

## Acts 18:18-28 The Work of Christ's Witnesses (Part 2)

### I. The Witness is Strategic For the Kingdom (18-23a)

#### A. Paul Completes His Work in Corinth (18)

1. Paul remains many days working after Gallio's ruling
  - a) The providential events of Gallio's ruling allow Paul to remain and minister in Corinth
  - b) This may also have set a precedent in the region so Jews would not as quickly bring charges against the church before Roman officials
  - c) Paul stays until he feels the time is right to leave
2. Paul leaves for Syria after the work is done
  - a) Paul decides it is time to head home
  - b) Remember Paul began this journey from his home church in Syrian Antioch
  - c) He is heading back to his home church
3. Priscilla and Aquila join Paul on the journey
  - a) Evidently the couple and Paul had gotten quite close
  - b) Priscilla and Aquila have become full fledged missionaries
    - (1) They followed Paul and will stay in Ephesus as he goes on
    - (2) Later Paul would say, "Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus who have for my life laid down their own necks..." Rom. 16:3
4. Paul completes his vow to God
  - a) Paul and the couple leave Corinth and go to Cenchrea
    - (1) Cenchrea is a harbor city associated with Corinth
    - (2) Cenchrea is about 11 miles away from the city
  - b) Their Paul shaves his head in fulfillment of a vow
    - (1) We are not told what this vow is
      - (a) It may have been a Nazarite vow (Num. 6:2-5; 15-21)
      - (b) This would have been a vow of thanksgiving or devotion to God (probably for God's intervention and protection in Corinth)
      - (c) If someone made this type of vow away from Jerusalem, at the end of his vow he would shave his head and present the hair at the Temple in Jerusalem within 30 days.
    - (2) There is much discussion and disagreement, but Paul had made some sort of vow to God and was honoring it here

#### B. Paul Continues Working On His Way Home (19-22)

1. Paul provides for ministry in Ephesus (19)
  - a) Paul preaches in the synagogue in Ephesus while he is there
    - (1) Even though Paul has his eyes set on home, he makes use of his time passing through Ephesus
    - (2) How often do we "settle" after we have finished some work
      - (a) Sometimes we think we have already done our part
      - (b) Sometimes we think someone else should take care of it
      - (c) Sometimes we think we just deserve a break
  - b) Paul leaves Priscilla and Aquila in Ephesus to work
    - (1) Although Paul is led to leave Ephesus and head home, Priscilla and Aquila will stay in Ephesus to build the church there
    - (2) We will soon see that Priscilla and Aquila continued doing exactly what Paul was doing - strengthening the brethren
2. Paul is led by God to leave Ephesus (20-21)

- a) The Ephesians desired for him to stay (20)
  - b) Paul left even though he seemed to be bearing fruit (21a)
    - (1) Why did Paul leave?
    - (2) Wouldn't it make more sense to stay if they people were interested?
    - (3) Paul gives us a hint in his next statement
  - c) Paul pledges to return to Ephesus if God willed it (21b)
- 3. Paul returns Home from 2nd Missionary Journey (22)
  - a) Paul goes up to the Jerusalem church
    - (1) It doesn't say he went to Jerusalem specifically but the phrase "he went up" was commonly used to speak of going up to Jerusalem
    - (2) Luke will say that after he visits the church, he will "go down" to Antioch
      - (a) If you look at a map, you will notice that Antioch is north of Caesarea
      - (b) Because of this, it is safe to say that Paul visits the church in Jerusalem before going home to Antioch
    - (3) What are some of the reasons that Paul may have stopped off in Jerusalem before going home?
  - b) Paul returns to his home church in Antioch
- C. Paul Spends Time Ministering at Home (23a)
  - 1. This is the end of Paul's second missionary journey
- II. The Witness Disciples Younger Believers (23b-28)
  - A. Paul Departs to Strengthen the New Churches (23b)
    - 1. Luke records the beginning of Paul's third journey as he sets out to strengthen the churches that he helped start
      - a) Paul was not just an evangelist church planter
      - b) Paul was also a discipler
      - c) Paul was following the great commission to "make disciples"
    - 2. We are called to strengthen the brethren as well
  - B. Priscilla and Aquila Strengthen and Instruct Apollos (24-28)
    - 1. The Attributes of Apollos (24-25a)
      - a) He is an Alexandrian Jew
        - (1) There were Jews in Alexandria, Egypt for centuries
        - (2) Alexandria was second largest city in the Roman Empire
        - (3) Alexandria was known for education, learning, and it had the ancient world's biggest library
      - b) He is an eloquent (or learned, educated) man
        - (1) This could mean that he was highly educated or he was an eloquent speaker
        - (2) This could mean that he was both - Rhetoric was highly praised in the ancient world
      - c) He is mighty in the Scriptures
        - (1) What a description - He knew the Scriptures
        - (2) He also knew how to interpret and preach the Scriptures
        - (3) His mind was steeped in the Old Testament and he knew how to pull it all together
      - d) He had been instructed in the Lord
        - (1) Luke almost always uses the term Kurios (Lord) to refer to Jesus
        - (2) Apollos is portrayed here as one who not only knows the Scriptures but understands that it is all about the Messiah
      - e) He was fervent in Spirit
        - (1) He wasn't just a dry educated speaker

- (2) He was passionate and zealous in his presentation
- 2. Apollos is Discipled by Pricilla and Aquila (25b-26)
  - a) Apollos Taught accurately (diligently) and boldly about Jesus
    - (1) The word diligently (*Akribos*) means "exactly, circumspectly, perfectly, or diligently"
    - (2) This lets us know that Apollos did know about Jesus' fulfillment of the OT
    - (3) He could not be said to teach diligently or accurately about Jesus unless that included the death and resurrection
  - b) Apollos' Understanding of Christianity was incomplete
    - (1) His view of baptism was incomplete
      - (a) Obviously he was unaware of the development of Christian baptism at Pentecost
      - (b) He knew Jesus was the Messiah and about the death and resurrection, but apparently he was still teaching deficiently about baptism
    - (2) This will be important: in chapter 19, Paul will encounter disciples of John who also were baptized into John's baptism. The difference between Apollos and these "disciples" is important
      - (a) Apollos believed in Christ and was a disciple needing better instruction
      - (b) The disciples at Ephesus in ch. 19:1-7, had not yet believed in Christ and were not saved until Paul preached Christ to them
  - c) Apollos is gently instructed by the couple
    - (1) Notice that they did not openly rebuke or interrupt Apollos
    - (2) Instead these two laymen, took the one who was mighty in the Scripture and explained the way more perfectly to him
    - (3) They were discipling him in a loving and gentle way
    - (4) No "re-baptism" of Apollos is mentioned
- C. Apollos Becomes a Powerful Witness to the Church (27-28)
  - 1. The Believers Commissioned him to go to Achaia (27a)
  - 2. Apollos Aided the Brethren in Achaia
    - a) He refuted the Jews publicly
    - b) He demonstrated that Jesus was the Christ from the Scriptures