

Acts of the Apostles – 18

I. The Inspired History

- A. Paul's First Visit to Corinth (1-18).
 - 1. He supported himself with Aquila and Priscilla (1-3).
 - 2. He first preached in the Jewish synagogue (4-6).
 - 3. He then preached from a Jew's house (7-11).
 - 4. The Jews created a riot to persecute Paul (12-17).
 - 5. Paul left for Syria by way of Ephesus (18).
- B. Paul's First Visit to Ephesus (19-21).
 - 1. He reasoned with the Jews in the synagogue (19).
 - 2. He left for Jerusalem for the feast (20-21).
- C. Paul Begins Third Trip (22-23).
 - 1. He visits Jerusalem and Antioch (22).
 - 2. He visits the churches a third time (23).
- D. Apollo Converted and Ordained (24-28).
 - 1. Apollos, though accomplished, needs conversion (24-26).
 - 2. Apollos preaches in Corinth vigorously (27-28).

II. The Sense and Meaning

- A. Paul gets to Corinth, lives with Aquila and Priscilla, and supports himself making tents (1-3).
 - 1. Corinth, capitol of Achaia, was famous for prosperity, lasciviousness, licentiousness.
 - a. It was prosperous by long existence with harbors of Ionian and Aegean Seas.
 - b. Both wealth ("a Corinthian") and immorality ("Corinthianize") were proverbs.
 - c. We may detect some of this from Paul's epistles (I Cor 4:7-8; 5:1-2; 6:9-20).
 - 2. Paul takes the gospel from the intellectual Athens to the pleasure-mad city of Corinth.
 - 3. Whether Aquila and Priscilla were converted before meeting Paul, we are not told.
 - 4. Pontus was a Roman province north of Asia Minor on the shores of the Black Sea.
 - 5. Paul, an educated intellectual, had acquired the trade of tentmaking for necessity.
 - 6. To further the gospel, he forewent any support from Corinth (I Cor 1:26; 9:6,11,12).
- B. Paul again preaches in the synagogue of the Jews with both success and opposition (4-6).
 - 1. We are told repeatedly about the most aggressive evangelist ever – in synagogues.
 - 2. Note two things about evangelism – it is reasoning (17:2-3) and persuading (19:26); it is not entertaining or flattering, and it is not accomodating or compromising, .
 - 3. Silas and Timotheus had been left in Philippi, Macedonia before catching up (17:15)
 - 4. Paul had a fervent spirit attentive to the Holy Spirit, which had stirred before (17:16).
 - 5. Ministers provide strength and courage (Ec 4:9-12; Pr 27:17; I Sa 23:16; II Cor 7:5-7).
 - 6. The Jews in Corinth opposed themselves and blasphemed as Satan's captives.
 - a. Paul does teach patience and gentleness (II Ti 2:24-26 vs Matt 7:6; Pr 26:4-5).
 - b. Ministers have a limited responsibility to the wicked (Ezekiel 3:16-21; 33:1-9).
 - c. He damns these Jews to the judgment of God (I Thess 2:14-16 cp Matt 27:25).
 - d. His turn to the Gentiles is for Corinth at this time (18:19; 19:10; 20:21; 28:17).

- C. Paul, turning from the Jews, preaches to the Gentiles in Corinth for eighteen months (7-11).
1. He enters the home of a Gentile proselyte (13:16,26,43; 16:14), next to the synagogue.
 2. The Lord blesses Paul to convert Crispus, chief ruler of the synagogue, and his house.
 - a. This initial convert is identified by Paul in his epistle (I Corinthians 1:14).
 - b. This cannot be the same as Sosthenes (17), for he would have been fired soon.
 - c. With others blaspheming, you do not know when God will reveal His own.
 3. Other Corinthians were also converted and baptized, including Gaius (I Cor 1:14).
 - a. Let the gospel order be understood – hearing, believing, and then baptism.
 - b. If we are patient, we shall see why Baptists were called Anabaptists (19:1-7).
 4. The Lord had much people in Corinth. Who were these people? Why not all people?
 - a. These are the elect of God ordained to eternal life (13:48; II Timothy 2:10).
 - b. The Lord knoweth them that are His (II Timothy 2:19; Rom 8:29; Gal 4:9).
 - c. The Lord does not know the wicked and will tell them so (Matthew 7:23).
 - d. Let Arminians, who defile God's sovereign election, choke on these words.
 - e. Your conversion is by the same means – God sent a man for you by grace.
 5. Paul continued for eighteen months teaching (which is preaching) the Word of God.
- D. The Jews create a riot against Paul to have him punished by the Roman proconsul (12-17).
1. Achaia was the province; Gallio was the Roman proconsul; Corinth was the capitol.
 2. The Jews, united in their hatred of Jesus Christ, accuse Paul before Gallio, the deputy.
 - a. The Jews, as usual with the enemies of Christ, falsely accuse Paul of sedition.
 - b. It is our duty to live holy lives according to the law at all times (I Pet 2:12-17).
 - c. Gallio shows disdain for the Jews, and so the Greeks beat their chief ruler; which taught the Jews to think before bringing their petty problems up again.
 - d. Sosthenes was likely converted, for Paul lists his name highly (I Cor 1:1).
 - e. It was not time for Paul to leave, so the Lord delivered Paul by Gallio (18), just as he had promised to him in a vision by night some time earlier.
- E. Paul leaves Corinth and travels to Ephesus on his way to Syria and Jerusalem (18).
1. Paul leaves Corinth for Caesarea, Syria; for he hoped to be at a feast in Jerusalem (21).
 2. He takes Aquila and Priscilla, very useful brethren (Ro 16:3; I Co 16:19; II Tim 4:19).
 3. Two of the three times this holy couple are mentioned, Prisca comes first (Gal 3:28).
 4. He makes a vow to visit a Jewish church in Jerusalem (21:20-26; Nu 6:18; I Co 9:20).
- F. Paul reasoned with the Jews, as was his manner, in the synagogue in Ephesus also (19).
1. Ephesus, a major city on the western coast of Asia Minor, would have Paul again.
 2. Again, Paul enters the synagogue looking for godly men. Again, he reasons with them.
- G. Paul does not stay long in Ephesus, as he intends to make the feast in Jerusalem (20-21).
1. Paul left Aquila and Priscilla in Ephesus to continue what he started, and sailed away.
 2. Though the Jews desired him to stay; he had to leave; but he did return for 2+ years.
- H. Paul visits both the church in Jerusalem and his home church in Antioch (22).
1. He landed at Caesarea, Syria as planned (18), and went up (altitude) to Jerusalem.
 2. He greeted the Jerusalem church and then went down (altitude) to Antioch, Syria.
 3. Antioch was his home church, so he spends some time there with the brethren (23).
- I. Paul begins his third evangelistic trip by systematically visiting the existing churches (23).
1. He travelled again, for the third time, to visit the provinces of Galatia and Phrygia.
 2. He revisited the churches systematically to confirm and strengthen all the brethren.

- J. Apollos, a very accomplished disciple of John the Baptist, is converted at Ephesus (24-26).
1. Alexandria, founded by Alexander the Great (332 B.C.), had many Jews living there.
 - a. Due mainly to grain trade, it was a wealthy and great city, second but to Rome.
 - b. Second only to Athens in intellectual status, it had the world's largest library.
 - c. It had heavy Greek influence, and its philosophy later infected Christianity.
 2. Apollos was an unusual man, in that God called a very talented and passionate man.
 - a. He was a Jew, so that gave him some Old Testament theology right there.
 - b. He was an eloquent man, in that he could speak and teach very effectively.
 - c. He was mighty in the Scriptures, in that he knew the Old Testament very well.
 - d. He was instructed in the way of the Lord, in that John foretold Jesus Christ.
 - e. He was fervent in spirit, in that he had passionate zeal for his Lord (Ro 12:11).
 - f. He spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, that is as far as John had.
 - g. He was a travelling, Baptist evangelist continuing the ministry of John Baptist.
 3. He gets to Ephesus in his missionary travels and enters the synagogue to convert Jews.
 - a. He boldly takes the opportunity to preach repentance to the Jews in Ephesus.
 - b. Aquila and Priscilla, continuing Paul's ministry, Providentially of course, happen upon him in the synagogue and hear his partial understanding of Christ.
 - c. They, a man and wife tentmaking team, take him home for full conversion.
 4. Apollos was a transitional evangelist during the 40-year time of reformation (He 9:10).
 - a. He was instructed in the way of the Lord, that is he knew about Jesus Christ.
 - b. As John the Baptist, he announced that the Messiah had come in Jesus Christ.
 - c. He had the valid baptism of John that preceded baptism in the name of Jesus.
 - d. John baptized the apostles, and neither they nor others required rebaptism.
 - e. But he did not know baptism in the name of Jesus or the Holy Ghost (2:38).
 - f. Apollos was ignorant of the incredible change of things at Pentecost (2:14-36).
 - g. After Pentecost, the baptism of repentance John-style was invalid (19:1-7), for baptism was now in the name of Jesus Christ with the gift of the Holy Ghost.
 - h. John's disciples, being only forerunners, were inferior to Christ's apostles.
 - i. Please see the study entitled "Rebaptism," which explains this passage fully.
 5. Let us observe a few facts of Bible soul winning, since the epistles are mostly silent.
 - a. The Lord has His people to save completely, but we may convert them to truth.
 - b. Both Aquila and Priscilla were involved. A wife may know the truth well also.
 - c. It takes the Spirit and apostolic knowledge to convert, not advanced degrees.
 - d. Truth-lovers want more than some truth or most of the truth. They want it all.
- K. Apollos traveled to Corinth, Achaia, where he helped disciples and converted Jews (27-28).
1. He was unknown at Corinth, so the brethren sent a letter of commendation (II Co 3:1).
 2. This man was a very competent minister and able to help those converted by Paul.
 3. His primary help was in publicly proving Jesus Christ to the Jews from the Scriptures.
 4. He had his faction at Corinth along with Paul and Peter (I Cor 1:12; 3:4-6,22; 4:6).