning of the Church with Jew and Gentile now one in Christ, a mystery not revealed in the Old Testament (cf Eph 3:4, 5, 6+). Quite a dramatic change in direction!

When Priscilla and Aquila heard him - It is notable that if Priscilla and Aquila were Christians (which they almost certainly were by this time having spent time with Paul making tents -- they were probably believers even before that time) but here we see them worshiping in the Jewish Synagogue. So what is going on here? This fact makes the point that Judaism was more than a religion (it was that) but was also a way of life, a way that was always meant to be distinct from the pagan way of life. And for those who had been raised all their lives and then became followers of the Jewish Messiah, their old way of life was still very much a part of who they were. So it is not surprising to see during this time of transition from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant (which is in effect what the book of Acts [chronicles](#)), that even Jewish believers were drawn back to certain aspects of the their Judaism. For example,

recall the actions of Peter and John in Acts 3:1+ who "were going up to the temple at the ninth hour, the hour of prayer." Here we see Jewish men who were clearly genuine believers in Jesus and yet they are still attending the hours of prayer in the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem.

THOUGHT - Old ways die hard, even for those who are new creations in Christ (2 Cor 5:17⁺). We need to remember this when someone comes to Christ (including ourselves!) and still continues to manifest some of the tendencies they had before they were born again. I can relate to this for when I became a new creature in Christ, some of my old ways almost immediately disappeared (my occasional cursing became almost non-existent, except when I fell suddenly into a fit of anger), but many of my old habits, especially what I allowed my eyes to look at (cf Ps 101:3), persisted and necessitated daily death to self (some days being better than others! Lk 9:23+) enabled by daily dependence on the Spirit for as Paul says in Romans 8:13⁺ **"by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body."** Mark it down beloved, (1) you **must continually** ([present tense](#) = continually; [active voice](#) = the choice is yours, a choice of your will, albeit somehow even your "will/desire" is mysteriously energized/enabled by the Spirit as described in Php 2:13NLT[±]) **put to death the deeds of the body** and (2) you **ABSOLUTELY CANNOT** put to death the deeds of the body by relying on your fallen flesh! Think about it! It is not even logical for fallen flesh to kill fleshly desires. I was an infectious disease expert in my former life and well remember what I used to teach about parasites - they do not attempt to kill their host lest they also die! Do you see the analogy? Fallen flesh is like a parasite and it will not kill those very deeds that feed it! Woe! Now are you convinced that you need DAILY (yea, moment by moment) to rely WHOLLY on the HOLY SPIRIT to put the deeds of the body to death? (Php 2:13NLT[±]) I hope that question is now [rhetorical](#) in your mind and heart.

They took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately - KJV = "expounded unto him." Tactfully taking Apollos aside privately and away from the other Jews in the synagogue would have allowed Priscilla and Aquila to teach him undisturbed. It is notable that Luke uses the same word **accurately** ([akribos](#)) to describe Apollos' **teaching regarding the things concerning Jesus** (Acts 18:25) but in the present passage adds the phrase **"more accurately."** ("**more**" is not in Greek but is clearly implied). In other words, Apollos was accurate in teaching what he knew, but his teaching lacked truths regarding which Priscilla and Aquila were acquainted, in large part because of their special time with the apostle Paul. Undoubtedly, this couple had become genuine believers in the New Covenant in Jesus' blood and had experienced the gift of the Holy Spirit at the time of their conversion (1 Cor 12:13, Ro 8:9⁺). And since Apollos was conversant only with the truths about Jesus up to the time of the **baptism of John**, (by [inference](#)) he was not familiar with historical truths that transpired (and are now recorded for us in the book of Acts) after the **baptism of John**. Did Apollos fully understand the crucifixion of Jesus (prophesied in the Old Testament) and the [doctrine of substitutionary atonement](#) effected by the death of Christ? Did he understand the fullness of truth of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, and that this truth was absolutely critical to the life of a believer in the New Covenant? (e.g., read 1 Cor 15:12-14, 15) Luke does not elaborate on the **more** accurate aspects of **the way of God** this godly couple taught Apollos. We will have to wait to ask Apollos in Heaven!

MacArthur comments "That the mighty preacher and scholar would consent to be taught by a lowly tentmaker and his wife attests to his godly humility."

THOUGHT - Apollos' who himself was eloquent and might in the Scriptures and yet was willing to submit to be taught by others begs an important question - Regardless of your age, are you willing to submit to others and be taught? This question is especially apropos to the young reformed movement (men in their 30's, now moving into their 40's - written 2019). My experience is that these younger men do not put much stock in what their older, more mature brethren (some having walked with Jesus almost as long as these young men have been alive!) have to say or offer. How ludicrous it would have been for Timothy to say to Paul "Thanks for your input but I'm good!" Does this unwillingness to submit reflect a touch of spiritual pride? I'll let you be the judge on that one! In any event this failure to be willing to be taught by more mature disciples of Christ is a sad circumstance and is surely a tragic loss for the body of Christ, as older men have far more experience with the trials, tribulations and triumphs of the Christian life! O well, I will get off my "soapbox!" Thankfully Apollos was willing to humbly submit to a couple of tent-makers!

Compare comments A T Robertson, an older Commentary (originally published in 1927) - Instead of abusing the young and brilliant preacher for his ignorance they (particularly Priscilla) gave him the fuller story of the life and work of Jesus and of the apostolic period to fill up the gaps in his knowledge. It is a needed and delicate task, this thing of teaching gifted young ministers. They do not learn it all in schools. More of it comes from contact with men and women rich in grace and in the knowledge of God's ways. (Word Pictures in the New Testament)

Barton - TOO PROUD TO LEARN? Although his natural abilities could have made him proud, Apollos proved

himself willing to learn (18:26). God used Priscilla and Aquila, fresh from months of traveling with and learning from Paul, to give Apollos the complete gospel. Because Apollos did not hesitate to be a student, he became an even better teacher. How much does your willingness to learn affect God's efforts to help you become all he wants you to be? Be humble enough to let others teach you truths and skills that can make you a more effective Christian witness.

The specific phrase **way of God** occurs only 4x in the Bible (in NAS) - Matt. 22:16; Mk. 12:14; Lk. 20:21; Acts 18:26. See synonymous phrase **way of the Lord** in Acts 18:25.

Took aside (4355) (**proslambano**) means to take hold of and lead aside (as Peter did to Jesus in Mt 16:22, Mk 8:32).

Explained (1620) (**ektithemi** from **ek** = out + **tithemi** = to place) means literally to place outside. It was used in this literal sense to describe newborn babies left out to die from exposure. It is used figuratively here in Acts 18:26 where it means to set forth, to provide additional information, conveying a deliberate and detailed narrative, in short "to explain." and thus to explain. **Ektithemi** is used with this same meaning in Acts 11:4+ ("**explain to them in orderly sequence**") and Acts 28:23+ ("**he was explaining** to them by solemnly testifying about the kingdom of God").

Utley on orderly sequence - It has the connotation of explaining something in a logical, temporal, or sequential order. This fits Luke's research method (cf. Luke 1:1-4), personality, and professional training (physician).

Ektithemi - 4x - explain(1), explained(1), explaining(1), set outside(1). Acts 7:21; Acts 11:4; Acts 18:26; Acts 28:23

Accurately (199) (**akribos**) means characterized by exactness, thoroughness, precision, accuracy in addition to the associated idea of looking, examining, and investigating something with great care and alertness. **Akribos** pertains to strict conformity to a norm or standard, involving both detail and completeness, with focus on careful attention. In context **akribos** refers to ethical behavior with a focus on careful attention especially regarding the dangers and deceptions that continually assault us from our mortal enemies, the world, the flesh and the devil. This word is used in the Septuagint when Daniel tells King Nebuchadnezzar that his "dream is trustworthy (Lxx - akribos, another version of Lxx has alethinos - true, dependable)." (Da 2:45)

Akribos - 8v - accurately(1), careful*(1), carefully(2), full well(1), more accurately(1), more exact(1), more thorough investigation(1), more thoroughly(1).

Matt. 2:8; Lk. 1:3; Acts 18:25; Acts 18:26; Acts 23:15; Acts 23:20; Acts 24:22; Eph. 5:15; 1 Thess. 5:2

Barton - THE POWER OF HOSPITALITY Priscilla and Aquila took Apollos aside and taught him (18:26). In an age when the focus is mostly on what happens between husband and wife, Aquila and Priscilla are an example of what can happen through husband and wife. Their effectiveness together speaks about their relationship with each other. Their hospitality opened the doorway of salvation to many. All their lives they used their home as a warm place for training and worship. Back in Rome years later, they hosted one of the house churches that developed (Romans 16:3-5). The Christian home is still one of the best tools for spreading the gospel. Do guests see Christ (and meet him) in your home? (LAC)

Acts 18:27 And when he wanted to go across to Achaia, the brethren encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him; and when he had arrived, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace,

KJV Acts 18:27 And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace:

NET Acts 18:27 When Apollos wanted to cross over to Achaia, the brothers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him. When he arrived, he assisted greatly those who had believed by grace,

NLT Acts 18:27 Apollos had been thinking about going to Achaia, and the brothers and sisters in Ephesus encouraged him to go. They wrote to the believers in Achaia, asking them to welcome him. When he arrived there, he proved to be of great benefit to those who, by God's grace, had believed.

- **the brethren** Acts 9:27; Ro 16:1,2; 1 Cor 16:3; 2 Cor 3:1,2
- **the brethren encouraged him** Colossians 4:10; 3 John 1:8-10
- **he greatly helped those** 1 Cor 3:6,10-14; 2 Cor 1:24; Php 1:25
- **who had believed through grace** John 1:12,13; Ro 1:5; 1 Cor 15:10; Ephesians 2:8-10; Php 1:29; Colossians 2:12; 2 Th 2:13,14; Titus 3:4-6; James 1:16-18; 1 Peter 1:2,3

- [Acts 18 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

And when he wanted to go across to Achaia- "Apollos had been thinking about going to Achaia" (NLT) He desired to go from Ephesus to [Achaia](#). Acts 19:1 specifies that he went to **Corinth** (korinthos) which was the capital of [Achaia](#) and was about 245 miles due west of Ephesus across the Adriatic Sea.

Wanted (disposed, wished)([1014](#))([boulomai](#)) refers to a settled desire, one born of or springing from **reason** and not from **emotion**.

The brethren encouraged him and wrote to the disciples ([mathetes](#)) **to welcome him** - Were Silas and Timothy still in Corinth? We do not know. The believers in Ephesus wrote what amounts to a "letter of [commendation](#)" to the disciples in Corinth (This may be the letter to which Paul refers in 2 Cor 3:1). Notice that the believers in Jesus in Corinth are referred to as **disciples**. To reiterate disciples are not a special class of believers. All believers in Jesus are disciples of Jesus and vice versa.

The CSB translation interprets the encouragement as directed to the disciples "the brothers wrote to the disciples urging them to welcome him," but that seems less likely in the context.

Encouraged ([4389](#))([protrepo](#) from **pro** = toward + **trepo** = to turn) is used only here and literally means to turn forward, to propel, to urge on, to urge forward (to persuade), to impel (morally), to promote a particular course of action. **Zodhiates** comments "In the NT only in the middle [protrépomai](#), to cause one to turn himself, as it were, toward action."

Welcome ([588](#))([apodechomai](#) from **apo** = from or intensifier + **dechomai** = to take from another for oneself, to receive, to welcome) means to receive kindly or hospitably (Luke 8:40; Acts 15:4; 18:27); of God's Word, to receive or embrace heartily, put out the "welcome mat" for it (Acts 2:41); of benefits, to receive or accept gratefully (Acts 24:3). **Robertson** says "Peculiar to Luke. To receive with pleasure."

Gilbrant - Greek writers of the classical period understood this deponent verb to mean "to accept," (of teaching) "to follow," or "to be satisfied." Secondly it meant "to receive back, recover" (Liddell-Scott). In Hellenistic Greek the term came to mean "to welcome" or "to receive" someone or something (e.g., Philo, Josephus); it also can mean "to acknowledge favorably" or "to praise" someone (Bauer).

And when he had arrived, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace - "he proved to be of great benefit to those who, by God's grace, had believed." (NLT) This is an interesting designation of disciples as "those who had believed through grace," clearly reminding all of us that all that is transpiring is by grace through faith (Eph 2:8-9). How did Apollos help them? Undoubtedly by strengthening their faith with his powerful preaching including his peerless command of how the OT Scriptures pointed to the Messiah (cf Ro 10:17).

Helped ([4820](#))([sumballo](#) from **sun** = together + **ballo** = throw, cast) literally means to throw together and then "to converse, to carry on a discussion," or "to consider carefully and draw conclusions" about a certain matter. Other meanings include "to dispute" or "quarrel" with someone, even to the point of engaging in a fight. As in the present context [sumballo](#) can mean to offer help, to be of assistance, give assistance.

Sumballo - confer(1), conversing(1), helped(1), meet(1), met(1), pondering(1). Lk. 2:19; Lk. 14:31; Acts 4:15; Acts 17:18; Acts 18:27; Acts 20:14

Fausset's Bible Dictionary has this note on [Apollos](#)- Apollos's main excellency was as builder up,' rather than founder, of churches. His humility and teachableness in submitting, with all his learning, to the teaching of Aquila and even of Priscilla (a woman), his fervency and his power in Scripture, and his determinably staying away from where his well deserved popularity might be made a handle for party zeal, are all lovely traits in his Christian character.

Spurgeon - "After he arrived, he was a great help to those who by grace had believed." What Apollos did afterwards, we do not know. His work was not a superfluous one, or it would not have been mentioned here with commendation. In what respects do those who have believed through grace need help? Most new believers need help in further instruction, and Apollos "was competent in the use of the Scriptures" (v. 24). Further, he was "fervent in spirit, he was speaking and teaching accurately about Jesus" (v. 25). Young Christians cannot be supposed to know much when they first come to Christ, but they come to be disciples—that is, to be learners. They know the three Rs—Ruin, Redemption, and Regeneration; and that is by no means a small part of spiritual education. But they do not know these elementary truths of God as fully as they might know them—and even about these things they will be the better for more teaching. Often they need somebody to open up passages of Scripture, to expound to them the faith, and to help them to compare spiritual things with spiritual. Apollos also helped them by defending them against opponents. We find that "he vigorously refuted the Jews in public, demonstrating through the Scriptures that Jesus is the Messiah" (v. 28). In doing this, he screened believing Gentiles from many a rude assault. He disputed with all his might and with great fervor of spirit against those who tried to subvert the faith of the new Christians.

Barton - THE DANGER OF GIFTS As often happens, Apollos's abilities eventually created a problem. Some of the Corinthians became more enamored with Apollos than with his message. An Apollos fan club developed. There is no evidence to suggest that Apollos encouraged this behavior. And Paul never blamed Apollos for this development. Still, Paul eventually had to confront the Corinthians about their divisiveness (see 1 Corinthians 1:12–13). Be glad for God's gifts, but always remember that they are given to bring honor to him. He is the point! His glory is the issue! Any ability or talent that calls undue attention to itself is sinful. Appreciate the gift, but more than that, praise the Giver of the gifts.

Acts 18:28 for he powerfully refuted the Jews in public, demonstrating by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ.

KJV Acts 18:28 For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.

- **powerfully refuted the Jews in public** Acts 18:5,25; Acts 9:22; 17:3; Acts 26:22,23; Luke 24:27,44; 1 Cor 15:3,4; Hebrews 7:1-10
- **demonstrating by the Scriptures** John 5:39
- [Acts 18 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

APOLLOS PROCLAMATION "JESUS IS THE MESSIAH"

Having been instructed by Priscilla and Aquila, it is not surprising that his message was identical to the apostle Paul (who he had not met) who had trained this godly couple. Luke records a similar description of Paul among the Jews in Thessalonica "explaining and giving evidence that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and saying, **"This Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you is the Christ (THE MESSIAH)."** (Acts 17:3+, cf Paul's message in Acts 18:5+ and Acts 9:22+) Robertson adds that Apollos is "in Corinth building on the foundation laid so well by Paul (1 Cor. 3:4-17)."

For (gar) explains how Apollos helped his brethren in Corinth. As a man mighty in the Scriptures and now undoubtedly mighty in the (Holy) Spirit, he was a match for any of the erudite Jews

He powerfully refuted the Jews in public - Apollos was "powerful" (*eutonos*) in the Word of God, while the Jews were "powerful" in the words from their wicked heart! (cf Mk 7:21, 22, 23, cf Mt 15:19, 20). In the only other NT use *eutonos* describes the Jews accusing Jesus, Luke recording "And the chief priests and the scribes were standing there, accusing Him **vehemently.**" (Luke 23:10+) The Spirit of God has to have a sense of humor for here in Acts He uses the same word to characterize Apollos' powerful refutation of the Jews! Guess who gets the last word? The Word.

Powerfully (2159) (*eutonos* from **e u** = good + **teino** = stretch) is an adverb which has the picturesque literal meaning "at full stretch," ("well stretched," pressed to the limit, fully extended) in a well-strung manner, and figuratively means powerfully, forcibly, vigorously (as used in Lxx of Josh 6:8 where the priests blew the seven ram's horns vigorously and loudly). Gary Hill adds it "refers to using accurate, *inductive reasoning*. This *extends* a true statement to its *legitimate (necessary) conclusions*, under God."

Refuted (1246) (*diakatelegchomai* from **dia** = intensive or denoting the channel of an act, literally "back-and-forth" until finished + **katelegcho** = to dispute from **kata** = down against + **elegcho** = to convict, refute, proving what is wrong or shameful) is used only here and means "to overcome thoroughly in disputation" (Zodhiates). It means demonstrating an idea is true by completely refuting what opposes it, i.e., to fully prevail in a debate which also puts down (*katá*) what is wrong (what wrongly opposes the truth). Apollos confuted the Jews thoroughly (**dia**), against (**kata**) all their arguments!

MacArthur adds that "Apollos was so effective in his discourse that he crushed his opponents, totally disproving them at every point. His devastating performance in the public debates made a profound impression on the Corinthian church. They soon held him in the same high esteem in which they held Peter and Paul (1 Cor. 1:12; 3:4, 6). It must have pained him (as it did Paul and Peter), to have one of the developing Corinthian church's factions identify with him. His successful transition from Old Covenant believer to New Testament saint was an immense blessing for the church." (MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Acts)

Toussaint adds that "So forceful was Apollos' ministry that factious believers at Corinth formed an Apollos party (1 Cor. 1:12). There is no indication that Apollos promoted such a faction and Paul nowhere held him accountable for it." (Ibid)

Demonstrating by the Scriptures - This is ultimately what anyone who presents the Gospel should resort to **-the Scriptures**. Of course in this context it refers primarily to the Old Testament prophecies about Jesus, a subject regarding which Apollos was

mighty (a veritable "dynamo!") J Vernon McGee once said that Christ is on virtually every page of the OT if we have the spiritual eyes to see Him. Apollos was attempting (of course enabled by the Spirit) to open the eyes of his Jewish protagonists to the truth that Jesus was their Messiah described from Genesis to Malachi!

Demonstrating (pointing out)(1925)([epideiknumi](#) from **epi** = upon + **deiknumi** = show, make known character or significance of something by visual, auditory, gestural, or linguistic means) literally means showing upon and so to cause to be seen, to exhibit (Acts 9:39). Figuratively it means to show to be true, to prove to be true beyond a doubt and so to demonstrate convincingly. In Luke 17:14 Jesus' command to the lepers to '**show** themselves to the priests was intended to be "proof" for the priests (cf. Mk 1:44) In Acts 9:36 the idea is to display or show all that Dorcas had done for the disciples.

Epideiknumi - 7v - Matt. 16:1; Matt. 22:19; Matt. 24:1; Lk. 17:14; Acts 9:39; Acts 18:28; Heb. 6:17

Scriptures (1124) See preceding note on [graphe](#)

That Jesus was the Christ - That Jesus was the Messiah (Greek - [messias](#); cf [Messiah - Anointed One](#)) about Whom the OT had abundantly prophesied - over 300 Messianic prophecies.

Related Resources:

- [Messianic Prophecy](#)
- [Josh McDowell's classic "More than a Carpenter"](#) - good book to suggest to your skeptical friends, Jewish or otherwise!
- [How a Jewish man Michael Goldstone met Messiah - site has multiple similar video testimonies](#)

Barton - THE ROLE OF REASON Apollos was from Alexandria in Egypt, the home of a great university and massive library. A scholar, orator, and debater, Apollos was used greatly by God to strengthen and encourage the church. A finely trained mind is a powerful tool when used for the glory of God. Apollos used the gift of reason to convince many in Greece of the truth of the gospel. You don't have to turn off your mind when you turn to Christ. If you have an ability in logic or debate, use it to bring others to God.

Comment on Psalm 37:31

The best thing.

In the best place.

With the best of results.

David, a man after God's own heart writes...

The law of his God is in his heart. His steps do not slip (Psalm 37:31)

Spurgeon comments: "The **best thing** in the **best place**, producing the **best results**. Well might the man's talk be so admirable when his heart was so well stored. To love holiness, to have the motives and desires sanctified, to be in one's inmost nature obedient to the Lord -- this is the surest method of making the whole run of our life efficient for its great ends, and even for securing the details of it, our steps from any serious mistake. To keep the even tenor of one's way, in such times as these, is given only to those whose hearts are sound towards God, who can, as in the text, call God their God. Policy slips and trips, it twists and tacks, and after all is worsted in the long run, but sincerity plods on its plain pathway and reaches the goal."